

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Handyman

by Stuart Carruthers

The shop was small but the house was even smaller. Its dark exterior appearance wasn't very enticing as it sat awkwardly among the numerous independent shops on Griffith Street. A taxidermist business attracts a particular type of client and the owner of this establishment insisted that all his clients had a pre-booked appointments. The sign on the door made its owner's unfriendliness blatantly clear.

The morning rush hour paid no attention to the young ginger haired postman who waited patiently for the door to number 76B to open.

"He won't answer, appointments only I'm afraid," advised Miss Glasshouse as she emerged from behind the bus stop.

"Do you know him?"

"Not really, we hardly ever see him," she replied, as she took the keys from her bag to open the shop door.

Sounding desperate he enquired if she would take the package, "you're bound to see him today aren't you?" And before she could reply, he shoved the package into her hand and was gone.

It was late afternoon when she heard the arrival of a customer next door. Grabbing the package she hurried out into the street but the door was closed. Stabbing her key into the glass window, he appeared looking non-to happy.

Speaking in a harsh tone he failed to look her in the eye, but he smiled, thanked her for being so kind and disappeared back into his shop. Straining to see who was inside she briefly caught a glimpse of a tall woman wearing a colourful headscarf. Miss Glasshouse was intrigued to know who this lady was, so she spent the rest of the afternoon waiting patiently for her to emerge from next door.

“Excuse me,” she said excitedly as the lady with the colourful hat stood patiently at the bus stop.

“Can I help you?”

“Can I ask you about your headscarf, it’s amazing?” and before long they were chatting like old friends. This was her plan to find out more about her neighbour, so she didn’t mind listening to the lady talk rubbish about buying it in some market in Portugal the previous summer. Meanwhile behind them a small stubby finger carefully parted the curtains to see what was going on and he didn’t like what he saw.

“So do you know Mr...?”

“I only know what's above, below or to my left or right of me," she confidently replied before quickly boarding the bus back into town, leaving Miss Glasshouse alone on the pavement looking somewhat confused.

The parcel contained a small dead bird, it was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. Carefully placing it between his heavily scared fingers he noticed a piece of paper placed under one of its wings. Unfolding it he instantly recognized the handwriting and the twelve digit phone number.

Dropping the bird, he ran next door and demanded to know who had delivered it. Unsatisfied with her answer, he returned to the shop, locked the door and unplugged the phone.

“Why now, after all these years?” he repeatedly asked himself as he frantically packed his bags. Checking over the house one last time, he stood alone in the dark planning his next move and then the knock on the door came.