

THE LADYKILLERS.....

three monologues by women who kill

by Matt Fox

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Lady Killers – A series of monologues from the perspective of female killers

- **Monologue 49 (28) – an assassin**
 - **Monologue 150 – a Texan death row inmate**
 - **Monologue 3 – a mother who has killed her children**
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Monologue 49 (28)

A woman is stood at a lectern.

She's is dressed in a formal business suit and has lecture notes.

The whole piece resembles as TED Talks lecture.

Woman: Professionalism is a funny term. Professional, in the purest sense is simply being paid to do something; a professional engagement. The term amateur, which is largely used dismissively these days to suggest a thing is poorly done or is badly executed, actually just denotes that there was no payment for a task.

Now I'd suggest, certainly in the world of art, invention and philosophy that those employed in such pursuits are not there for anything as crass or vulgar as monetary gain, and in fact, the placing of a financial figure against their work, actually cheapens it. Money can cut the heart out of pleasure, and remove all the joy from an activity.

I've always found the term 'a professional person' deeply irritating. We all know what it means; someone that's university educated, someone with a job which is seen as an achievement to have attained; basically someone who's earning reasonable money and isn't working class.

It's nonsense though. The guy flipping burgers in McDonalds is a professional, who's certainly not there for any other reason than the meagre minimum wage he receives to be overheated and abused. The girl pouring out pints of lager in Wetherspoons whilst drunken idiots stare down her top is a professional; but no one's asking her to countersign their passport application are they?

Another common distinction is the difference between a job and a vocation...which may go some way to help explain the oddly skewed concept of 'professional' that we now have. A vocation is something you do because you want to, and if you get paid for it then all the better. A job; well that's just giving up those precious hours of your all too short life, in exchange for the financial means of existence. A job is a trade-off, a vocation is a gift.

For me, my work is a vocation; it's what I love to do. Really as far as I can see it's what I always wanted to do. I'm freelance, so I view assignments as jobs, with definite fees per transaction. Some jobs are better than others, some are dull and just a financial exchange. Some though are amazing and exciting and frankly I'd do them for free; they're the ones that make this a vocation.

Today is the final part of Job 49 for me. One off the half century and quite a big milestone in my line of work. Now if you were a graphic designer or a gardener or a hair dresser, then fifty jobs wouldn't seem a lot...much less than a year's work. But what I do is more like writing a novel or painting a

portrait. It takes time; the planning must be perfect and the execution exact. The stakes in what I do are about as high as it's possible for something to be, and if one thing goes wrong then it's game over forever. In fact 99.99% of what I do is preparation; the actual act itself is almost instantaneous...you want it to be instantaneous, for the sake of everyone involved. Clean, quick and largely painless, unless of course there's a need for pain...but that costs extra.

I think the film *Leon* had it best understood; the quiet diligence of it all. Keeping a low profile and out of the limelight is crucial. This is no place for showmanship and egos.

So what of Job 49? The request came through 6 whole months ago, with a holding payment and all the details I needed. You get a name, address, photo, plus any specifics of when and how they want it done. Usually it's just clean and quick with as little fuss as possible...sometimes it's not...sometimes a message needs to be given...sometimes it needs to be seen by someone specific...all of this costs extra though, as the risk is greater.

I'm not a sadist in any way...I don't like causing pain and distress, so for me these special requests are the most challenging element of what I do. But you don't want to be known for turning down work or having a weak stomach...strength and coolheadedness are what everyone's after.

Pause

I did once have a job where they had a very clear and very stark message that they wanted conveyed. It was Job 28 I believe...I remember them all. They're personal interactions with another human being; you basically have a relationship, but one which the other individual has no knowledge of until seconds before it ends...it's a strange sort of thing.

But Job 28 was a special one, the person, a man in this case, must have done something that had really upset the client. I never ask why they've called me in, it's best not to know as it prevents you working out if it's deserved or not, and that's not my job. The instructions were very detailed, like something you'd give to a child to make sure they did a task exactly right. There was no emotion in the instructions, but they were clearly emotionally driven. The actions requested were difficult to stomach, even for me. It was slow and messy, and loud, even with gaffer tape and cables ties. Usually I aim for the subject to either not see me at all, or only for a split second. But this man saw me for a long time. Hours and hours. The idea was that it would take as long as possible, following a specific sequence of actions, which would draw out the subject's eventual demise and maximise the agony. Doing something like that takes a lot of energy, a lot of stamina. It also starts to mess with your head.

It's been suggested by a whole host of respected academics and psychologists that those who historically worked in the corporal and capital punishment sectors would in all likelihood have been found to have serious mental issues if examined by modern doctors. Hangmen, headsmen, disembowlers; most of them would have started to lose their marbles after a while. I can understand why; it's one thing pulling a trigger or slitting a throat. It's quite another when your elbow deep in a still living person, extracting vital organs as they scream and writhe around. That sort of thing stays in your mind...in your dreams...

I like to think I'm fairly sane... clearly there's something wrong with me to consider doing this for a living...but I'm not convinced that it's full scale psychosis. I'm calculated and cold, but so are people