

The Man in the High Castle

by Jason Ronin,

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Dedicated to those who find justice an empty word.

Life had certainly dealt me a shit hand so mama tell your children not to do what I was about to do. When I ponder on my reason for being and the reasons that guided me to this hellish path, wading in the blood of the unrighteous, I hold onto the only thing that stops my decent into madness, a photo pinned to the back of the sunshade in my car. The picture shows a dusky haired woman of twenty-eight with a glint of amusement in her eyes and skin as fresh as a morning shower. She has one arm round a seven-year-old boy who is smiling and holding up a teddy bear he has just won at the last fairground he would ever attend. One month later they both died. Victims of a world gone mad, and did they receive any Justice? That's a joke isn't it, justice! My wife and child murdered in a drive by

shooting, wrong place and wrong time. The shooters, two sixteen year old scroats in a stolen car and the system handed them six months in one of her Majesty's holiday camps, what price innocence? What price life?

My descent into the mire of social inbreeds and the garbage of society began on February 10th in the year of the almighty may or may not be there 2000, forever burnt into my brain for it was the day Janice and Dillon's blood spilt onto the streets of Lambeth, outside Kennington tube station to be precise. I was serving with 22 S.A.S at the time based in Hereford with the training cadre. My world was rocked to pieces by this news. In a fog of depression, I attended the funeral, afterwards, while sorting through their stuff the fog lifted. Clarity hit me with all the power of the tube train they would have taken smashing through the wall at the end of the line. I had the power and where with all to give them justice where my country could not, for as the fog lifted and clarity hit me I was left with a deep seated anger boiling in the pit of my stomach, contained like the powers of hades about to be unleashed. I am the pale horse and death is about to become my friend. I had enough money put away so I bought myself out and set on my path for justice. Know thy enemy. Through certain friendly sources, I found out where the two wanna be gang bangers lived. Two weeks before their release from the holiday camp I had created a new legend with passport, credit cards, and all the paper work that helps create a life, again through various means. I felt like a secret agent about to embark on a mission to a foreign land and in a way, I was that man. The streets of Elephant and castle, the lands of the maisonette and blocks of flats, became jungle land to me, and I immersed myself in the beat of this land. I rented a maisonette adjacent a boarded up pub called the *Land of the Hand* and directly across a communal green from where the two killers, Tony and Earl Desmond, called home. I affected the habits of the grey man, seen but never noticed. My wardrobe was kitted out from various charity shops and I took to wearing glasses also to add effect I took to carrying a book everywhere. To complete the look I walked with a limp and stooped my body to make me appear smaller than I actually was. When I finally entered my new home, I was Brian Jones, unemployed bookworm, originally from Greys in Essex, and no threat to anyone. I was in bandit country and the recon had started. My first S.A.S instructor had told me patience kills... kills your enemy, and I could be as patient as a spider.

I was patient when they arrived home after only three months inside, British justice at its best; you behave we will let you out half way through your sentence, what a fucking joke it all is! Sitting on a chair outside I was patient while the backslapping and yo, ma bro init rituals occurred. There must have been around a hundred youths, male and female that gathered outside their home upon their arrival, the track suited bling bling generation. Why is it, the youth of our land try and emulate the American street gangs, from the clothes down to the complicated hand signs, you ain't no 18th street, bloods and Crip wanna be Mara salvatrucha dick heads. What a bunch of wankers, albeit dangerous wankers, if they ever came across one of the American street gangs, the brown stuff would hit the seat of their pants. My patients stayed with me for two more years. I watched them come of age, in their wanna be gangster world. They had developed a rep and had come under the purview of Shaquille „Shaka“ Darue, local drug dealer and blagger. He

had a fearsome reputation and had pretty much gotten south of the Thames sewn up. They went to work for him as dealers and runners; Darue moved out Momma Desmond and put her in a big house in Kensington so her boys could deal from the Maisonette. Five Oh never bothered the boys so no doubt palms had been greased. The partys the boys always seemed to have ceased once the dealing started and they walked round the estate like they owned it, they swapped tracksuits for Armani suits and the plated bling became real. A week after their eighteenth birthday the demise of the Despond's began.

