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## 1. SIX FEET UNDER

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The angel was in her dream again; however, this time her steel face was that of an old and angry man. The eyes were filled with hate, and the voice with the sound of vengeance<sup>1</sup>.

But it was just a dream.

Except this dream seemed to be so much more real than any other. This dream felt cold. This dream was dark. This dream was hard against her back and head.

No, she did not like this dream; so she forced her eyes open.


Normally, her room was light, even at night, because for many years now, she had hated being in places where she could not see. Yet tonight the room was filled with an impenetrable<sup>2</sup> darkness, and she felt a sudden stab of fear.

She quickly tried to move her arm to reach the lamp on the bedside cabinet, but instead her elbow banged<sup>3</sup> against something hard, and she cried out.

Confused, she tried to sit up, but this time her head struck<sup>4</sup> something.

Panic spread over her. The type of panic you feel when you wake in the middle of the night, sweat covering your body, your heart beating, your mind still half-convinced that the monster of the nightmare is a reality.

She kicked her legs, but they too seemed to be trapped. Only then did she begin to form an image in her mind of where she was.

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- 1 **vengeance** - *bosszú*
  - 2 **impenetrable** - *áthatolhatatlan*
  - 3 **to bang against sth.** - *nekimegy vminek*
  - 4 **to strike sth.** - *beleüt vmibe*

An image of a small space, enclosed on all sides, virtually<sup>1</sup> no bigger than the length<sup>2</sup> and width<sup>3</sup> of a person.

The image of a coffin<sup>4</sup>.

The sound that escaped from her lips was horrendous<sup>5</sup> to hear. It did not sound like a woman at all. It sounded like a wounded<sup>6</sup> animal. It sounded like fear itself.

“Help me!” she screamed, her voice muted by the small space. “For God's sake, somebody help me! Help me! There's been a mistake! Get me out of here! Get me the hell out of here!”

After several minutes of screaming and kicking and trying to hit her hands against the wood, she stopped. Slowly she managed to regain some control of herself, to stop the tears that were falling down her face, to slow her breathing and to start thinking.

The first thing she did was check her clothes. They seemed to be the same suit and blouse that she had been wearing when she left the restaurant.

The restaurant. Was that the last thing she could remember? No, she could remember walking home through the city of Newcastle.

So what had happened? An accident?

Despite her fear she was still an intelligent woman. No, there had been no accident. At least, not of the physical kind. The cut on her head was the only part of her that hurt right now.

Right now? What time was it right now?

Her watch, it had luminous hands<sup>7</sup>! If she could...

But before she moved her arm, she knew that the watch was not there. For more than ten years she had worn that watch. Now its very absence<sup>8</sup> made her begin sobbing again.

1 **virtually** - *gyakorlatilag*

2 **length** - *hossz*

3 **width** - *szélesség*

4 **coffin** - *koporsó*

5 **horrendous** - *iszonyú*

6 **wounded** - *sebesült*

7 **luminous hands** - *világító számlap*

8 **its very absence** - *nagyon hiányzik a jelenléte*

“Damn it, Jean!” she told herself. “Pull yourself together!<sup>1</sup> You can get out of this. Think!”

Her watch was gone. That could only mean one thing.

That someone had placed her in this coffin in spite of the fact<sup>2</sup> they knew she was still alive.

Her heart began to race<sup>3</sup> again, but this time it was anger that drove it. “You cowards!” she screamed.

Her phone? No, if they had taken her watch, they would have certainly taken that.

So she was alone.

Her family would never know what had happened to her, though they would be full of the suspicions<sup>4</sup> that had tormented them for years. It was the fear of every judge’s family: the fear that one day a criminal would take revenge<sup>5</sup> upon the person who had delivered their justice.

In the dark she began to cry again, and this time she made no attempt to stop herself.

“Judge Grey?” a quiet voice whispered. “Can you hear me?”

Judge Jean Grey jumped in shock, her head banging against the wood once more. The voice was quiet and muted, but it seemed to be very near to her. “Who is that? Where are you?” she shouted.

“Judge Grey, if you can hear me, you have to find the walkie-talkie. Can you do that? Can you reach down and find it? Somewhere near to your right leg.”

The judge’s right hand quickly searched in the dark and found something. It was a thick plastic square, and she could feel large buttons on it.

“Press the first button if you want to speak.”

1 **to pull oneself together** - összeszedi magát

2 **in spite of the fact** - a tény ellenére

3 **to race** - hevesen ver

4 **suspicion** - gyanú, bizalmatlanság

5 **to take revenge upon sb.** - bosszút áll vkin

For a moment the judge waited. She tried to compose<sup>1</sup> herself, to remove the fear and tears from her voice. When she finally pushed the button, it was the voice of the famous crown-court<sup>2</sup> judge that spoke. The judge who had brought to justice more criminals than any other in the north of England. The judge who was famous for her tough sentences and iron rulings<sup>3</sup>. “Listen to me. Listen very carefully. I don't know who you are. I don't know why you are doing this. I only know that you are making a very big mistake. Do you really believe that you will not be found? I'm a crown-court judge. Someone will have seen you take me. Someone will be looking for you even now. Let the authorities know where I am, and I'll call for them<sup>4</sup> to be lenient<sup>5</sup>. Fail to alert them, and I'll make sure you suffer for this.”

There was a long silence; then the quiet voice spoke again.

“You don't like the dark, do you? You don't like small dark places?”

It was horrible to hear her phobia on the lips of this man, but she was determined to be strong. “What do you want? Money? I have money, but the only way you can get it is to get me out of here now. You may have my wallet, but I'll never tell you the pin code.”

“9784,” the voice said quietly. “I know all of your secrets, Judge Grey. I know it all. I know where you hide the cigarettes that you tell your husband you don't smoke. I even know why you're scared of the dark, but I want to hear you say it.”

The judge's blood turned to ice. This was not the voice of a petty criminal<sup>6</sup>. This was the voice of a madman<sup>7</sup>. “Look, you

- 1 **to compose oneself** - összekapja magát
- 2 **crown court** - koronabíróság
- 3 **ruling** - ítélet
- 4 **to call for sb. to do sth.** - felszólít vkit, hogy csináljon vmit
- 5 **lenient** - elnéző
- 6 **petty criminal** - pitiáner bűnöző
- 7 **madman** -őrült