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Everything You Know Is Wrong

by Stuart Carruthers

- August 18th 18:08

The force of his disfigured fist as it crashed into the kitchen table, shock the foundations of the house. Rage emerged from his sparkling blue eyes. Grace Sullivan didn't flinch. Pushing the Knight across the chessboard she looked him straight in the eye and announced with a smile "check mate".

At five feet nothing and with a temper like her fathers, she wasn't to be messed with.

- July 2nd 09:49

The morning after the night before. Scattered across the sitting room floor the remains of a job well done. Terry as an ex-service man insured that everything was in place. "Do you want to sit down Miss Sullivan? I need to show you something." Like a dealer in the local casino, Terry placed the photographs in order across the table. "Your handywork?" "You're drunk." "DON'T LIE TO ME." "This is not the time, now gather up the boxes, phone John and sober up," said Grace.

- July 24th 22:07

Grace let the phone ring six times before answering. Without saying a word she wrote down the exact words that brought a smile to her face. Turning to face the other occupant of the room, she carefully removed the knife from her pocket and sliced his

ear off. From behind the masking tape that covered his mouth, an earthy scream emerged in the silence. Before the night would be over, the body of a young man from Sheffield would be found face down in the canal.

- August 2nd 13:04

Albert Turtle briskly walked into No 28 Ship Street and announced to its occupants that the shop was now closed. As the confused looking ladies mumbled between themselves, Albert held open the door, smiled and showed them onto the pavement.

Upstairs the frantic sound of Grace as she walked back and forth on the wooden floors indicated to Albert that she wasn't happy. Her descent down the stairs changed the atmosphere of the room instantly.

"Can you do me a favour Albert?"

"What?"

"When that kid of yours arrives, keep him away from me."

"I know what you do Grace."

"Are you scared? No? then do what your told."

- August 9th 17:06

As fast as the answers passed his lips, Grace Sullivan inflicted a pain John Nolan had never felt. His fast hands, that put many a victim to sleep were worthless now. Scattered across the floor bundles of notes stolen from the Devil. Stopping briefly to turn up the radio, Grace lit a cigarette, pulled back the net-curtain to check no one was outside, before returning to end the days of a man who stole her youth.

Over an hour had passed before the knock at the door came. After some brief small talk, Grace placed a brown envelope in the hand of a girl who wouldn't let her down.

Placing the bundles of cash into the black sports bag, Grace's smiled at her friend as she emerged from the kitchen and set about cleaning up. Not a word was said between the friends as they went about their business.

The main street was busy with the rush hour traffic, so to avoid bumping into anyone she didn't want to, Grace made her way to the Rose & Crown via the back streets. The snug was empty. The drink flowed. The sun set.

- August 17th 08:05

They were late for school.

Grace frantically packed the kids lunch boxes while upstairs the boys had no interest in getting dressed.

Despite repeated calls for them to hurry up, in the end Grace stormed up the stairs and read them the riot act. As the boys got dressed and Grace put her make up on, a letter dropped in the hallway.

In the rush to get out the door, Grace didn't notice the letter on the floor, but her eldest son Tom did. As Grace parked in the school car park, Tom leaned forward and dropped the letter on his mother's lap, said goodbye and joined his friends on the slow walk into school.

Picking up the letter, she instantly recognised the handwriting. The single scruffy white page inside had a single sentence written on it: *Now everyone knows who you really are.*