

By Nikita Sowan

SILENT KILLER

a drama

by Nikita Sowan

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Silent Killer

Period: Modern- Day England, 2020

Genre: Naturalistic Drama

Setting: An Elderly People's Care Home, East London

Characters:

Grace Sawyer-

Grace Sawyer is an African- American woman, 81 years of age. She currently resides in a Care Home for the elderly, in London. She is a religious woman, and is showing signs of dementia.

George Sawyer-

George is Grace Sawyer's son. He is 47, and is a teacher. He visits Grace every weekend, with his son.

Isaac Sawyer-

Isaac is 9 years old, and is Grace's Grandson. He loves football, and is always excited to visit Grace every weekend.

Nurse Emma

Nurse Emma is a new recruit who has started working at the Care Home. She is 24 years old, and is friendly and endearing.

Nurse Jyoti

Nurse Jyoti is an experienced senior nurse, and is 52 years of age. She is of Indian descent, and a very abrupt woman, who likes order and control.

Cynthia Bowen

Cynthia is Grace's best friend, and also lives in the same care home. She is 80 years old, and has arthritis in her hands and arms.

Radio Presenter

A Radio Presenter is making announcements on the radio.

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SCENE ONE:

Grace, George and Isaac are in the garden of the Care Home.

ISAAC: Ma', look at me! Look how high I can kick it now. I've been practicing.

Isaac kicks a football in high into the air, and waits for it to land on the ground again.

GRACE: Oh Isaac, that's great!

ISAAC: Dad, you're not watching me. Look!

Isaac kicks the football again, high into the air.

GRACE: Isaac, watch out for them Freesias mind you, or Nurse Jyoti will be on to you!

ISAAC: I'm nowhere near a Freezer, Ma'!

GRACE: Freesias, Isaac. They're flowers, my love. Don't tread on them.

Isaac continues kicking the football, alarmingly close to the potted Freesias.

GEORGE: How are you mom? Taking all your meds? Sleeping okay?

GRACE: Yes, yes, I'm taking all of them. Don't you worry about me son.

GEORGE: I'm just checking. The nurses have increased your dosage.

GRACE: I know. I'm telling you, these pills are rotting my brain. I keep forgetting things- only small things, but I keep forgetting George. It's not like me to forget things is it?

GEORGE: What do you mean? What do you forget?

GRACE: Oh you know, just small things. I forgot the name of the new nurse the other day! And I've spoken to her so many times, I really don't know how I forgot, silly me. And just yesterday I forgot your number- I was going to call you to tell you about the Summer Fair, that you can bring Isaac along too.

GEORGE: Yeah well, that's just old age mom, everyone will forget things at your age. I wouldn't worry about it at all.

GRACE: My age? Old age?! I'm 81 years young George.

Grace playfully smacks George's hand.

NURSE EMMA: And you've never looked better Grace! Not a day over 30.

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Nurse Emma places a tray of food down in front of Grace.

GRACE: Oh, thank you my dear. I can't say I disagree with you.

NURSE EMMA: Right eat up, you. There's Banoffee pie for dessert today. I've got to give you your meds too.

Emma checks her watch, and smiles.

GRACE: Oh yes, time for my pills. I almost forgot.

SCENE TWO

Grace and Cynthia are in the lounge, drinking tea. There is classical music playing softly in the background.

CYNTHIA: I am tellin' you Grace, I'm losin' my charm! There're just over fifty residents 'ere, half of 'em men- and not one of 'em have looked my way! Not a single one. I used to be a right catch back in the day! Blimey, I even got an 'aircut yesterday. Look 'ow good it looks.

Cynthia runs her fingers through her hair and beams at Grace.

GRACE: Oh Cynthia, please! You are 80 years old now, why does this even matter to you? Why is the attention of men even running though that mind of yours? We're all shrivelled up prunes here. Nobody to impress here.

CYNTHIA: Speak for yourself, 'ol girl. Nobody to impress? I'm no prune!

GRACE: A Raisin then.

Cynthia flails her arms around.

CYNTHIA: I've lost my charm! I've lost my charm, AND my arm for Christ's sake! Oh I 'ate being old, I do. I hate bein' a Raisin- a prune.

GRACE: Arm?! What?

CYNTHIA: Yes, arm. The ol' Arthritis is playin' up again, and I can 'ardly move my arm. It may as 'ell just not be there.

GRACE: Oh, you are a drama queen. You still have your arms Cynthia. Don't be such a fool.

Cynthia sighs heavily, and pouts her lips.

