

Smiles

Smiles on faces but turmoil inside
It seems cameras do lie and pain they do hide
For not all smiley faces tell the facts of life
A wedding photo of a happy husband and wife
Could actually hide the pain of a coercively controlled victim of crime
For they are not living their dream on this day at this time
iPhones a plenty and memories are snapped
Confetti is thrown and guests hands are clapped
Only serving to show that this crime is hidden
Isolated, alone the truth deeply forbidden
Perpetrators driven by power and control
Chipping away at their victim til their no longer whole

It's funny really how many think it's not domestic abuse
Yet the victims will toy with escape by a noose
See it's easier to leave those that they love
Floating from earth to a place up above
Where safety may lay and peace they will find
No longer subjected to hands so unkind

See it's not just violence that equals domestic abusive behaviour
It's the perpetrator who becomes the victims worst fear but also their saviour
To understand that it's not that easy to leave
Remaining because the gaslighting will have the victim believe
It's them that's at fault for surely they provoked
Pushed the buttons, said the wrong thing, made the wrong jokes

Looking in the mirror to see a black eye
On the bathroom floor sat sobbing in secret they silently cry
Self blame and self loathing is all that remains
Trapped in this hell with Invisible chains
Hearing the myths from family, colleagues, a friend
Their words hurt but still you pretend
See this is the bit they don't seem to get
He just isn't the man that they all just met

Behind close doors he pulls me to bits
Accused of cheating and in my face he spits
He always says he's sorry though and gently strokes my hand
He lifts me from the floor and helps me up to stand
Sure my ribs hurt where his boot hit my belly
I'm a little wobbly and my legs feel like jelly

He didn't mean it though, he's just really stressed out at work
He said he's really sorry for acting like a jerk
Excusing his behaviour because my heart still thinks it's love
It wasn't really that bad just a little shove
I'm sure he wants to change and needs me to be there
He tells me all the time I'm the only one to care

He cannot live without me, if I leave he'll end up dead
How would I live with this knowledge in my head
I know he stops me wearing my favourite little dress
Maybe he's right though, it's a bit short and makes me look a mess
We're saving money since I stopped going to the gym
No more nights out drinking with my best mate Kim

It's better just the two of us he tells me all the time
He's doing it because he cares it's not like it's a crime
He didn't mean to hit me when the door opened on my foot
Wrong place, wrong moment maybe it was accidentally shut
At least that's what he tells me before the tension starts to build
Heart racing, head spinning as the atmosphere feels chilled

Swearing and shouting here we go again
He's lost the plot ranting like he's gone insane
Screaming about my wages as my bank card is removed
I'm allowed it back in future once myself to him I've proved
At least it will stop me spending no more hair and nails can be done
Unable to get the new uniform for my youngest son

While all of this sounds crazy and many won't understand
Why I'll return tomorrow to my husband hand in hand
I want you to know it's not because I do not feel fear
Entirely the opposite see it's safer to keep him near
For when the perpetrator starts to lose his grip
Behaviours only escalate and the offender starts to flip

When all of the above and more has been your life for so much time
It's easier to remain a victim of this twisted crime
To walk away is risky and by that I mean life or death
Removing a victim from the offender is no safer than smoking Crystal meth
Coercive control is madness that barely anyone fully knows
Building over time so subtly it barely shows

Cycle of abuse like a big wheel on Blackpool prom
Round and round as they isolate you from dad, sister and mom
What anyone will tell you if you take the time to ask
Is that escaping the situation needs to be a meticulously planned task
You don't just pack a bag one day and walk right out the door
That would be like signing your own death warrant for sure

It starts with tiny little steps of putting things in place
Speaking to an idva who will find you refuge space
Guiding you towards the path that will help you live again
A new start, hope, joy and leaving behind the pain
I'd like to tell you all that the offender will get punishment in court
Sadly I'd by lying though and this I just cannot report

The actual truth is that only 1% of rapes are prosecuted by the CPS
Victims left without justice, hurt and in a mess
Even when convicted for domestic abuse before a judge
The sentence is barely none existant on this they do not budge
Usually finding ABH reduced to common assault
A tap on the wrist, a minuscule fine, no justice, no result

That's what makes it so much harder to walk the other way
To build yourself back up from all the things you've heard him say
Year upon year of hearing how your a cheating little hooker
Ugly, useless little bitch definitely not a looker
Imagine that said time again every single night
Eventually the lies he tells become the truth and you give up the fight

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