

TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION

Freya Morgan

Strange Death Vigil

With a final glance behind him, he slips down the small ally that leads behind the pub, his footsteps silenced by the mournful tune he whistles to the girl who will never hear it. It doesn't bother him though, and as he climbs the steep staircase, soft music matching his melody seeps from beneath the door. The door itself lies at the end of a hallway aged with stories that now lie silent, remembered only by the stains and cracks that clutter the walls.

With stiff fingers he unlocks the door and pushes heavily against it until it groans open. Instead of turning on the lights, he steps towards the centre of the room and carefully, in unnaturally fluid movements, begins lighting the candles. Upon reaching the glorious shrine, he bows, lighting the final candle and illuminating the casket beyond it. Inside is a young girl, deceased but dressed in the finest bridal wear and arranged as if she simply fell asleep before her wedding day. The man, utterly devoted to her, spins himself into a trance, muttering prayers while carving new symbols on top of old in the floorboards.

Finally he stands and walks to the casket placing a kiss on the glass, his breath leaving a ghosted lip print over her mouth. "The dead will not haunt you tonight, my dear".