EYES OF FURY

Mari Ann Caudill

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Rev 05/07/2022

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Cover Design: Mari Ann Caudill

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Eyes of Fury

Brittany's dress flutters in the mountainous breeze as four police cars drive toward her. She shivers as the wind collides with her body. There is blood on her hands and dress. A murderous act she cannot fathom as a blank slate is before her, and the memories of the last twenty-four hours have diminished.

The sheriff exits the vehicle, straightens his belt, and walks toward her. He spits tobacco onto the ground before making his way up the steps. Whispers erupt as questions she cannot answer. The sheriff handcuffs her, and two police escort her to the police car, where she watches the men hurrying back towards the cabin.

The coroner removes her husband's body to the hearse. The black bag hides his unrecognizable body. Brittany wipes the tears from her cheeks as the coroner closes the door on the hearse. Never would she have imagined that her vacation would turn into a mystery and only one of them would be returning home.

It's been six months since Brittany's husband was

murdered. She sits in silence in a psychiatric hospital alone with no visits in months. The nurse enters the room with the daily medication, and Brittany swallows the pills without force. She closes the sketchbook and climbs into bed. Dreams of only images that she can never forget.

Fear she feels, yet calmness she endures. Only a vivid memory circles through her mind daily. Her husband is inside the gas station a few miles from their cabin. She sees a man walking past the pumps as she closes her eyes to sleep. She will never forget the fury in his eyes: they haunt her each waking hour.

A detective arrives at the asylum to talk with Brittany about a sketch she drew previously about the man she had seen. He walks into her room with her doctor to see her rocking softly in her rocking chair, looking out the window. The detective kneels before her and places his hand on her knee, and she stops rocking.

Tears fill her eyes as she places her leathery hands on his. She has not spoken a word since her husband's death. She has undertaken a vow of silence as she endures the terrible nightmares that have taken hold of her nightly. She watches as the young detective pulls out a mugshot and her sketch, holding them side by side. The images are similar.

"Mom," said the detective, fighting back his tears.

"We have arrested the man you sketched. He confessed to dad's murder. You can come home now. It's over."

"I didn't do it?" She questions, looking down at her son. "You found the man who was at the gas station?"

"We have him, mom, the man you saw at the gas station. He confessed to everything. You didn't kill dad."

THE END

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