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FATAL CUT

June Hampson's new novel
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ONE

Asfendiou, the Greek Island of Kos, April 1972

'Please God,' she whispered, her heart overflowing with love for her beautiful boys, 'don't ever let anything or anyone harm my sons. Not when for once in me bleedin' life everything is on the up an' I feel so happy I could burst!'

Daisy Lane bent over the bed and tenderly wiped the perspiration from Eddie's forehead. His dark hair was damp, causing it to curl even more tightly than it usually did. In sleep his breathing was deep, untroubled as only a ten-year-old's can be. In the next bed, six-year-old Jamie's sheet was wound so tightly around his perfect little body it seemed as though he wanted to hide from the world. He moaned quietly in his sleep. Daisy touched his blond hair and sighed. His downfall was his jealous nature, but why it should be directed towards his brother, Eddie, she couldn't fathom. Perhaps he'd grow out of it . . . after all, didn't she treat both boys equally?

She shook her head, banishing her sudden negative thoughts.

Vinnie was in the next room. Lovely, lovely Vinnie!

Jamie's father had come to Greece to see her, a surprise that definitely added to her happiness and would thrill the boys when they woke.

Daisy glanced in the long wall mirror. It seemed ages since she and Vinnie had shared time together. Smoothing her blonde bobbed hair back behind her ears she turned, weighing up her body, and decided the black halter top and the black shorts that looked like a tiny skirt enhanced her tan and showed off her slim figure.

If that didn't get him going then nothing would, she thought. God, but she'd missed him. That was just one of the downfalls of being involved with a copper, and a bloody straight one at that! Served her right, she supposed, for co-owning Daisychains, Gosport's premier nightclub, with the notorious London gangster Roy Kemp, friend of the Krays.

Coppers and gangsters just didn't mix socially. It didn't help either that she was looking after Roy's nefarious interests while he was banged up at Her Majesty's pleasure.

Negative thoughts again, Daisy, she scolded herself. Vinnie's come to see you, so bleeding well make the most of it! At least here in her little Greek house she was free from prying eyes.

The thin curtain fluttered at the window letting in a small breeze and the scent of flowers wafted into the room from her garden. Already Kos was about to excel itself with sunshine and colour in true Greek style. Daisy decided 1972 was turning into a very good

year indeed. She winked at her mirrored reflection, closed the door behind her and went out to join her man.

‘Why do I always forget how tall you are?’ Her arms snaked around Vinnie’s waist and she leaned her head against his broad back, breathing in the male scent of him, combined with the orangey cologne he always wore. She’d interrupted the conversation between Vinnie and her very pregnant friend Susie that was taking place on the stone-flagged garden terrace covered with trailing grape vines. ‘Where we goin’, Detective Inspector Vinnie Endersby?’

He twisted round to face her and she saw that his beautiful, different-coloured eyes were twinkling. Dark honey and chocolate, eyes that she wanted to drown in.

‘You’ll see when we get there.’ Daisy wondered at the seriousness of his tone but quickly dismissed it. Wherever he was taking her, she thought, they’d be together.

‘I’ll just take a quick look at the boys. I won’t wake them.’

Vinnie quietly opened the door on the sleeping children. His Jamie looked like an angel. He wished he could spend more time with the lad instead of flitting in and out of his life. That’s exactly what it felt like at times, he thought. That he was forever flitting between cop shops in London, Liss and Gosport, and

juggling crimes he was working on while trying to put some stability in his two sons' lives. He couldn't walk away from his wife, Clare, because of his son Jack and he didn't want to walk away from Daisy because he loved her and Jamie. It also pained him that he was in Greece at Roy Kemp's request.

He could sense Daisy hovering behind him and smell her perfume. He was growing hard. He turned, causing her to step backwards while he gently closed the bedroom door on the children.

He gathered her into his arms, nuzzling his face down into the enticing warmth of her neck. For a slim woman her breasts were large and luscious, just the way he liked them.

A quick thought slid into his mind. Why couldn't life always be easy? Why did bad people want to hurt the innocent? He pushed the thoughts away. He didn't want to upset Daisy here. Now was not the right time to tell her of his fears.

Instead he asked, 'Why do sleeping boys look like butter wouldn't melt in their mouths?'

'And little buggers when they're awake,' said Daisy. 'Jamie's still wettin' the bed, you know.'

'He'll grow out of it. Everyone knows little boys are worse for piddling than girls.' He stared hard at her. Her long-lashed green eyes were wide and trusting. 'I love you,' he said.

'I know,' she whispered back before her lips found his. With short tender kisses he then traced her

cheeks, her nose, her forehead. He felt her shiver with excitement.

