

A Good Man's Darkness

Part One

Those who know me will call me a good man, a nice man, a quiet man. Those who do not know me will call me a mad man, an evil man, a killer. I tell you that I am nothing but a broken shell. I once had a life, a family and a reason to live. I was happy until my entire existence was destroyed in a storm of violence. My life was taken from me. A gunfight between criminals in a carpark, six seconds and my wife and daughter were gone.

The police said they died quickly, it was bad luck, the wrong place, the wrong time. They said it was a tragedy. My life stopped that day. The police said it was common thugs in a shootout. The news said it was another gangland execution by the Cerlo crime family, a common crime in their attempt to expand their bloody empire. All I knew was that my life was over.

I did not know how I would go on, many times I thought of joining my loved ones, but I was too weak. The day of their funerals I buried my daughter and wife together. I did not know it at the time, but I buried myself with them. I was an empty shell surrounded by black fog. All those who tried to help me in that first year, I pushed away.

As I collapsed into despair I was constantly reminded of my loss. News of the Cerlo family continued to rise like a disease taunting me with their power and untouchable status. Then the darkness began to fill me. First came the pain, then the rage and then the burning fury filling me with a purpose. A plan began to form.

All the light I had in my life was taken from me and turned to darkness. I decided to share my darkness with those who forced it into my life. I would wipe the Cerlo family bloodline from history. I would take their happiness as they took mine.

I had much to learn in the following years. I had never been in a fight, I hated violence, but to complete my task I needed knowledge of bloodshed and brutality. I spent a year researching on the internet. Once I was content with what I had learned I began to buy weapons. I spent the last of my money on learning how to use them.

On the fourth year of my loss, I went to the graveside of my wife and child. I told them what I intended. When I felt the calmness sweep over me I knew I had their blessing. I bought a rundown campervan, left my home and my old life behind. My task began three weeks later.

Part Two

I kept track of the Cerlo family through news feeds. There were five lives to be taken. I

would start with their youngest son, a child like my daughter. The boy was attending one of the luxury schools built for the rich and powerful. I studied the school for two weeks through the scope of my rifle. I saw their comings and goings. At eight years old the boy was two years older than my daughter. He had his mother's eyes but already his father's arrogance and evil nature. I watched him bullying and hurting the smaller children, laughing as they cried.

I knew on this day the boy would be collected by his parents. It was his eighth birthday according to his birth certificate. I waited in the treeline surrounded by beautiful flowers. The school came to life as the pupils began spilling out the doors. I looked to my left, waiting for the white limousine. I only waited a minute before it turned onto the long driveway. I looked to my right to see the boy standing alone, waiting for the car to stop beside him.

The riflescope gave me a clear picture of the boy smiling as his parents got out of the car. I waited and released a breath I did not know I was holding. Doubt scratched at the back of my mind. Does the boy deserve to die? Did my daughter? I watched as the boy was scooped up by his father, both of them laughing and smiling.

I pulled the trigger. The shot was louder than I expected and was soon replaced by a woman screaming. I knew that sound well. I broke down the rifle and placed it in my backpack. I walked away from the sound of a mother losing her child and the scream of the sirens getting closer.

I listened to the news on the radio. They used words such as horror, tragedy and innocent life. It was like hearing of my loss all over again, almost as if the news reader picked up and read the same sheet of paper they had used all those years ago.

I began planning the next part of my task. I knew who my next targets were, and where they would be. I was lucky when it came to my next targets. The funeral for the child was big news. I went to the cemetery and spent an hour looking for a place to set up my rifle. I found a spot with an open view of the graves.

While I scanned the area through my scope a car approached. Two men emerged and moved away from me down a path between the gravestones. I tracked them through my scope, practicing as if they were my targets, judging distance and space. It was not until they turned around and I saw the faces look towards me that I realised my luck.

The two men facing me were the brothers of the leader of the Cerlo family, second and third in the power chain. I looked around and saw only a lonely man sitting by an old gravestone. I decided to push my advantage. I focused my scope and watched as they surveyed the area. They came to the end of a row and stopped to talk. My scope was pointed at the back of a head and my target faced his brother. I pulled the trigger.

I saw the puff of blood as my bullet entered the back of his head, and a second one as it struck his brother in the face. I moved my scope down to check the bodies, the closer target was dead, half of his face missing. The second man was still twitching and lay away from me. I focused at a spot under his chin. I pulled the trigger then waited for a second. There were no screams or people running away, just a lonely old man sitting by a grave. I broke down my rifle and moved slowly and left the cemetery.

Part Three

The good fortune I had at the cemetery changed my plan significantly. I had two targets left but now they would be harder to get. I had time on my side and this task would need patience.

I watched the news and checked the internet, all reporters had the same viewpoint, an attack from a rival. The cops did not confirm or deny the rumour. The reports included updates of extra security around the family. I did nothing more for a month. The news reported on murders of people known to other crime families, they implied retaliation. Then the murdering stopped, an agreement had been reached allowing the people to settle back into their relaxed, overconfident ways.

Another two weeks passed before I got my chance to act. I watched high-price shops. The woman I was waiting on liked expensive things. It was only a matter of time before she turned up. But the question was how many men she would have with her?

The woman began visiting a jewellers, grieving costs a lot if you can afford it. After the third time I saw her I decided it was a pattern and planned to act on her next visit. The shop was on a side-street with no place to set up my rifle with confidence. I decided to use a different weapon. I saw her car arrive and like the other times she was dressed in black with only one man with her for protection.

They walked passed my truck in silence without looking my way. They moved three yards closer to the back of my truck as I slid from the driver seat. The man did not have time to turn on me. I brought up my shotgun, aiming low. I fired first at the woman and then at the man. They both went down hard. I stepped over the man, closer to the woman. She looked up through shocked tears. I pumped a new shell into a chamber, pointed the barrel at her head and fired.

The chaos had exploded as soon as I fired the first shot, people screamed and ran. I used the commotion to get back to my truck and leave. I realised my truck would be found easily so I dumped it and placed my weapons in a bag. I began planning for my final task.

Another two months before I could act. The Cerlo family had fallen apart, leaving my final

target without enough power to protect his business and no protection for himself. I watched him for two days, this broken man sat in his huge garden by his massive swimming pool. He was alone. I climbed the wall, walked towards him, my gun held out in front of me. I shot him in the leg, so he could not run.

My family are now free of this darkness. I stood facing him as he cursed me, hatred in his eyes. I pointed the gun at his stomach and fired until the gun clicked. I looked down at what was left of him and pushed the button releasing the magazine. I placed a single bullet into the clip, cocked it and placed it under my chin.

I thought of my family and pulled the trigger. >>**JL**