

Family First

by D. Joseph Hetzer

I stormed into Robert's office. Across from me, sat the man who had ruined my life. After being in financial trouble, my wife Anne and I were approached by this man. He had offered to alleviate our debt, in return for a few small favors. However, his favors quickly escalated; soon I became a part of illegal transactions and under-the-table trading. But I would put up with this no longer. I sold the few assets my family owned and paid this man the remainder of the money.

I slammed down the envelope containing his money on the desk. He looked up at me with a quizzical expression on his face. "Listen, you have taken all that I have. You promised my family security, and all you've done is make things worse. Now here is the rest of the money. I absolutely will not do anything else for you." I explained. He opened the envelope and smiled.

"What makes you think you can walk out of our little arrangement?" He asked. His face adopted a false look of concern and his voice became filled with the utmost lack of sincerity that made my blood boil. "This isn't just about you, think of your family Jack." He said. Thoughts of my faithful wife Anne shot through my mind. My daughters Rose and Lizzy needed my protection; I had to be there for them. This man who has already taken my life's work was now prepared to threaten my family; this needed to end.

"You stay the hell away from my family!" I stammered. Rage coursed through my veins like a potent poison. I reached my trembling hands across his ostentatious desk and grabbed him by his collar. I could smell the scent of expensive alcohol on his breath. That stupid look was gone from his face, replaced with a look of worry.

I stared into his cold eyes, searching his soul for a reason to spare this villain. His icy blue eyes were once filled with confidence, but now they were filled with uncertainty; that same

feeling of insecurity that my family now felt because of him and his unquenchable greed. "Don't do this Jack. You are better than this." He pleaded.

My lips curled, "Maybe I am, but you're not." I spat. I lifted up his delicate frame and threw him back against the wall of his office. I watched as his head bounced off the decorative brick and his body slumped down to the ground. I staggered over to him, and crouched down to where his body lay limp. Lifting him up by his shirt, I drew my fist back and went to work.

When I had finished, my fists were bloody and his was face unrecognizable. I wiped the sweat from my forehead on my patched suit. I turned my head and noticed he had a mirror on his desk. The arrogant prick had a mirror on his desk. I looked at my reflection and pondered my actions. Now I searched my own soul for affirmation for what I had done. It was over now; he would never bother my family again. No one would look for him; his fellow illegal traders would want no part of an investigation. This man had no friends; no one on earth cared for him.

Now, I smiled to my family as we ate dinner. His body, resting firmly under the house, would be our foundation for a new start. A new beginning was given to us, and we will not let it go.

