

## A mother's loss

She looked at his sleeping body, not making out many details in the badly lit room. He was a very handsome man. Short black hair, brown eyes, not very tall though. Probably a good thing, she wasn't exactly built like a giant herself. She lent over and stroked his hair gently, touching his forehead by mistake. He felt cold, so she went to put the heating on. She didn't know how long she had been sitting there watching him, she wasn't really aware of a lot of things at the moment. She hadn't even noticed the blood that had made the arms of her jumper stick to her skin. She got up from the bed and walked over to a chair next to the window, reaching into his jacket she found a packet of cigarettes and a box of matches, she lit her cigarette then sat down on the chair. A few hours later the sun was creeping in through the curtains, and she was gone.

Katy had been such a happy little girl as a child, never did anything wrong, always did what was asked of her, and then she hit her teens. She'd known before hand that things would change when her daughter got older, after all kids changed, and she still remembered the things she put her parents through when she was in her mid teens. It didn't prepare her for what would happen to her little girl though. Staying out past her curfew, sometimes her bed hadn't even been slept in when she hadn't bothered coming home at all. Smelling of booze and cigarettes, having touched God knows what else. It'd terrified her. Left her feeling helpless, not having any ideas on how to change it, how to make things better. She always hoped and prayed it would get better though, that somehow they'd get through it like they had everything else. Maybe if she had done something, said something, tried to fix it, things would have been different. It wouldn't have had to come to this.

It hadn't always been easy being a single mum, and she had always had to work a lot, but she was doing it for them, so that Katy would have everything and be happy. She had lost her parents years ago, and had no other family except from a brother who was an alcoholic and better left to his own devices. Katy's dad had only been a one night stand, a silly mistake when she was sixteen and he was older and should have known better. He had a wife she found out later, wanted nothing to do with Katy. So it had just been them for what seemed like forever. Now it was just her, and she was going to make him pay for it.

She hadn't been surprised when the police knocked on her door. She hadn't been surprised at them being there, but the reason they came had killed her inside. She'd stopped breathing that moment when they told her. Katy was dead. She had over dosed. They told her what on, but she couldn't remember it at the time. Just a mixture of pills, powder and alcohol. She'd noticed that they weren't telling her everything. Living with Katy had taught her a lot about lies and how after a while you recognized them. She asked them what there was they hadn't told her. She broke down crying as they told her that her daughter had been six weeks pregnant at the time of her death. The over dose

hadn't just killed the only person that still mattered in her life, it had killed her grandchild.

They had taken her to the morgue so she could see her. She didn't look like her daughter anymore. Her face was pale, her make up had been cleaned off already, and nothing was covering her but a white sheet that blended in with the death on her little girl's skin. She just stood there looking at her, the tears had dried up and she couldn't speak. Just looked at her. They told her that she had already been in the morgue for more than twenty hours; they'd had problems identifying her at first. The person that had rung for the ambulance had been in shock and had been so high themselves he or she hadn't been with it. When they finally did get an answer out of them and could find her family, the post mortem had already been done, and that's how they knew about the baby. She thought that would be it then... but it wasn't.

Katy's cremation had been barely a week later. There weren't a lot of people there, only her and some of the staff from Katy's old school. She'd been an exceptional student, up until her problems started, and some of them wanted to pay their respects. There was a girl too. She hadn't recognized her, but assumed she was a friend of her daughter's. She'd noticed that the girl looked nervous. Twitchy. The moment they'd gone outside after the cremation she had lit up a cigarette and she had just stood there looking at her, like she couldn't decide whether she wanted the hassle of talking to her or not. Lighting up a cigarette herself she had walked over to the girl, and told her thank you for coming. She was glad Katy had had a friend. That's when the girl had burst out crying. She told her that Katy was a good girl. She didn't do drugs, never had, she might have gotten drunk and do silly things, but she didn't touch anything else, not until a few weeks before she died. Something had happened to make her change. A man had. Katy had disappeared with him, barely conscious when leaving her friends after having drank a healthy amount of beers and vodka. When she had come back she had been crying, and trembling, her face bleeding and her neck bruised. Then she took a pill someone gave her. To relax. She'd never been the same since that.

She wasn't stupid. She realised what had happened, and she asked the girl to describe the man. She did, and gave her his name. Or what he was known as. He was a business man, worked in a company in the middle of the city, but he liked to hang out with the teenagers. Would give them drugs and alcohol and they'd let him stay with them. He'd been there before and the girl had seen him eyeing Katy up. If only she had done something before, then maybe she could have stopped this. The guilt was still inside her, like a lump stuck in her throat, but it wasn't just guilt anymore, there was anger. He had raped her. He had killed her.

She'd spent the next months preparing. She learned how to shoot a gun. She learned about drugs. She learned how to be attractive again. Had her hair done, her nails done and her make up always perfect. Then she got a job in his company. It sounded easier than it was, for months she had just waited, hoping that something would become available. A job as a receptionist did eventually. With a lot of effort and a little bit of luck she was offered the job, she suspected it had been down to the low pay package she had asked for

combined with her experience. She didn't care why though; the important thing was she had got it.

The first time she saw him it had taken all her self control not to attack him. She just wanted to hit him, beat him, make him hurt like he had made Katy hurt. Instead she had just smiled, looked at him and he had smiled back to her. Later that day he had emailed her, welcoming her to the company. Two weeks later he had invited her out for dinner. Three weeks later, he was dead.

It was the second time that they were going out together, and she knew that he thought he would get something more than just a good night kiss this time. She had flirted with him all evening, pretending to be more intoxicated than she really was. After dinner she had asked him back to her house, and they'd stumbled in through the door together, laughing at each others drunken states and the way their taxi driver had looked at them when they practically had fallen out of the cab. She had offered him another drink, and he ended up having several before they made their way upstairs. She literally had to drag him into the bedroom as by now he was struggling to stay on his feet. The sedatives she had mixed into his wine were the main reason why.

When she woke him two hours later, she had tied his legs and arms to the bed. She had taken all his clothes off and folded them neatly, putting them in the corner of the room, his jacket hung on a chair. She didn't want them getting wet when she poured the ice cold water over him. When she thought back on it later on, she admitted to herself it had been a strange thing to do, not wanting to mess his clothes up. She'd looked at him, but her smile was gone, she was tired of putting up with having to act like she wanted a man that she hated more than she had ever hated anyone. She looked him in the eyes and then she spoke. About Katy. She told him how he had killed her that night when he had raped her. How she would never come back, never grow up, have a family, have a life. Then she told him neither would he. She kept talking as she took her gun from the night stand drawer. It had already been loaded and had been fitted with a silencer she had gotten with the gun that she had purchased through someone Katy had known. Releasing the safety catch she pointed the gun at him, shooting him, over and over till there were no more bullets left. Then she untied him, and sat down next to him on the bed, her arms and hands wet from blood after she had reached over his chest and brushed against it when trying to loosen the ropes. Then she watched him die.

The police found her in the early hours of the morning; the caretaker of a nearby garden had seen her sitting on the cliffs watching the sea, getting concerned when he noticed dried red stains on her jumper. As they approached her they saw she was holding a gun, in her other hand an urn. As they asked her to stand up and drop her gun, she did as they asked of her. She dropped the gun, but not the urn. Then she jumped.