

Johnita Smith

The Crewdson Room – Flash Fiction Story

“The Star Witness”

The Feds think they are helping me by locking me away in this nice small town hotel room on the beach in Florida, but they are not, you see I know he is looking for me, I can feel it. He knows that I am the only one that saw him murder her in cold blood. The only reason they still have a case against him is because of me, the star witness. Damn, I hate that I went outside that night for a smoke to try to relax my mind from my stressful marriage. Never did I think I would witness my mentally unstable neighbor snap his wife’s neck in rage, he just got back from the war. I remember Karen telling me about his high-ranking sniper background. She would always say that she never wanted to upset him when he came home, he just gets worse every time he returns. Karen and her two kids were so scared of him when he came home. She just wanted out of the marriage, but he wouldn’t let her go. Now he is on the loose and the Feds can’t find him. Those poor kids, what are they going to do now. What am I going to do, I am terrified.

“Angie,” he said in a demanding voice. “Are you listening to me? I know this has been very hard for you but the changes we made to your hair and clothing is for your own protection.”

“Yes, I understand you don’t have to yell. Knowing Mark, he probably already knows where I am and he’s coming for me, I just know it,” I said as I tremble in my seat on the fenced in terrace. My new blonde wig and warm clothes were very out of season, I look like a weirdo wearing a turtleneck in July. But these people are supposed to be the professionals.

“Look, we can’t protect you if you don’t stay put and stay quiet inside this room,” he said leaning forward in his chair, sweat trickling his hairline in the Florida heat.

“But I am staying put and doing exactly what you asked of me. I just left the room to see the water and try to clear my head,” I said as tears swell from the corner of my eyes.

“There is no time for tears, we will find him and then it will be your turn to take the stand and we will put this monster away for good,” he said.

I watched as Agent Stern walked off the terrace through the empty hotel room. I didn’t have anything to keep me sane just the television and a phone that I couldn’t use. Sitting in the quiet drinking a cool glass of water all I could think about was my family and their safety. I knew what I had to do, I had to take the stand and tell my truth for Karen and her family. No one has the right to treat a wife and mother that way, women matter too.