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Flash Fiction - 563 words

Fact: Good Murder

To kill is a sin, reasoning be damned. She knows this. *Scrubbing, and scrubbing, and scrubbing.* Life is not meant to be quelched. *The water runs clear, but she does not stop.* She should have avoided it. *Scrubbing, more and more, deeper and harder.* She couldn't have avoided it. *Water, now pink, cascades from her hands into the drain.* No excuse. *The warmth diminishes to a cool stream, shiver-inducing.* She should have tried harder. *Her eyes do not see, just blankly stare.* There is no excuse. *She cannot feel, only continue to wash without ever getting clean.* Numb is the girl scrubbing hands so hard she bleeds.

There is no good in war. There cannot be.

When she comes to, the drain is gurgling and her bar of soap has dissolved into nothing. *Breath, Breath.* It takes a few hard blinks and several minutes to gain back a register of her senses. The sink. The soap. The *smell.*

She gags, stepping back and falling into the wall. Head drops onto knees and shoulders sink. *She is just so tired.* She needs to stop spiraling. *What are the facts?*

Fact: the floor is tile.

Fact: there is a sink in front of her.

Fact: they are at war.

Fact: people die in war.

Fact: people kill in war.

She does not want to be evil, does not want to fall into habits of those she is afraid of. She does not want to lose herself.

Fact: people kill.

But why? She has seen bodies fall, blood seep. She has seen the death, but never thought about the kill itself. *Murder*. That's the word.

Fact: she killed.

It was quick and warm, and she didn't have a choice. *Wrong*. There is always a choice. *There is no good in war*.

Fact: he was hurting people.

Fact: he wanted to kill her.

Fact: his hands were bloody too.

She doesn't remember what she used, only that there was something in her hand. Fact: sin is fact.

A sin does not become less of a sin depending on who performs it. Sin is an action.

Fact: sin is bad.

Fact: murder is a sin

Fact: killing is murder

She's a murderer. *He was too*. She can't look at her hands. Fact: both of them have hands forever stained with blood.

She does not want to become those she fears. But she did kill. She has always thought of herself as good, but can she still? If she walks out right now and lives on, is she as callous as all the others who only treat life as a tool? *Keep moving*. The guilt will haunt her, but she cannot stop, there is still much to do.

Fact: no true hero desires their path

She almost can't bear it, but gathers herself. A swallow, a breath, and muscles begin to tense. Pulling together the broken pieces that have now been scattered, mashing together to give herself strength again. Without looking at them, she slides hands underneath her weight, and the slight sting of mangled skin grounds her. Using the support from her hands; the thump, thump, thump of blood in her heart; and every last ounce of courage; she stands.

Fact: Good and Evil will both scrub blood off their hands, but only good will feel so tainted as to keep scrubbing and mix their own blood in.