

INNOCENT

by

Olga Tremaine

olga_tremaine@yahoo.com

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FADE IN:

INT. DETECTIVE HOLT'S OFFICE - DAY

VERONICA, 50, dark shadows under her eyes, stares at pictures of young victims with gun wounds.

VERONICA (V.O.)
Every mother dreams that her baby
would grow up and one day become a
professor or a doctor or maybe a
politician...

She shakes her head no.

DETECTIVE HOLT's hand (50) brushes away the pictures and slaps another stack of photographs in front of her.

DETECTIVE HOLT
No?

She shakes her head.

Detective Holt's hand removes the pictures. Places one more in front of her - of ERIC, 20. She stares at it like a deer in the headlights.

VERONICA (V.O.)
... But what if he'd grow up to
become a murderer?

Her eyes well up with tears.

DETECTIVE HOLT
Is this your son?

She nods. Holt looks satisfied.

DETECTIVE HOLT
Had he ever been diagnosed with
depression or bipolar disorder?

VERONICA
No.

DETECTIVE HOLT
So, did you ever notice any type of
aggression, unusual outbursts or a
lack of empathy?

She shrugs.

DETECTIVE HOLT

Were you aware he bought four guns
within the last month?

VERONICA

No, that's not my boy. Eric is a
kind and compassionate person.

DETECTIVE HOLT

If it's not your boy, why is he in
hiding?

VERONICA

He's innocent.

Mr. Holt shoves the photographs of victims in her face.

DETECTIVE HOLT

Their families don't think so.

INT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Veronica knits in front of TV. It's a scarf, finishing
stitches. Her fingers move in a monotonous way, her face
looks disconnected from reality.

The front door creaks. Eric slips in. Veronica drops the
knitting needles as she sees him.

VERONICA

They're watching my house.

ERIC

Yes, but I had to tell you, I'm --

Her hand covers his mouth.

VERONICA

Shh. I already know.

He's stunned. She hugs him.

VERONICA

I was waiting for you. Here...

She wraps the scarf around his neck.

VERONICA

Keep this with you and remember I
will always love you. I don't
believe them. They will find the
real killer soon enough.

Detective Holt bangs the door open, his gun drawn.

DETECTIVE HOLT
Alright scum, your time is up.

Eric raises his hands, surrendering. Detective Holt puts handcuffs on his wrists, searches him for weapons.

VERONICA
He's innocent.

Detective Holt pushes Eric outside.

She runs to the window and watches her son being escorted on the street. She catches his glance.

She opens the window.

VERONICA
I'll visit you tomorrow!

Detective Holt pushes Eric into his car.

INT. DETECTIVE HOLT'S OFFICE - DAY

Veronica stares at the folded scarf lying in front of her.

It's quiet. She can hear her own heartbeat. Finally:

VERONICA
What happened to my Eric?

DETECTIVE HOLT
(not right away)
He asked us to give it to you.

She holds her breath.

VERONICA
You killed him.

DETECTIVE HOLT
Considering what he has done, I
think it was logical for him to
take his own life.

Tears run down her face. She picks up the scarf, looks at it lovingly.

VERONICA
My little boy...

DETECTIVE HOLT
Your little boy killed fifty
students on campus. Fifty! --

VERONICA
No! He's innocent! He's innocent...
He's innocent...

She rocks herself, holding the scarf and weeping. Detective Holt collects his papers on his desk. Clears his throat letting her know she needs to leave.

VERONICA
He really killed all these people?
That's impossible.

Detective Holt shrugs.

VERONICA
But how?

She stares at him in disbelief, then her gaze moves away aimlessly.

VERONICA
What did I do wrong? I never hit
him, never raised my voice. I gave
him nothing but love!

He looks at her somewhat with curiosity.

VERONICA
Eric, my little Eric. I read him
books every night, I sang him
lullabies, I gave him hugs. Lot's
of hugs!

Detective Holt looks serious.

VERONICA
Tell me, Mr. Holt, what did I do
wrong? When? He was the light of my
life, nothing less.

She moves closer to him.

VERONICA
He really liked these pancakes, you
know, very small. He'd say: Mom can
you make me a quarter sized mini
pan cakes with lot's of butter,
their edges are so crunchy.

(MORE)

You know, I'd make batter very thin
and make them very small. And make
the pan very hot first.

Her eyes well up again. She is not even talking to Halt
anymore, more like she is rambling to herself.

VERONICA

And the pan goes pshh... That means
it's time to pour the batter. You
can't take your eyes off the pan,
because they can burn very fast.
They are thin and small. And then
I'd say: Eric, come and eat your
pancakes, they are ready.

She starts sobbing.

VERONICA

Ready... Ready...

Detective Holt steps up and opens his arms in a hug. She
rests her wet from tears face on his big shoulder as her
mouth keeps rambling random words.

FADE OUT.