

Tales of Darkness Drive

The Fixer & Darkmoor House

He'd had many names over the centuries, but he always thought of himself as The Fixer or The Problem Solver. He was the one that came along when you thought it was so dire it was do or die; he was always watching, always ready, and he knew how to solve a problem.

His solutions were often..... Extreme. He thought that word befitted it best, or maybe extreme circumstances called for extreme solutions?

His current presentation pleased him greatly. He twirled his cane before throwing it in the air and deftly catching it. He put on a smile, curling his lips upward to give his face an expression of friendly benevolence.

The smile faded, his face hardened and lengthened, and his eyes grew cold and dark. The first problem to solve was also his own, but to solve it would mean fixing things for someone else, so it was a win-win.

A nasty man with a sharp tongue and ready fists awaited him in the tall, imposing house at the end of Darkness Drive, a man who beat his wife and terrorised his children.

A man who'd stolen his mirror.

He'd seen it. Hanging in the large back room some would call a drawing room, but even without it being in his possession, it showed him what took place in the house.

It showed him pictures of now and images of the future.

He knew that without his intervention, the woman would die a horrible death at the hands of her violent husband.

He also knew that the children would bear witness. They would be destroyed beyond repair, and after growing up in care, they faced a future of criminality, homelessness, and eventually early deaths. It was in his power to change this and offer them a future they could build for themselves.

He glanced up at the tall, imposing house situated at the very far end of Darkness Drive. It was bigger than most, with a large, gated entrance that led to a gravel drive.

Resting his head against the front door, his acutely tuned ears could hear what was happening within the house. The desperate sobbing of small children made him narrow his eyes; he could see them huddled under the sheets in their room, clutching one another for comfort.

There were the sounds of muffled blows hitting soft flesh and the repressed cries of the person on the other end of them. His lips pursed in disgust as he heard the foul things that the man was saying as he beat her.

Pulling away from the door, he took a moment to make sure his face was settled into a neutral expression before raising his cane and rapping firmly on the wooden surface.

He heard the footsteps as they came closer—heavy, male footsteps that were purposeful and annoyed at the interruption. He thought he could sense an underlying fear of being caught out, which was overlaid by curiosity as to who was banging on his door this late at night.

The door swung open, the soft light from the hall illuminating a short, stocky man with a square head that looked slightly too large for his body. His face was flushed, and occasionally his eyes darted back into the house.

He'd already settled on his game plan, playing to man's greed and his need to feel stronger and better than anyone else.

"Hello, Mr. Gregson, I believe you have a mirror for sale; I would be most interested in purchasing it from you if the price is right."

He leaned on his cane and crumpled his face, appearing innocent, vulnerable, and open to exploitation. The man narrowed his eyes, taking it all in and coming to the conclusion that he was supposed to.

Rubbing his hands together, he stood back and pulled the front door wider.

"You'd better come in and see the goods then," he said as the elderly man slowly and painfully shuffled into the house.

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SIX MONTHS LATER

Number One Salesman

Shaun examined his reflection in the mirror appreciatively. His dark hair was shot through with grey, which he felt added a respectable dignity to his boyish good looks.

He had a face that was square and evenly proportioned. His blue eyes, thankfully, were not a window into his soul, but twinkled with a good humour he didn't often have unless it served a purpose for him.

He practised his slow, sexy smile and then flashed the one he thought made him look friendly and approachable.

Yes, both were working as they should be, he thought.

You see, Shaun was one of those people who used what he could to get what he wanted from others. But he was also one of those people who didn't like to give anything back. As a young child, he'd learned the value of using his assets to get his own way, and his overindulgent mother had endorsed it. An only child of a woman who'd been left by the handsome man who'd got her pregnant and then vanished. He had been spoiled and feted all his life.

Shaun was an estate agent for a medium sized company in town. His basic wage was topped up by commissions on the properties he sold, and due to his cunning and willingness to dress up the truth, he was currently their number one salesman.

Running his fingers through his hair and taking one last look at himself, he rolled his shoulders and returned to the main office. His desk was in prime position at the front of the room, where it could be seen by anyone looking into the window.

Throwing a quick, disparaging glance at Brett, who was sitting in the least prime position at the back of the room, he strode confidently to his own desk.

Shaun tended to have two folders for properties on his books. One contained the decent, value-for-money properties, and the others were the hard-to-shift properties that he tried to unload on those who he thought were more susceptible (read gullible, thought Shaun).

His first customers of the day were an older couple looking to downsize who were able to buy outright without the need for a mortgage.

For them, Shaun used his decent properties. Smelling a decent commission, he was charming, friendly, and full of compliments.

During the day, Shaun met with various customers at his desk, and then the afternoon was spent carrying out viewings. The older couple he'd seen first thing were delighted with the two-bedroom cottage he'd earmarked for them and immediately made an offer at the asking price.

Following them, he took an anxious couple and their young toddler around one of his hard to shifts. At first glance, it looked like a nice place, but he always timed viewings to avoid potential customers finding out about the gangs of local youths who'd started hanging around that street after the schools kicked them out.

The current owners, having had enough of it themselves, were selling up at a lower than usual price for a quick sale. They'd told Shaun to be honest with viewers, but of course he wasn't intending to share anything negative that might affect a sale.

The anxious, young parents were immediately impressed by how close to the local schools and park the property was. How big the bedrooms were and the lovely garden for their son to play in.

Although it was left to them to discuss it and come back to him if interested, he already knew he'd made a sale. He mentally added up his commission and resisted the urge to greedily rub his hands together.