



**THE EVIL
WITHIN**

ELVIRA FRANKENHEIM

The Evil Within by Elvira Frankenheim

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Sibyll Kalff + Steffi

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The Evil Within

God sees everything, preached the unmarried Joshua Black with all passion to his church. This congregation consisted of 544 churchmen. Sad, but true, only some 30 worshipers found their way to his Sunday sermons at ten a.m. Pastor Black was asking himself ever so often: *And how many of these few people are nothing but hypocrites?* Who leads a double life? No one can read another's thoughts. God only knows what goes on inside of his creatures.

He was sure that Grandma Kowalski, an exceptional and spry 93 yearold, was a god-fearing and therefore did not belong to the fraction of hypocrites. For the preacher, hypocrites were all the people that pretended to be Christians, but whose deeds were not in accord with the Christian belief. They were like wolves in sheep's

clothing. A regular church or sermon and a necklace with a cross did not turn anyone into a Christian at all. For God, what humans do when no one is watching is more important. God is all-knowing, because God is omnipresent.

Pastor Joshua Black came from a bigger town, about 300 miles away from Springfield. There, he first studied three semesters of medicine, until he finally found God and the true belief due to God's mercy and thus became a dominie. Some one and a half years before, he moved into the village and overtook the church administrative office because his predecessor, Reverend Joe Weaver, went into retirement.

On Christmas more of the churchmen actually showed up and participated in the mass, but one was never ever seen there. As opposed to all other church visitors, his sins were only too obvious. Perry Hobbs moved to Springfield about six months ago and stole peace from the village. He was freshly divorced, and was accused of having nearly beaten his first wife to death. His recent partner, Janet Tanner, was constantly beaten. And not only one time. Everybody in the village knew that he also constantly abused his new partner's thirteen year old daughter. And no one in the village ever interfered or did anything to stop it... yet.

After the mass, the 39 years old servant of the Lord normally first went to the tavern to smear his dried out throat with two or three beers. He loved to hang out with Major Murphy and Sheriff Collister who loved to discuss criminal cases and fictitious crimestories. Collister always confessed to the pastor that, if he were not being a policeman, he would teach this damn swine of a man Hobbs a tough lesson. A very tough lesson, actually. But he only confessed that to the Reverend and the Major, and thus it was a shared secret.

Hobbs was nothing but a thorn in the conservative Major's flesh as well. This guy was not meant to belong into their honorable community. Additionally, Hobbs' stepdaughter was his daughter. This secret never became public either. But some years ago,

Murphy did actually confess to pastor Black. Janet Tanner was a woman that Major Murphy had an affair with, though he was married at this time.

Perry Hobbs had long not been seen for a morning pint. He had to drink his beer somewhere else, either at home or outside on a park bench, near the historical monument, when the innkeeper Oliver expelled him from the pub. Oliver was really fed up with that gadfy, that provoked the other guests, started fights and never payed his tippe shell. So far, he owed some 500 dollar to the clubowner for drinks and smashed up inventory. Hobbs, being out of work, could never think of reducing his debts. The enourmous consumption of alcohol and dissatisfaction with his life formed a vicious circle.

On a Monday morning, some five days before Christmas Eve, the number of inhabitants of the village was lowered by one. It was not Grandma Kowalski, the village elder, that left them. A pedestrian found Perry Hobbs lying dead in the creek.

Today, shortly after Christmas

I sit alone at my kitchen table and I've just finished my breakfast. I could take one more cup of coffee. There is a knock on my door. I hardly have ever any visitors so early. It will surely be Collister. I was well prepared for that occasion.

I open the door and he is the caller.

»May I?«

»Of course.«

We go to the kitchen and I offer a chair to my guest.

»I have the morning off today and I thought why not stop by the parson, the one who always breakfasts so very alone. And a good opportunity for some further discussion about crimes and criminalist sensory.«

»Coffee?« I ask.

Collister nods, dumb. I take a clean cup and pour hot coffee from the pot and join him at the table.

»It is about Hobbs, right?« I am not really asking that at all - I know that it is about Hobbs.

»Yes, exactly. Perry Hobbs died on Sunday, the 18th of December, at about midnight. Death by drowning.«

»A silly accident«, I say after a short silense.

»That's about the size of it. But concerning Hobbs' case, there is something more.«

»Like exactly what?«

The police officer pours some milk into his cup. I hand him a spoon.

