

The Darkest Night Out of Them All

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"I heard the scream, the scream that rocked my world...Her screams that play in my dreams like a broken record."

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Never Trust the Flower Man

I tiptoed across the wooden floors, into a room. A room now bare, but with the ghostly reminder what there was. The walls were peeling in rips and I could still see the faint coloring of blood staining three walls. The oak floorboards were stained too, but it was only a darker shade and no one would guess it was blood spilt by a murderous hand.

“Why do I even stay in this house with all these memories?” I inquired, but no one was home. Only me, sitting in the windowsill wrapped up in the past. The past that was only years ago, but to me it was as if it were just days ago.

“Mom, come down!” I could hear my little girl yelling to me from the bottom of the stairs. I guess she wasn’t very little then, she was more like a grownup than a girl. She was tall and beautiful like a rose. Her hair was a strawberry red that fell down in curls framing her pale skin. Her eyes weren’t just a sea blue, but they held serenity and joy. She looked nothing like me, she looked like her father; her father, gone away into the ground to rest for eternity.

I felt a sharp pain in my chest, in the hole that rested where my heart should’ve been. It wasn’t like I wasn’t used to these pains, but after years of bearing them a person becomes accustomed to the pain. It’s more like a lifestyle: don’t feel the pain then there is something wrong, but more like something that has finally gone right in a really long time. I turned my attention to the blood splattered walls, the blood of my kin.

I ran down the steps to find my daughter, Barry smiling up at me in a black dress. It was the night of her recital she played the harp and boy, was she talented.

“Ready mom?” Her eyes were lit up with excitement.

“Let’s go.”

We made it to the music hall in our dinky little town. It was warm enough to go in with no extra clothes. It was one of those nights that seemed utterly perfect and nothing could go wrong, oh how I was wrong. She pecked my cheek and ran off like a flitting elf, I knew I didn’t have much time but I wanted to buy her roses. My physical way of showing her how proud I was. I paid for my flowers and signed up for discounts, I put all my information required: number, name, address, email address, the whole shebang. I figured I was going to be buying many more flowers in the future.

I tried to sprint back seeing the time was ticking closer to the beginning of the show, but it is rather hard to run in a dress and heels. I made it with two minutes to spare and sweat dripping down my brow. The lights dimmed as I took my seat and the musicians came out, one by one like a procession of silent marchers. The maestro picked up his sticks in his silky white gloved hands and began thrusting them in different motions making circles in the air. The music filled the auditorium and I could pick out my daughter’s harp. Her notes coming out slowly in a melancholy way and picking up speed like a roller coaster. Each song her harp played a different tune and I knew when the rest stood up it would be my girl playing her solo piece. It was calm like the Moonlight Sonata by Beethoven. Her notes filled the air bringing on serenity to lay on her audience’s shoulders like snow. Her last note hung in the air and everyone went into a roar of applause. The last piece the musicians played vibrated the air and again had everyone standing and clapping and “whoop-whooping”. I found Barry at the front shaking strangers’ hands and having a smile that curled up to her eyes.

“Barry!” Her eyes searched all around her until she found me waving at her ferociously.

We made our way home with roses in Barry’s arms and laughing, but all giggles stopped by the end of the night and were replaced with wails. I unlocked the house door and we entered together, but I was too foolish to see the door was already unlocked. Barry headed up stairs before I did and I kept the roses to put in a vase so they will last for a couple hours. I heard the scream, the scream that rocked my world and I let the glass vase crash onto my feet, but I didn’t care. No, I bolted towards the stairs not caring about my dress ripping; I just knew I had to go save my little girl.

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I replayed the images of the fatal night as if it were a movie that never stopped, just repeated itself. I walked around the room and felt the sobs beginning to rip through me.

That man was there, the man who sold me the flowers to give to my precious girl. His face was ragged, but he was smiling. His sick twisted mouth was curled into a sadistic grin, he had Barry by the hair and knife at her throat. I looked at him with a burning sensation to kill him at the very spot, but I never had the chance to kill him, never even had the chance to lay a finger on him. He cackled and I could imagine him throwing his head back and laughing like a witch that is about to cast a spell. With one blow he knocked me out cold.

I woke up to his laughter and Barry's screams. Her screams that play in my dreams like a broken record. He was using her body for his own pleasure, his own needs, to satisfy his craves, but once he noticed I was up and coming after him he pulled out and hit me with a fist and a slow but killing kick to the ribs. I coughed and out came blood, I stood up again and screamed for Barry to run, but she couldn't, she would never move again. A knife protruded from her chest where her heart was supposed to be. I looked at the guy who sold me roses for Barry, the man who killed Barry, and the man I swore I would kill. A new fury rose up inside of me, it used to be saving my daughter, but now that she is dead I was going to put that man through as much torture as I could.

I didn't !

The cops came before that, before my plans could even formulate. A neighbor must've heard and dialed 9-1-1 in anxiety, but they were too scared to actually come and try to help.

I walked out the room to where paints and everything needed to redecorate a room. Today was the last day the room where my daughter was murdered would be and weeks from now I will sell this place and find somewhere new to live. Somewhere, where a middle-aged woman can start her life over.

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