Noose

I stood in a hardware store and looked at the rope with longing. I had a choice between a hemp rope at 42p per 6mm and a 36p per 6mm cotton rope. I had to pick a rope quickly before anyone caught on to what I was doing. After all, when you see a heavyset middle-aged man with long unkempt stubble lining his face look at rope, you don’t immediately think he’s going to be using it for crafting purposes.

I quickly picked up the cheaper rope and went up to the cashier.

He looked at me sceptically as he scanned the item. “Anything else?” He asked as he lifted his eyebrow.

“What, no,” I replied speedily.

He stared at me for a good few seconds, I felt his gaze penetrating me and I began to sweat under my clothes, he knew exactly what I was going to do with the rope.

He shrugged and bagged the rope.

I sighed softly, paid him and hurried out of the building.

I got into my car and slammed my head onto the steering wheel, breathing heavily.

I was gonna do it, I was really going to do it, I was finally going to listen to the voices. “I’m proud of you, man,” One of the voices said.

I smiled and nodded silently put the car into reverse and drove to my house.

I was humming happily all the way there and I was tapping the steering wheel with glee.

I looked around and admired the trees one last time, I would miss the scenery around my house. But that was all I would miss.

I knew that this was the right thing to do, after all, I had nothing to live for. My wife had left me and had full custody of our two kids despite the fact that she was an unfit parent.

She slept around a lot while we were together and forced my kids to cook breakfast for the men in her life while I was out working abroad.

I missed them, but I wasn’t going to kid myself, I knew that no matter how hard I tried she would always win every case.

She had the best lawyers and the best defence against my attacks. She would always say that at least the kids knew who she was. As if they didn’t know who I was.

Every time I walked through the door, my little girl, Lily would always run into my arms. And if Noah didn’t know me then I guess he wouldn’t remember our monthly camping trip where we’d tell each other everything. Which we’ve been having for the past ten years since he was six.

But my ex-wife’s greatest defence was always the same: I’m a criminal or more accurately I used to be.

I spent 6 months in prison for petty theft, I didn’t remember what I stole but Sue (My ex-wife) sure as hell did.

Apparently, I stole someone’s miniature Eiffel Tower statue, it was their most valuable possession.

I felt really guilty about that for the longest time, not because of what I had stolen, I felt more guilty that I didn’t even remember doing it and that I had allowed myself to block out the memory and lock it behind an iron door in my brain.

I pulled up on my drive, grabbed the rope and got out of the car, I opened the door and was immediately aware of the sheer emptiness of the place, I had only moved in recently, so I didn’t have any of my valuable possessions with me in the house, all the hallway was, was a door and a table where I slowly dropped my keys.

I sighed and ran my hands through my hair. “I guess it’s time to die.” I mused.

I walked into the kitchen and inspected my surroundings, the marble counter was at the far end of the room, gleaming in the sunlight. But that wasn’t what I cared about; I cared about the table in the centre of the room and the ceiling fan that hung ominously above it.

I had it all planned out, I went over to the table and pushed it away from the fan but stopped pushing it when the edge of the table was aligned with the fan.

I jumped onto the table and began to tie the rope around the fan, I tugged it to make sure it wouldn’t come apart, it didn’t.

I then took the remaining rope and shakily tied it around my neck, I tightened the noose and the rope pierced and rubbed into my neck.

I grunted at the discomfort and shuddered with anticipation.

I was about to jump off when an unfamiliar voice came into my head, “Don’t do it,” It pleaded.

“Who the fuck are you?” I demanded. “You’re not one of the friendly voices.”

“Actually, I’m Steve the friendliest voice you’ll ever hear and I’m here to tell you that you’re not dying today.”

Then a familiar voice decided to speak, “Don’t listen to him, you have nothing to live for. So just drop… drop… drop.”

I stared at the ground, dazed and confused, what was I going to do? I couldn’t decide whether I wanted to jump or not.

My conviction was solid before but now that Steve had shown up, it had become infinitely more difficult to drop off the table.

I stood there legs trembling and waited for the decision to be made for me.

“You shouldn’t wait for one of us to make the decision but you should make the right choice.” Steve reasoned.

I stood there still trembling and sighed deeply. I hadn’t made any good decisions in my life, I had married the wrong girl, got the wrong job and hired the wrong lawyers.

But then I remembered the one good thing in my life, my kids. I imagined the horrified looks on their faces when they found out that their dad had died in such a gruesome manner, would Noah have to check my corpse, his mother probably wouldn’t of done it.

I couldn’t put him through that, I couldn’t do it at all.

I slowly lifted my arms and was pulling the noose off my neck when… I slipped.

I fell off the table and my life flashed before my eyes but I didn’t die. The rope broke and I slammed onto the floor with a thud.

I moaned and laughed at the same time.

I had never been happier about my weight than I had in that moment.