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CYNTHIA: Oh 'ell, I suppose it doesn't matter 'ow anyway- charm or no charm, arm or no arm. I'll be gon' soon- won't be 'ere for very much longer I 'eckon. My charm won't 'elp me then, I suppose. Or my bloody arm, mind you.

GRACE: Where are you going? Holiday?

CNYTHIA: No. I meant goin' as in... passed on. Dead. Finitio. Gone.

GRACE: Oh you are so morbid. So, so morbid Cynthia. Have a little faith, and trust in God. When it is your time to die, the Lord will let you know. No point fretting about that right now. Is there?

CYNTHIA: I'm not being morbid. On no Grace luv, I'm just bein' realistic! Look at what's goin' on in the world right now. This deadly killer! Nobody can see it coming- it's like a silent killer, roamin' our streets, killin' off everyone we know! The Jack the ripper of all killers- killing silently, and before we can protect ourselves!

GRACE: What killer? Who is Jack? Oh, stop being so dramatic Cynthia. There is no killer on the loose. It just doesn't happen these days. Who is Jack? Do I know him?

CYNTHIA: No, no. I am tellin' you Grace- this will be the death of us all. It's killin' old people especially you know. I even overheard Nurse Emma an' Jyoti say that! I'm not lyin' Grace. We need to be careful. It could get any of us.

GRACE: Oh, stop it.

Cynthia finishes her tea and resumes knitting. Grace pulls her shawl closer around herself.

SCENE THREE

Nurse Emma and Nurse Jyoti are serving residents Breakfast. Grace and Cynthia are sat eating Breakfast in the garden.

NURSE JYOTI: Good Morning, Grace. Lovely weather today.

GRACE: Good morning Nurse Jyoti. Yes, it's lovely. It's about time it was beginning to get warmer. It'll help Cynthia's arthritis I'm sure!

CYNTHIA: Yes.

NURSE JYOTI: Yes, that's true. This warm weather will definitely help, won't it?

CYNTHIA: Yes.

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GRACE: You can wear your new sandals now Cynthia. The ones George got for your Birthday. They are lovely, they are.

CYNTHIA: Yes, okay.

NURSE JYOTI: Are you okay Cynthia? You are quiet today. Anything I can help with?

CYNTHIA: Nah, I'm alright, just feelin' abit strange. Bad Cough.

NURSE EMMA: Strange?

NURSE JYOTI: Are you feeling sick?

CYNTHIA: I think I'll be fine. Just a cold maybe. Just feeling light headed. And this cough just won't bugger off!

NURSE JYOTI: You've not got a fever have you Cynthia?

NURSE EMMA: Fever? Cough? Are you out of breath at all?

Nurse Emma places her hand on Cynthia's forehead.

CYNTHIA: A little maybe.

GRACE: Oh love, it's because you've got yourself all worked up over that killer nonsense! Have a cup of sweet tea, that will help.

NURSE JYOTI: Killer?

NURSE EMMA: Nurse Jyoti could make some Chai Tea?

CYNTHIA: You mean Chai, luv. Not Chai tea. That just means Tea Tea.

NURSE EMMA: Chai.

Nurse Jyoti smiles.

NURSE JYOTI: I'll go put some on for you.

CYNTHIA: Thanks luv, I think that'll help no doubt.

SCENE FOUR

There is a Birthday Party going on in the Care Home, for one of the residents. Everyone is in the main lounge celebrating.

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ISAAC: Who's Birthday is it 'Ma?

GRACE: Oh, what is his name? I've forgotten his name. That man sitting over there. It's his birthday. I can't remember his name.

Grace points to a man across the room. He is coughing.

ISAAC: He doesn't look very happy on his birthday. He's not smiling.

GRACE: Oh I'm sure he is. He might just be tired.

ISAAC: He's coughing lots, 'ma. Maybe he's sick?

CYNTHIA: Oh nah luv, he's just a miserable ol' git he is!

Cynthia shovels cake in her mouth, and then starts furiously coughing.

GRACE: Cynthia! Watch your language!

ISAAC: Git. Git. Git. Git. Git. What does that mean? Is it a bad word?

GEORGE: Isaac. Enough.

CYNTHIA: A miserable ol' git means-

Cynthia starts coughing again, and stops mid-sentence.

GEORGE: Anyway! We had better be going. Isaac has school tomorrow. And a football game.

ISAAC: 'Ma! I'm the goalie tomorrow. And we're going to win!

GRACE: Yes, you are Isaac. Right, give me a kiss- you have to go now. I'll see you next weekend, yes? Next weekend George?

