

02.

STOP THIS CRAZY THING

An unknown number of years later, Bernadette Franklin was sitting in her van parked 100 metres from the Dalston flat she would shortly be breaking into: Michael's. Feeling extremely anxious, she had to continually remind herself that she was doing the right thing: *It will be for his own good.*

Michael and his new weirdo mates would soon be leaving the house to go clubbing and he would no doubt conveniently leave the lights on. He'd always left the lights on in some idiotic attempt at feigning to be home when he went out. It was supposed to scare away the burglars, Bernadette nervously snickered to herself.

About half an hour to go. He's bound to go out soon. Bernadette mentally ran through the checklist of items she wanted to steal. First of all, she'd take his beloved laptop. Once she had that, she would grab any small computer accessories, like digital or video cameras. Bernadette had heard that Michael had been making dodgy movies and she was planning to steal a tape or two. *Fuck it, I'll steal all of them if I can.*

As well as uncovering the truth about him, there was a big part of her that wanted to *Fuck Him Up.*

She would also steal any important papers, passports and other things that would make his life hard. If it turned out that Michael had really sold himself to the Occult as he had said, Bernadette would find out once and for all. She'd heard through the grapevine that he had become involved with some very dangerous people and was now performing all kinds of strange and dangerous rituals. She had even met some of his new spooky mates once. She shivered a little and hoped the rumours were false. The Michael she had known wouldn't be so stupid.

“I'm getting initiated,” had been his last words to her after they had split up. Dumbstruck, she had hung up on him. That had been six months ago and she had spent much time in the months since worrying about him and pondering what it could all mean. *Worrying, Ha! I haven't slept!*

Initiated? What's with that? Initiated into what? Michael had alluded to there

being a 'global revival' of people studying the 'Occult' and 'Magick' and 'Witchcraft' and that he was going to be a part of it. Bernadette had thought she could talk him out of getting involved, as if it was just a phase he was going through. But when he'd said that he was getting initiated into some cult or conspiracy or whatever, Bernadette felt she had no choice but to cut him off. She had stopped answering his calls and emails, hoping to lure him back to the world of the sane. *But by cutting him off, I've let him get buried deeper in this strange, evil world.*

He's getting initiated? Since that ominous phone conversation six months ago, Bernadette had worried continuously. She had tried to forget it, but somehow couldn't. She'd tried everything to push Michael from her mind but he visited her sleep, haunted her dreams, his face kept appearing and vanishing in crowds. She had to know what had happened. *Has he already been initiated? He must have been - our phone conversation was six months ago... But initiated into what? The whole thing is ridiculous! Does he think he's going to rewrite history? I've got to stop this crazy thing. There is no goddamn global magical conspiracy! Pah! The only conspiracy out there is the one in his twisted imagination...*