

THE FAMOUS PLACE

THRILLER

It must have been family lunch as it was the ritual on every Sunday. But an event aroused my curiosity... This is how it began.

It was on Sunday, I arrived at my sister's house. When I rang the bell, nobody opened the door for me. After three times, I entered from the backyard. I saw my brother-in-law alone inside the house, without Annie, my sister and my nieces. So, I hid next to the wall. When I turned around, as we were in autumn, there were fallen leaves except on one place. It was very strange because I know my sister's garden is always neat but not that time. Thus, I decided that I would come back the next day but not alone.

The next day, I came back to my sister's home with her best friend, Peter. He hadn't heard from Annie either. As I explained to him what I had seen day before, he wanted to come back with me because my sister's husband, Jack, had never inspired him with confidence; that what he said.

So, we arrived and we rang the bell. This time, Jack opened the door, he looked drunk and he gazed at us. I greeted him and asked him about the unexplained absence of Annie and my nieces. He answered in bafflement that Annie had gone to her mother because of a huge row with him. I found it was inconsistent because when she had had a row with him, she'd come to me or she'd call me but not my mother 'cause she didn't want to annoy her.

He gushed and he gave us a pretext to close the door. Then, we decided to go home. Peter returned to his car and I returned to mine too. Peter left but I didn't want to leave without news from my sister. Thus, I left of my car and I went to the place where I had hidden the previous day. Then, I watched Jack who was putting fallen leaves on the famous place. Suddenly, Jack's phone rang. He picked up the phone and I stayed quietly to listen the conversation:

- Hello Jerry! I'm feeling bad.
- ...
- Well, I drank all night.
- ...
- You're going to consider me as a crazy man but I've heard some voices since I did what you know...
- ...
- I think it's my children but you and I know what happened to them.
- ...
- Yes, you're right. It's just a trick. I couldn't see or hear them anymore.

This call said a lot about the absence of Annie and her children but I didn't know exactly what had happened to them.

Now, I knew Jack was certainly dangerous. I decided to go home.

For one week, we spied on Jack, with Peter, taking turns. We observed his behavior and realized he never left the house except every day from 6 to 8 pm. So, one day, when he left the house at 6, we decided to enter it. We found Annie's handbag and her phone but it was strange 'cause she never forgets them. Something more scheming: there were Annie's and the children's shoes and the mess in the house (Annie was a fussy woman!) but they were obviously not at home. Peter went upstairs and I went out. I'd had enough of it so, I called the police. While waiting, I examined the garden and there was a spade. So, I used it and I dug a hole on the famous place. But it was at that moment Jack arrived behind me. I was terrified

and he was furious! The moment passed very fast. He caught me and tied me to a tree. I thought I would be saved by Peter because he had gone downstairs and had arrived in the garden. I shouted "Help me Peter! He's dangerous! It's him! He's crazy!". But he did nothing, he just looked at Jack and he told him "Fortunately I called you! She could have had us discovered". I was shocked! Peter was Jack's accomplice! They told me as they were digging a hole in the ground "You'll end up like them!" Then, I understood my family was buried under this famous place. I was crying and shouting. I hoped the police would arrive quickly!... I was praying when I found myself being grabbed by Jack and Peter. I was desperate. I was already in the hole when I saw the police! They arrived and they started handcuffing Peter and Jack, but Jack was very unforeseeable: he took one of the police officers' gun and he shot himself in the head...

I'd lost my sister, my little lovely nieces and my brother-in-law...And I didn't know why he had done all that.

Assia Bouznad