

Deadly Justice

Prologue

The full moonshine revealed the man's face. He stepped back until darkness sheltered him. He breathed deep. The afternoon rain had produced a thick fog, and he loved the smell of the damp earth. The afternoon rain had produced a thick fog. The mist played havoc with his eyes. Here and there, ghosts floated through the gloomy night.

The lights in the bar dimmed. She passed the window her body obscured by the Miller Lite sign. He sneered; tonight he would extinguish her light.

He had chosen this tavern because of the sign. There were other bars with a Miller Lite sign in their windows; this was the only one in Washington D.C. that he knew had a barmaid named Miller. This night Shannon Miller would be his.

For the next two hours, he would toy with her, giving her a chance to repent. Whether she did or not made no difference. His knives were sharp. He fingered the knife in his pocket. The blade was sharp and tonight she would feel it. Tonight she would feel his blade.

An hour before sunrise her time would run out. As with the others, he would weigh down her body with a cement block. Barely alive, she would struggle against death as they all did. The water filled her lungs. The last thing she saw on this earth would be his eyes, the eyes of her murderer.

How long would it take before her family, her friends reported her missing? A day possibly two? Surely no longer. Then, the search would begin. He would watch the reports recording it all on his DVR.

In a week or two, some tourist or jogger would spot a floater in the Potomac. All evidence washed away, she would be just another woman executed by the D. C. Killer. He would add her disc to his collection.

He wiled away the time thinking about his first kill. She had lounged in her bath thinking she was alone. When he entered the bathroom, she smiled. The expression on his face made her smile falter. He came at her, grasping her by the shoulders. He pushed her down, holding her struggling body under the water. Her eyes wide with terror she tried to plead with her murderer. To ask her husband why? He sank her body in the Potomac. The first victim of the D. C. Killer.

The door opened. Shannon Miller stood in the breach surveying the parking lot. Nervous she started to go back inside, then changed her mind. She peered toward him, her eyes trying to penetrate the mist and gloom. He was a shadow invisible to her.

Satisfied, she stepped out, locked the door and hurried across the deserted lot to her car, a red Toyota with more rust than red. The tap-tap of her high heels pulsated on the cracked asphalt. The beat of her shoes matched the throb of his heart. He could hear her heavy, fearful breathing. He smiled.

The moon scurried behind the clouds as if to hiding its face in horror.

He was an avenger, a messenger of God. His mission was to rid the nation's capital of immoral women. Fearing him, prostitutes now walked the streets in pairs. Even in their terror, they still pursued their wicked trade. At times, he saw them huddled in groups of three or four. They reminded him of children in a thunderstorm.

Like a spirit, he crept in her direction. The only light was cast by the Miller Lite sign and a distant street lamp. The light in the parking lot had burned out weeks ago throwing it into darkness.

He stalked her as a lion does its prey. He moved slowly, silently, low to the ground, keeping the car between them. His dark running suit blended with the night. He was the Dark Angel. The Angel of Death. In another life, he had passed over Egypt killing the firstborn of those not chosen by God.

Her eyes darted in every direction still she didn't see him. He was invisible.

Her hands shook as she tried to get the key in the door. The 11 o'clock news reported they had found another one. If he stuck with his pattern, the D. C. Killer would strike again tonight. By morning, a woman would be dead. She prayed it wouldn't be her.

She fumbled, dropping the key ring. She stooped to pick it up, her head turning in every direction, her ears alert to every sound. Without seeing him, she sensed him. She lowered her eyes, trying again successfully this time. She turned the key. There was click. She sighed; unaware that she had been holding her breath. The dome light flashed as she opened the door.

He was on her in an instant. Their bodies slammed against the door. The light blinked out. He held her in an iron grip. One hand over her mouth and the blade poking into her left breast.

"Move and I'll kill you." He growled.

She moaned. Tears obscured her vision, coursing down her cheeks, smearing her mascara and dripping off her chin. Her body trembled.

"Please don't hurt me." The words cracked through her parched lips.

He grinned. His face twisted into a deadly smile. "Tonight I'm going to save you."

For the next two hours, she suffered tortures no woman should endure. Her body cried out in protest, her voice silent, stopped by the duct tape covering her mouth.

By 4 AM his work was done. She had paid for her sins with her blood. He took the duct tape off her mouth, wrists and ankles. Lovingly he replaced her clothes. She was she was pure now. Now she was a child of God.

The rope was standard sold in any hardware store. The concrete block came from behind the bar.

Dawn was an hour away. He rowed to the middle of the river.

Giving her a kiss, he pushed her body into the water. She awoke struggling against death. She sank down her eyes wide with terror. The water enveloped her. The concrete block pulled her out of his sight. He waited two minutes counting off the seconds, and then he rowed rapidly to shore.

No time. He stashed the old rowboat under the aged willow tree where he had found it two days before. The blood soaked running suit went into a dumpster, the gloves into another. He knew the schedule. By 10 AM, they'd be on their way to the landfill. Good luck finding them.

At the townhouse, he showered shaved and changed into a dark blue suit, white shirt, and red tie. It was going to be a great day. One the most important days of his life. He felt

invigorated. Shannon Miller's strength ran through his veins. This day he would announce his candidacy, his past hidden, his secret unrevealed.

He laughed. The voters were about to elect a serial killer as their leader. By the end of this year, the D. C. Killer would be president of the United States of America.

The limo pulled to the curb. Jimmy Falan jumped out and was halfway up the sidewalk when Jerald Robbins opened his front door.

“Good morning Senator or should I say Mr. President?”

“Not yet Jimmy. It won't be long. Then you'll be the chauffeur to the most powerful man in the world.”

“Yes sir.” Jimmy grinned.