



HIGHLY COMMENDED 2022 CATEGORY 14-18 YEARS: ERIN DAVIES

Silent Scream

I like to count my sheep, number them individually. It doesn't send me to sleep, but they do. Not peacefully though. They sleep with their mouths open in a silent scream.

People were talking. Maybe they had found them. I mustn't get excited however. Arriving at the scene at least half a dozen ambulances and many police cars were there. They had found them.

I had forgotten the beauty of my creations. Hanging from the ceiling by their ankles, limbs covered in deep gashes. Their torsos were bloody and bruised, throats slit and the most disturbing factor was their mouths appearing almost frozen in time, in a silent scream. I had to suppress the smile that was threatening to show and hide the pleasure that it brought me to see the other responders' horrified expressions. Although there was a terrific mess left, I made sure that there was nothing left behind that could link me to the case. No hair, no blood, nothing left underneath the fingernails of the victims. It got rather tedious after a while but it was worth it. For this moment, this feeling, this rush of adrenaline, I would do it all again in a heartbeat. But for now those fantasies had to wait. Right at this moment, I had to do my job, I had to be the doctor.

'I'm Detective Davidson, and I am the lead detective on the case.' standing tall, he extends a hand, meant to be shaken i assume. He wears a green bowler's hat and is never seen anywhere without it. When he is working on a case he is known to remove it and continuously trace the jagged scar carving its path along his balding head. He was good, very good, it isn't something that I would deny. He has worked on many cases that have come into the hospital and all of them he has solved. He was part of the reason I wanted to do this. He had successfully solved 27 cases and I wanted to be the first case he could not solve, the first one where he could not find a solution, the first one that made him doubt. False leads I think that's what they're called. I knew that I had given him many clues, none pointing to me of course. There were many different paths he could take, all he had to do was choose one. 'Doctor Parkes, Doctor Parkes can you hear me?', he repeated.

'Yes, sorry Detective,' flashing him a smile.

'Doctor Parkes, please relay your observations to me that you have made of the victim,' he was telling me to describe her. Victim 9. She had been a secondary school teacher for a little over a year. Her fiancé had died only a few months prior to me helping her. She was torn apart by the death of him, so much that she had to take time off of work and receive prescriptions to sleep. The number carved into her back resembles the number 9, leading us to believe that was the ninth victim. Each one of the 14 of them hanging there had it.

'Victim 9, severely broken femur, snapped in multiple different places, tibia and fibula are both equally damaged. Major internal bleeding was evident, thought to have come from the liver. Right shoulder was dislocated and the left eye was no longer in its socket. A significant amount of damage to the cranium, a broken and dislocated jaw.'

'All of the victims have been through an incredulous amount of trauma,' he said without looking up from the morgue's report of her.

'It is disturbing, truly.' I state. I thought that now would be a good time to ask the burning question that I desperately wanted to ask

'Have you found the killer?'

I knew that this case would be one to make the news. Not just the local papers but hopefully national television. I would make sure to work close to the case, but not so much that they start to suspect. It is a known fact that when a number of murders occur the killer is always there, watching, involving themselves. I would not do this. I would be smarter, cleverer, more cunning than the rest of them. I would be the best.

When I got the call that my brother had been taken in for questioning I wasn't surprised. He was one of the people who had hurt me. One of the people who I would seek revenge upon. I was tempted to make him number 12 but I thought better of it. That would tie me to the case.

I was writing reports of the bodies from my masterpiece and suddenly I felt a presence behind me. 'Your brother is an interesting character.' It was Detective Davidson.

'You're trying to tell me I grew up with him,' I'm usually good at trying to read people's intentions but I couldn't tell what he was doing.

'Well I'm sure you'll be pleased to know that we ruled him out of the investigation.' This confused me. I thought he would have been the prime suspect. Maybe he wasn't as good as I thought he was.

In the week he visited me, showing up at the hospital, the place where I do my weekly food shop, and even my house. It was enough. I had had enough. That night I decided to visit him.

I knocked curtly 3 times upon his office door and waited patiently before him allowing me to

enter. I walked in and I could feel the adrenaline rushing through me again, like before. Before I knew it he was on the floor. Bloody and bruised. Jaw broken, open in a silent scream. One last thing, I rolled him over and carved 15 into his back. Then it was over. I left the room with a feeling of satisfaction.

I do not fall asleep counting sheep. I send them to sleep with a silent scream.