ISAAC: Yeah see you next weekend 'ma.

GEORGE: I'll have to see 'ma. I don't know what's going to happen with everything that is going on.

GRACE: What's going on love? Work okay?

GEORGE: Work's fine. I mean everything with the death toll because of the-

CYNTHIA: Oh god yes you're right' there George. It's bloody terrifyin' it is. All those deaths already- my god I can't even-

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ISAAC: Lots of people are dead. It's very sad, isn't it?

GEORGE: It's okay we-

CYNTHIA: So many dead. It's a killer it is.

Cynthia starts coughing again.

GRACE: Killer? What's happened?

GEORGE: Don't you worry about it, mom. Right we're leaving. Say bye Isaac.

ISAAC: Bye Isaac.

GRACE: Oh you are cheeky!

George leaves with Isaac.

CYNTHIA: Righ' ho luv. I think I'll be off to bedfordshire myself too luv. I still feel out of it slightly. I think my temperature is up again. I might just go speak to Nurse Jyoti about it. Need a good ol' sleep too I think. Nigh' night.

GRACE: Goodnight Cynthia. I'll see you tomorrow.

CYNTHIA: You take care of yourself luv.

SCENE FIVE

It is a bright morning, and Grace is sitting outside in the garden having her Breakfast. Nurse Emma is sorting out Grace's daily pills.

NURSE EMMA: There you go Grace... just two more doses after this one.

GRACE: Ahh thank you love. I'll forget myself, so can you remind me later?

NURSE EMMA: Of course. I'll just get your coffee for you. You wait right here.

GRACE: Oh thank you dear. Emily is it?

NURSE EMMA: Emma.

GRACE: I knew that! Sorry I just forgot.

NURSE EMMA: That's okay, Grace. I'll be right back.

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Nurse Emma leaves. She then returns with a cup of coffee.

NURSE EMMA: There you go. Just how you like it. Milk and two sugars.

GRACE: Two sugars?

NURSE EMMA: Yes. That's how you told me you like your coffee, just last week. Did I get it wrong?

GRACE: Oh, dear I must have forgotten that. I normally have just the one sugar.

NURSE EMMA: I can change it for you?

GRACE: Don't bother yourself love, it's fine. I'm sure I'll live.

NURSE EMMA: Well, I'll remember for next time. Milk and one sugar.

Grace sips on her coffee. Nurse Emma turns around to leave.

GRACE: Oh just before you go Emily, where is Cynthia today? She normally joins me for Breakfast in the garden.

NURSE EMMA: Oh I believe I heard Nurse Jyoti say she isn't feeling too well today. She's in her room, sleeping.

GRACE: Oh dear is she sick? Mind you she was feeling rather sick the last few days- she told me herself. Can I go see her?

NURSE EMMA: Yes of course. Maybe later though? She's sleeping at the moment.

GRACE: Yes, yes okay. I'll see her later.

Grace continues to eat her Breakfast, and Nurse Emma leaves.

SCENE SIX

Grace is in Cynthia's room, Cynthia is laying in bed, feeling unwell. The radio is playing in the background.

NURSE JYOTI: Right Grace, you can only stay in here for a short while. Miss Cynthia needs her rest.

GRACE: Needs her rest? Cynthia never needs her rest! I'm sure she'll be up and running soon. Isn't that right Cynthia?

By Nikita Sowan

Cynthia mumbles something, and turns over in her bed.

NURSE JYOTI: Hmm, yes, I'm sure she will be fine in a few days.

Nurse Jyoti leaves the room.

GRACE: What's the matter with you? Cynthia? You're never this sick, love.

Cynthia mumbles again.

GRACE: What did you say?

CYNTHIA: Deathly

GRACE: Death? Oh don't exaggerate. You'll be absolutely fine. Just get some rest. Listen to the radio and sleep.

Grace turns the radio volume up higher. Cynthia falls asleep.

RADIO: ... there have been a further 91 deaths today in the UK, and the number is likely to get higher each day.... It is devastating....

GRACE: Deaths? Did you hear that Cynthia? Goodness, why are so many people dying?

RADIO: ... those especially at risk are over 70s....

GRACE: Who is doing this?

RADIO: It really is a killer.... we must prepare accordingly to prevent further deaths....

GRACE: Killer? Cynthia you may be right about a killer. Cynthia? Oh what is going on?

RADIO: ... The true impact will not be known until we reach the peak of this killer Dis- ...

Grace switches off the radio. Cynthia remains asleep.