

## Old News

Dark. Cold. Unsafe neighborhood. Shootings every day. Was this job worth it? His wife, who worked at the prison down the street, always said that he shouldn't be afraid. Life happens whether you're ready or not. As he thought of her and their life together, he smiled and was filled with peace. Samuel would die that night while delivering mail.

The entryway smelled damp and the lights flickered off from time to time. His boots echoed off the concrete, which was smattered in scuff marks and littered with torn pieces of long forgotten mail. Two rows of old-school mailboxes were stacked on the right wall, which were stuffed with unpaid bills and a big drop-box hung under them, for outgoing mail, which Samuel knew would be empty again tonight. He opened his satchel to grab the keys when he was suddenly filled with panic that quickly took over. He felt his hair stand on end, goosebumps spread from head to toe, and his mouth filled with the taste of bile and bitter stomach acid.

He turned in time to see the bedraggled woman slam the crowbar across his temporal bone with a resounding crunch. All sound, taste, smell, and thought were erased from his fractured skull. His body twitched with each blow she heaved, as pieces of him splattered the walls like a blender without a lid. The psychiatric ward of the maximum security prison was missing an inmate tonight. Tomorrow these walls would see red and blue. A lighthouse of police colors. A coroner's van. Body tarp. News. Forgotten.