

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

God Knows You Sin

by Stuart Finegan

In a bleak dark room a pale skeleton like hand shook violently.

*

As the school gates opened, hordes of uncontrollable shrieking teenagers emerged onto the deserted suburban streets.

Friday, a few minutes before four o'clock. Within minutes silence had returned.

Emerging into the late winter sunshine, Gloria Gallagher stood momentarily to enjoy the unexpected warm felling on her pale skin. One by one her colleagues walked by. Pleasantries exchanged on the upcoming bank holiday weekend.

Walking home she passed the Church of our Lady, with its imposing oak doors. Childhood memories locked away for another day. Rusting mesh wire covering its dirt covered stained glass windows. Eyeing the barely noticeable crack within the glass, Gloria smiled. Her secret yet to be told.

Swooping swifts sang excitably as she turned the corner onto Limerick Street. The late evening sun having encouraged swarms of microscopic insects to chance their arm in the evening sun. Like fighter pilot's picking off their enemies they cut through the air as Gloria laughed uncontrollably.

It didn't take long for the smile to be wiped from her face.

*

It didn't happen by chance. Sharp sly words. Over time, often in company.

Praying on that vulnerable naive youth. Knowing well her elders wouldn't be told. Put-downs delivered in comedic fashion in full view.

Days became months became years. Confidence shattered.

Revenge a dream in planning.

*

Lazy Saturday afternoon.

As the clock waited patiently on its replacement batteries, Gloria went about her business. Unaware of the time, she cleaned up last night's mess. The stale smell of cigarettes and wine greeted her arrival into the numerous downstairs rooms.

Why?

That's all she could say to herself as she struggled to hold back her stomachs violent reactions. The door to the front room only opened with a gentle nudge. Walking into a blinding dark room Gloria took a moment to allow her eyes to adjust. Chewing gum, fag butts, bottle tops under foot disgusted her. Scrambling across the room in desperation to locate the light switch the shock of what happened next came without warning.

Deep inside she knew she had been walking a tightrope for too long. Her every move or spoken word scrutinized in detail.

Stood in the far corner she watched her.

The dust clogged needle struggled to finish the final notes on her favourite vinyl.

Heavy red velvet curtains stood strong against the outside pressure of the bright light.

Her grey coat, Galway shawl, hands carved with lines of untold stories.

She waited patiently.

At the right moment she made her move.

*

It was over in minutes.

Unexpected rage with lucifer's soft hands came from total darkness. Gloria liked to make use of what she knew.

As the house occupants slept downstairs utter carnage unfolded in the front room. Like a knife through butter. Release, relief, a broken heart, then silence.

Tear drops of velvet red blood slowly pool beneath her feet.

*

As the sunlight warmed her skin, Gloria wondered what ordinary love felt like. Above birds fly high in the winter sun.

Late evening as an angel falls to the ground.

