



Mirrored What I Saw in Me

by Stuart Finegan

It is a truth universally acknowledged that when one part of your life starts going okay, another falls spectacularly to pieces. I read that.

In one of your books?

It mirrored what I see in me Shelia

Red or white?

I'm serious Catherine

So am I, there's only three bottles left and the way Maureen and her new lesbian lover are drinking, there wont be anything left soon, now red or white?

What didn't you tell me about the letter?

You're having red

The second paragraph is the killer, you left him no choice

They're engaged I think?

What?

Well going by the rock on her finger, are you drinking this, cos if you're not then I am?

What time is it?

*

As the late warm summer breeze entered the room, the naked ceiling lightbulb gently rocked. Shelia slumped into her chair, rendered useless and lazy by the heat. Scattered across the floor in no order a few possessions of little worth. She was transfixed by the slight movement of the lightbulb. As her mind played out numerous conclusions her eyes moved left to right as the summer breeze engulfed the room.

Between her delicate fingers gripped his felt-pen, it awaited her orders. Today was the day.

It had taken years to reach this point. Catherine once said bravery was her hardest obstacle.

Without thinking the ink emerged from the felt tip.

Days, months, years.

The story she's couldn't tell suddenly seen the light of day.

*

Have you no manners?

Excuse me?

You've sat in that corner all evening

And?

You didn't even bring a bottle to the party yet helped yourself to everyone's else's

Shelia

How bloody rude are you?

SHELIA, I'll drink whatever I want, red, white or dishwasher, keep your voice down will ya, making a bloody show of yourself. This is what I call a party so bloody cheer up Shelia

*

Its 03:00am and time to go.

Bags packed, sit waiting in the hallway.

The last twelve months have been too good to be true. Mrs Sullivan had been to kind.

The job offer was too good to be true. A few bob in the pocket.

*

Despite the altercations and restless situations, it was now or never. Shelia had put pen to paper on many an occasion and with the assistance of a cheap bottle she finally revealed her soul. As the hours passed the words became easier. The needle worked its magic on a well-worn vinyl record as it collected unwanted dust on its journey. Skipping a word or two Shelia dragged herself from the chair to lift the arm and restore her pleasure.

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Looking back now she knew the date, day and time off by heart.
All six foot three of him.

As the corner became her shelter, it was easier to make the next move. He laughed, smiled, swung frantically, Shelia retreated. Within her inner self it would be over soon. Tomorrow or the day after the bus was leaving. Shelia crouched down like a begging doll and prayed. Convinced shame wasn't the coat she wore.

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Where is it?

What?

The red or white, Jesus

I need you to keep a secret

If she's taken it, I'll go mad, What secret?

Catherine, you need to listen to me

I am Shelia, what have you done now?

What's that supposed to mean?

Sorry, are you leaving him or not, I mean it's been on the cards for a long time?

Yes, but I cant stop thinking about the kids

Are you serious? I mean the kids are grown up now, when did you decide this?

Let me show you, but you can't tell, please Catherine

O my God Shelia, I'm so sorry, when did this happen, I'll fucken kill him

You don't feel it at first, that's the lie, but after a while it becomes normal

Shelia

Its ok, I taught he'd turned a corner and I went with him, foolishly

Don't leave now, please, I mean things have been going so well

And what exactly does that mean?

Your new job, the flat, everything

Catherine, you'll have me crying next, I don't recognise myself anymore

Shelia

It is a truth universally acknowledged that when one part of your life starts going okay, another falls spectacularly to pieces. She read that you know.

Is that what she told you?

Your mother longed to live among the sky, the birds and the springtime

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