

Divine Justice

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It had been easy. Ridiculously easy, really. A couple of phone calls to make the arrangements, a few trips to the bank to withdraw the agreed-upon payment in small amounts, and his biggest problem disappeared — his wife kidnapped by a trio of small-time thugs and murdered, her body never recovered. Joseph allowed himself a slight smile while the mourners bowed their heads in prayer during her memorial service, but at "Amen" he molded it into a grimace of grief. One by one they filed past as they exited, grasping his hand, expressing their sorrow and offering any help he may need. But the freezer was already full of casseroles, and he didn't think he could stomach any more of their "help." When they were the only two remaining, Bernie put a reassuring arm around Joseph's shoulder. "Stay strong, brother. Things have a way of working out just as they're supposed to." They walked to the door, Joseph puzzling over the comment from his wife's brother. It started to become clear when they reached the parking lot — and Paula stepped from behind a van. "Hello, Joseph. As you can see, I'm still alive." "My dear wife! I'm so relieved..." He felt Bernie's hand tighten around the back of his neck. "What's that, brother, you're relieved to see her? Are you relieved to see them too?" Police closed in from every direction. "Joseph Grimes, you are under arrest. You have the right to remain silent..." Yes, Joseph thought, it had been easy. Too easy, as it turned out. * * *