

PND

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12:29AM. Nothing has changed, but everything is different.

12:38AM. They're not screaming anymore, but their words echo throughout the deepest caverns of my mind.

12:48AM. The silence scares me. I wait patiently for the threat of the morning—sunlight changes everything—it brings with it all that I fear... life and the living. My secrets are kept at bay in the stillness of the night. Here, in the darkness, I am comforted by cold hands that whisper to me. I cannot hear what they say, but the way they wrap themselves around me is strangely familiar.

1:03AM. I hear the baby cry. It is a gentle calm before the storm. I turn to roll myself out of bed and realise that I am already standing over the cot. My feet are tingly and numb, as if I have been standing here for some time. I stroke the baby's soft skull ever so lightly, so as not to disturb the slumber that has befallen the precious bundle. A chill runs down my spine, a cold prickle in the air, so I pull the blankets up a little higher and lay a kiss upon the baby's ear. Somehow I drift back into bed and close my eyes, finally, to sleep.

4:12AM. I wake to his screams, but the bed beside me is empty. In a sleepy daze, cold hands guide me along the hallway. It is too dark to see properly. I head to the bathroom to splash some water on my face. I don't bother turning the light on—it will only blind me. Instead, I feel my way to the sink. Tripping on a shoe, my knee hits the side of the bathtub, my hand slipping from the edge into the lukewarm water. The shadows play tricks on me

because the water is not clear, resembling something akin to a deep, dark pond. Skimming the surface and cupping my hands together, I splash the water onto my face repeatedly. It tastes a little funny—probably the soap—but I walk out of the room refreshed and oblivious to what it was that brought me here in the first instance.

5:58AM. The alarm blears and he doesn't stop it. He always stops it. I place my hands over my ears—the sound so unbearable that I begin to scream. At first I scream into the pillow, then underneath. Tears mingle with snot as I stumble out of bed, hands pressed firmly over my ears. In the cot, the baby does not stir. He always stops it.

6:42AM. Suspect found in walk-in robe of master bedroom, visibly distressed, screaming and uncooperative. Nightgown appears to be soaked with blood. Slight lacerations and facial swelling; cause unknown. Suspect transported to hospital for immediate medical and psychiatric evaluations.

6:56AM. Infant found in cot in master bedroom—unresponsive. Blood on blanket and clothing; no visible wounds. Traces of material found in mouth. Possible asphyxiation.

7:22AM. Adult male body found in bathroom, identified as suspect's spouse. Victim's body submerged in bathtub, fully clothed. Multiple gashes across forehead. Bloodied bedside lamp retrieved from behind towel rack.

3:45PM. Suspect's initial medical report indicates violent struggle consistent with altercation in bathroom. Fibres from nightgown sent in for testing against material traces found in infant's mouth. Preliminary psychiatric diagnosis suggests PND (Post-Natal Depression) as cause of homicide. Suspect admitted to psychiatric ward for further observation, awaiting conclusive test results to indicate probability of murder charges.