Darkness fell on the south London estate and a demon was abroad, death moved in shadows as I made my way to the rear of their maisonette, three windows could be opened. I had checked on previous occasions and never found them open, the curtains always closed day and night. I was dressed in black jogging bottoms and a black hooded top; I had walked the estate for an hour checking the location of all the usual players before approaching the rear of the domicile. I had hung back in the shadows, a bottle of cider in my hand in case I needed to play act. Two years of patience was about to end tonight, Justice thy will be done.

Ok to work, after a final check of the area I made my way to the rear and superglued the windows and to be on the safe side I set up several trip wires corresponding to where someone could run if they made it out of the windows.

Half an hour later I had made my way to the front and affected the attitude of a drunk. Plonking myself down on a bench directly in front of the target home, mouthing off drunkenly, and taking sips from my cider bottle I waited. I did not have long; two pimp walking ghetto garbage heads approached the front door. Time to put on a show.

„Hey Brah, ya got any spare glitz“ I giggled to myself at the language coming from my lips, „Got me a sweet deal wiv a liddle mama from Romford, gonna bang the granny outa her,“ I put the bottle to my mouth and my elbow slipped off my knee spilling some of the cider on me, good effect I thought.

„sheeit, yuse so loaded ya couldn't bang yer own granny, granddad innit,“ they both creased up laughing at this as one of them knocked on the door. They continued to laugh as the door open spilling light into the night.

„What the fucks up wid you two“ a voice I recognised as Earl's said.

They parted to show Earl the old drunk on the bench. His brow creased and he came out holding a baseball bat.

„Fuck off ya lush“ he raised the bat threateningly. I just looked at him.

„Got any glitz Earl“ this time my voice was normal and my eyes stared into his as I stood up. Outside I was an ocean of calm but inside the adrenaline was flowing as it always did in these situations. Fight, flight or freeze the mix was called and I was trained to take these feelings and use them as a weapon, these boys are gonna find out how finely tuned that weapon was.

Earl froze for a second; just a second was all I needed. I quickly danced forward and kicked the side of his knee while ripping the bat from his hand, he cried out in pain and surprise as he went down. Before the two diddy boppers could react, with my free hand I whipped out a Glock 17 from under my top and pointed it at them.

Hello boys“

I threw the bat away and dragged Earl to his feet. I quickly pushed all three into the Maisonette, Tony was at the bottom of the stairs, and I ushered the four of them into the living room, kicking and cursing them to keep them off balance.

„Have a seat boys“ I pushed earl onto a plush leather seat and the others slumped onto the leather corner piece. Looking round the room I whistled softly, the seating must have cost a couple of thousand, they had a giant cinema TV and state of the art stereo equipment, deep carpeting covered the floor and the walls decorated with expensive looking wall paper.

„Business been good for Momma Desmonds boys“

„Who the fuck is you, you’re makin a big mistake mon.“ Earl had switched to talking with a Jamaican accent. I laughed and slapped him across the face, hard enough to make his memories rattle.

„We not afeered o’ you boy“ Tony added his little fake Jamaican point to the conversation.

„Oh please boys don’t giv any of your fake wanna be king dread accents, you two were born in this home and the closest you been to Jamaica is smoking some of its finest home-grown while watching Cool runnings, Sanka ya dead.“ I jamaicanised the last three words of my sentence before putting a bullet between the eyes of one of the Pimp daddies. This got their attention. I had Tony tie up the remaining pimp daddie and drag him and his dead buddy into the kitchen. Back in the living room, I sat them down and talked gently to them.

„Now then, I know you are wondering what this is all about“ I paused for effect.

„I’m here because of the reason you spent six months in jail when you were sixteen“

They looked at each other then Earl dived for the window and tried to open it, Tony went for me, brave but foolish. I sidestepped and pistol-whipped him before crossing the room and grabbing the back of Earl’s shirt and pulling him back into his seat.

By the time the night was over, I had my Justice, obtained with the use of pliers, kitchen knife, hammer and finally two more bullets from my Glock. A search of the home I came up with their stash of drugs and fifty thousand of the queen’s folding paper. I left before first light and returned to being my old self. It did feel good and bad at the same time, the yin and yang of morals and morality, but the way was set. A way that led to this parked car, waiting for a man who had got away with hurting children. When I was young, I remember building a castle out of cardboard and placing a Knight on top of the highest tower, looking out at his imaginary land passing judgement on those below him, I had become that knight.

THE END, or is it.

