

confidently, "Family's can't keep secrets from each other. It was father who knew what was going on. In fact, that's how I found out. But he wanted it kept a secret to protect his name, or maybe your's. Anyway, now that father's dead, I don't have to keep quiet anymore."

Goodwin's face took on a pained expression, as though he had just been punched in the stomach.

"What about Angela?" he said. "She's gone. Can't you leave her alone?"

"Why should I?"

Goodwin became frightened and silent.

"She may be gone, but your guilt isn't" X continued, "But don't worry. As long as I don't talk, it will stay a secret. That is as long as I get what I want."

"But it was five years ago. No one even remembers it anymore."

"Oh, they will once they hear the whole story."

Goodwin looked disgusted, "I don't care who you tell. No one would believe you anyway."

"Oh yes they would. I'll tell the world about it. I'll put it in the Daily Cleaner!" X saw that this has no effect on his brother and so, began in another place.

"I wonder what Mum would think if I told her a little story about her daughter Angela and -"

"Her daughter's gone. Her husband's dead. Isn't that enough. Do want to kill her, too?"

X said nothing.

"OK", Goodwin spoke with revulsion. "I guess I had forgotten what you were like. I don't want the money. I won't take a cent of the inheritance. You take it all. See if it can change you from Satan to God!"

X laughed, "Strange lives are coming, strange lives are here to stay. Vaild again, in case you didn't know."

At that moment, Mrs. Walton again entered the room, and the conversation stopped.

Mrs. Walton smiled, "Talking about old times, boys? It's so fun to talk about old times, isn't it. I remember when your father and I were first married and Xavier was born. Rex bought a camera, and he didn't make much and it was quite a luxury for us at the time, and he said he wanted to take pictures of me and the baby, and that he'd buy a photo album and we'd start a collection of family pictures. Rex loved us so much. So very much. But he just couldn't seem to show it. Or maybe he just didn't understand you boys and so he didn't know what to say. But he loved us so much. He was a good man. The best man."

"He tried, anyway, Mum." Goodwin added.

"So what," X smirked.

"And he was a hard working man," Goodwin continued. "And just for us, too. He wanted to make life better for his family than it had been for him. And look what he's left us!" Goodwin glanced around the room. "And I guess he had it pretty rough when he was young, too."

"He had it rough!" X sneered, "What about me! I had it rougher than he ever did!"

"I don't think so, X -"

"What do you know! Have you ever been in Saint John? NO! You don't know anything about it."

"But we loved you, Xavier." Mrs. Walton spoke up, "And your father was a good man. He really was."

Xavier's eyes were angry and flashing, "Good man! He was a criminal!"

Mrs. Walton was growing upset, "X, don't say that!"

"He was! I was only fifteen and he put me in the mental asylum. That dungeon in Saint John. And you went along with it!"

Goodwin sighed, "Not again. Every time you come home we always hear the same story about your mental troubles and Saint John. Can't you forget?"

"There was nothing the matter with me! I wasn't crazy! Just because I got angry and started throwing things around. What do you expect! If anyone wanted to get Dad's attention or have him listen to them at all, you had to yell and shout! Everything had to be

his way. What did you expect me to do!"

Mrs. Walton was anguished, "Oh, Xavier -"

"And when I did stand up, and he couldn't put me down, he decided I had to be put away! And you went along with him!"

"Oh, Xavier. You were sick. You needed help. What could I do!"

"You're as much a criminal as he was!"

At this, Goodwin finally spoke up, "X. It's all in the past. Forget it. You were responsible for going to Saint John yourself. Your actions proved you were crazy."

"My actions! What about your actions? Would you like me to tell Mum what you're guilty of?"

Mrs. Walton looked puzzled, "Guilty?"

"X, you're getting what you want! Leave Mum out of this."

Xavier was becoming angrier, "This whole family has always been against me. No wonder I always had so many problems. You're all against me! You're criminals! And you'll both get what's coming to I'll see to that. I'm going to tell Mum your secret just so she can see what kind of person you are, Goodwin!"

Mrs. Walton spoke, now almost to herself, "Angela?"

Xavier continued, "She's as much dirt as the rest of you. Why does she deserve to be spared?"

"Angela. My poor, lonely daughter. Always so alone..." Mrs. Walton mumbled.

"Angela and you and your secret. The secret that must have shadowed you all these years. The secret that drove her away from her home and everything she knew."

"Poor Angela. And she was only seventeen..."

Suddenly Goodwin shouted in pain, "You don't want the money. You just want to punish us!"

Xavier, now almost violent, turned to his mother and cried, "Angela and Goodwin made love!"

The room seemed to fall apart around them.

"Xavier, are you Satan!" Goodwin's voice was tortured.

X turned on him, "And you think you're as good as Christ. I wonder if Christ ever made love to Mary. Could she have been as good as Angela. Bodies sweating. His breath mingling with her gasps of sensation. His white sperm making her feel warm and wet inside," Xavier smiled triumphantly, "And she was good too, wasn't she, Goodwin. Christ making love to Mary just like you making love to your sister."

The room fell into a hushed silence. Goodwin glanced ashamedly at his mother. A wild, frightened look had come into Mrs. Walton's eyes. She grasped for a knife lying beside a plate of squares on the coffee table, and lunged at Xavier, trying to stab him.

The two men grabbed at her, finally subduing the women and forcing her back into her chair, where she sank, crushed. Mumbling to herself, the old woman spoke in a low, soothing voice:

"Come now you two. Xavier. Goodwin. Lets say our prayers now. Come on, say them with me. 'Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. God bless Mummy, Daddy...'"

Xavier laughed for an instant, then turned to leave, saying, "She's obviously gone crazy. I'll call the hospital. We can't keep her here."

Goodwin stood, silently staring at the coffin, and gave only a murmured response, "And in the end, it is the worker who pays. And his children murder to sicken his days."

"Quoting Vaild! I knew you'd come around." X replied, "I heard that music stops mental cases from becoming violent. I'll turn on some music before I go." He walked to the corner, turned on the stereo and then left.

Quietly, the sweet flow of melody washed the living room, the words whispering kindly:

Nothing you can do can not be done,
Nothing you can sing can not be sung,
Nothing you can make can not be made,
No one you can save can not be saved.

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Photo by Steve Patricien

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