'You're beautiful,' he said and swept her hair off her face. She moved her arms to his shoulders and he let his hands wander over the warmth of her flesh while he breathed in the softness of her skin. It always amazed him that she fitted against him like she was supposed to be there and that such a small person could fill him with so much pleasure. He would have liked to wave a magic wand and make her small enough to fit in a matchbox that he'd carry with him everywhere. His palms found her breasts and he cupped them one in each hand. 'Perfect,' he whispered, delighted to feel her nipples harden and thrust themselves against the thin cotton of her top.

Susie's voice cut short his excitement.

'If you two don't bugger off, I'll not get a nap because the boys'll be awake!'

He heard Daisy's deflated sigh match his own.

The air was dry and warm as Vinnie led the way down to the road. Daisy's house was on an incline reached by stone steps that were garnished with terracotta pots of bright red geraniums. Vinnie knew that when Daisy was at home in Gosport her beloved pots were tended by the owners of the nearby Taverna Asfendiou. That was another thing he admired about Daisy. She got on with people. It was rare to hear her put someone down or say bad things about them, and people gravitated towards her.

At the bottom of the steps, parked on the road's

grass verge, was the motorbike he'd hired at the airport. Vinnie climbed aboard and started up the engine.

'Get on,' he yelled, steadying the machine. He felt her arms around his body, felt her make herself comfortable on the pillion seat, and soon he was moving through the sleepy village. Some of the houses were still in ruins. He knew the earthquake of 1933 was to blame for this. After the desolation many families had relocated to the larger town of Kos, the island's port. It was a small island, barely thirty miles long, but the terrain changed from sandy beaches to pine forests and bare mountains. 'I'm going to whisk you away so I can have my wicked way with you without interruptions.' He had to shout, the warm wind was taking his words away.

'Thank God for that,' Daisy yelled back. He released one of his hands from the bike's handlebars and patted her clenched fingers that were gripping his waist.

The bike plunged through the Greek countryside and Vinnie loved the sensation of being at one with the machine, the sun and the speed. Smells of herbs, flowers, and the yellow whins that were whisky scented filled his nostrils and he wondered whether it was possible to get drunk on smells.

On the airport road he headed towards Kefalos. Here the land was uneven, with vegetation growing in gullies. The wind from the sea had torn away all but the strongest trees, which had bent themselves into

strange shapes to survive. The sea, blue today as baby ribbon, bordered volcanic earth and outcrops of rock. And then ahead, like a thin yellow stripe, the road pushed upwards in a zigzag to the top of the mountain where the small village of Kefalos lay.

After a while Vinnie changed gear and slowed the bike to a standstill.

'Just look at that view.' He waved an arm expansively, taking in the panorama around them.

'Fuck the view, I thought I was never goin' to get you to meself,' Daisy said. She'd climbed off the seat and was rubbing at her bottom. He shook his head and smiled at her then switched off the bike's ignition, rose from his astride position and set the machine on its stand.

'Come here,' he said. 'It really is so good to see you.' He noticed her eyes travelling over his body, and the familiar hardening began at his groin. She reached for him.

He kissed her for a long time, tasting her sweetness, holding her head back so he could kiss her throat and her neck.

'Not here.' Daisy tugged away and led him from the road to the shelter of a group of trees. A grassy hillock gave them invisibility from the road.

He pulled her down on to the soft spring grass. The ever-present chirrup of the cicadas was in his ears. Kneeling before him, Daisy picked up his hand and raised it to her lips, kissing each finger in turn, then, with her eyes locked to his, she began undressing

slowly. Mesmerised, Vinnie watched her every move, while the breeze sent tantalising wafts of her perfume and skin to inflame him. When she was completely naked she said, 'Your turn,' and began unbuttoning his shirt.

The pleasurable sensation of her fingers on his skin made the surfaces of his body tingle with anticipation. 'Let's get these off.' She unzipped his jeans and he wriggled out of them, looking down at his hardness, and the milky fluid glistening at the engorged head of his cock.

She was gazing at him with such tenderness.

And then he was inside her, pushing through the soft folds of her body, pushing and pulling back, pushing and pulling back until he could almost stand it no longer.

The fucking, he thought, was as soft as velvet yet as hard as stone. She grasped him tightly and thrust her pelvis at him as though wanting him to come yet willing him not to. Every movement was a discovery that made him want to cry out.

'Come now,' he commanded.

A jolt ran through him like wildfire, wave after wave.

Tears of happiness seemed to stream from every pore of Daisy's body.

'We came together,' she said.

Afterwards, Vinnie clung to her. Held her tight and close. She had exhausted him, mentally and physically, and he felt marvellous!

'Daisy?'

'Yes?'

'I love you.'

'I know you do,' she said.

He, feeling the sun on his skin and the weight of the woman he loved at his side, closed his eyes. He was completely satisfied. Until he remembered why he had to come to Greece.