»When the corpse was examined, they found ...«

»A lot alcohol«, is my fast explanation.

»This would explain an accident, a boozer falling in the creek. No, they found benzodiazepine.«

»Benzodia...?« I ask stupidly as I put my right hand into my pocket and play nervously with the little bottle.

Collister focuses on the cup of coffee with sharp eyes.

»It is a narcotic, an anesthetic. You can also find it to be psychotropic. Why did Hobbs take this drug? Who prescribed it for him? A doctor did not in any case. Where did this drug come from?«

»Well ... good question.«

»By the way, knockout drops contain benzodiazepine as well. And even

stranger, why didn't we find this pharmaceutical in his place?«

I deliberate on this and look around in the room.

»Well, we can possibly think that he first got drugged and then ...«

Collister takes a careful sip.

»Coffee tasting strange?«

»It must be the holy water«, is my answer by keeping a straight face.

»Our Mr. Preacher makes jokes! You should do that in church, and then more will attend the sermon!«

»The sermon is no comedy show and the Bible a serious matter. This holy book is the mirror, how dirty or clean you are in front of the eyes of God. Self delusion does not function in this case at all. The one who does not take the Bible seriously is stupid. It is all about where you will spend eternity - in heaven or hell.«

»I do not believe in any eternity at all, and I do not believe in any God either, not in any that lets evil happen. I do not believe in any God, that has people in the poor countries die from famine either.«

»A way bigger catastrophe is to stand by without acting. There is a study that makes clear that the money of the seven richest people in the world would be enough to abolish all hunger worldwide.«

»I do not believe in any God that has criminals go without punishment.«

»That is wrong!« I react with a sharp voice. »What goes around comes around. We reap what we sow. It is all simply a question of time.«

»Sorry, I am really not sure about that. I cannot believe in any God that I cannot see, but who never overlooks anything himself. For me and my

court, only proof counts. I do believe in right and wrong.«

»And in the fine fragile line between that«, I add.

Collister carefully takes another sip and says: »One who believes in God cannot deny the existence of the devil.«

»Of course not, the devil is real. He is called Satan, or Lucifer, and was long ago the most beautiful angel to be found in all of heaven. After the creation of Adam and Eve, God demanded that all the angels worship humans, but Satan refused to. The humans should worship him, not the other way around. Satan wanted to be like God. He wanted to climb up the skies and sit on the throne next to the Almighty. But because of his pride and, Satan became a fallen angel. Since then, he projects all his hatred, jealousy and pain onto us humans,

because he got driven out and alienated by us from his holiness, and happiness, while being amongst all angels in heaven.«

»Ho-hum«, Collister moaned, being rather tired and bored.

»Angels are spiritual beings. The devil is the father of all lies that attacks our mind. And all our thoughts get influenced by this, which triggers emotions, that again, have nothing but a bad influence on our deeds. Satan tries by all available means to make the human body the object of sin. One can definitely say that Satan is the spirit of deception. Bad people are obsessed by such demons and turn into criminals. By killing felons, you cannot eliminate these forces of evil either. Jesus did exorcise demons. There are legions of fallen angels and if they were visible, they would darken the sun.«

The sheriff looked at me unbelievably. Unimpressed I kept on talking.

»Someone who loves God obeys his creator. Every human was equipped with free will by God; the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden shows that explicitly. Either you follow what God said, or you keep your fingers away from the forbidden fruits ...«

»Oh you don't«, interrupts me Collister.

»That is right. Or you do something, that God forbids, one sin. Sin is the cause of all evil in this world. All that is allowed or not can be found in the Bible, the word of God. I orientate myself thus, consulting the word of Jesus Christ, the God of life and the resurrection. And only His judgments are just.«

»Eye for an eye ...«

»Tooth for a tooth, I know«, I break in.

»And with this philosophy, society would only consist of blind people and ones who wear false teeth. That is no justice but revenge. It is written: *The revenge is Mine, spoketh the Lord.* Eye for an eye, the revenge does not function, Jesus instead demands: *Love your enemies!* With this love, he does not refer to any feeling, but to a decision on how to treat others. And enemies are people that one finds to be rather unsympathic and one avoids. Love your enemies, that works because the Lord are going to handle it. To take the law into one's own hands is not allowed.«

»Well, with good cause«, Collister agrees. »I do believe in chain of events by chance.«

»Either you believe in God or everything is mere chance. For me, God is the most sovereign ruler of the universe, the one that has everything

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