

WHO IS TOMMY DOYLE?

Tommy Doyle was in his mid-forties and lived alone in an old brownstone building in a district of LA. He had joined the police force after leaving school; like his father and his grand-father before him.

During his time in the force he had met, fallen in love with and married a sweet girl called Mary. They had never had any children so Mary found the loneliness and stress of being a policeman's wife too much for her. There were many nights when, due to the job, Tommy didn't come home. His mixing with bad guys often frightened Mary so she hated Tommy's job.

The final straw for her had come when Doyle's partner Pete Mackintosh had come close to being shot. It was fortunate that day that Doyle had turned the corner of the street at the right moment, thus saving his partner from a nutter who had thought it would be fun to shoot a cop. This incident had created a strong bond of friendship between the two men; one that still existed today. But Mary couldn't take it anymore. She plucked up the courage to tell Tommy that they were drifting apart and he must choose - her or his job.

In some ways it was a hard decision for Doyle but Mary was not surprised when he finally chose the job. Fortunately, they parted amicably. She was now married to a grocer and they lived somewhere up state with their three children. She was happy and that was all that mattered to Doyle. After she left she had often rung Doyle to see how he was doing but slowly this had petered out; they hadn't seen or spoken to each other for nearly seven years.

If truth be known Tommy occasionally missed Mary. It had been nice to come home to a warm house and a cooked meal. 'Oh well,' thought Doyle, 'it's all water under the bridge.'

Tommy was now a PI (Private Investigator), having left the force, disillusioned and disappointed over three years ago. Having been a police officer for over twenty years he had finally been driven out; most of his fellow officers believing by an over-ambitious lieutenant.

At the time Doyle had been working undercover. Six months into the assignment he had discovered that someone was trying to set him up; what for he never he found out although he wondered if he was getting close to discovering a crooked cop. He'd only just managed to avoid being incriminated but it had ended up with him being hauled before a disciplinary board.

After twelve months of investigation Doyle had finally been exonerated. He and the other officers at the precinct believed a local con man had somehow been involved but the guy had managed to avoid being captured. Perhaps he had been forewarned and had fled the country; leaving Doyle's fellow officers with the suspicions that someone else within the force was behind the whole affair. Unfortunately, it was something they hadn't been able to prove or follow up on, as connections 'upstairs' meant the guy was in the clear.

About four months after being cleared Doyle made the decision to retire, or maybe he'd resigned; depending upon your point of view. Having become disillusioned with the lack of support from senior management, it seemed to Doyle that it wasn't what you knew but more a question of who you knew. He suddenly found he didn't like the politics of the modern police force.

‘One day you’ll pay,’ thought Doyle, ‘whoever you are, you’ll pay.’ Now Doyle wasn’t one to bear grudges but still he never forgot where a debt was owed; either by him or to him.

As it turned out leaving the police force had worked out well for Tommy. He’d started his own PI agency; taking an office on the first floor of the old brownstone building he now called home. He had vacated his then current apartment and set up a bedroom in one of the other rooms of the office.

Eighteen months later a relative of Doyle’s had passed away, leaving him a small inheritance, which meant he wouldn’t have to work any longer if he chose not to. When the owner of the building also passed away the brownstone came up for sale so Doyle put an offer in for it. Overnight he went from lessee to landlord.

Being a PI can sometimes be dangerous so Tommy adapted the building to suit himself; making it more secure. Each of the floors had two apartments consisting of a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms and a bathroom. He decided to convert the two apartments on the top two floors into two large units; meaning each floor had an apartment that offered a bigger bathroom, 3 bedrooms, large lounge and a large kitchen/diner. By blocking off and using part of one of the bathrooms he was able to create a secret staircase, thus allowing all the floors to be linked. The idea being that this staircase would give him an alternative escape route other than the fire escape should he ever need one? So far he hadn’t. To ensure secrecy he had used a builder from out of town. By the time it was finished anyone visiting the place was unaware of this secret route.

Doyle also decided to keep his office on the second floor, expanding the size of the main office, kitchen and bathroom and using the extra rooms for storage and a gym. You had to keep fit to be a PI.

The two ground floor apartments Tommy had converted into two office/apartments. Occasionally he rented these out on a short term lease when work was slow or if he needed the extra cash. To-date he had only done this twice and at the moment they were both vacant. In time he would probably convert them back into full apartments and rent them out permanently. But for now he was content to be the only person living in the building.

Work started slowly but in time it increased. Tommy didn’t need to be kept busy. He liked the neighbourhood where he lived and was soon an integral part of the community; making friends easily. Although somewhat lonely at times, Tommy could live with that; being out of the force had been a good move. Occasionally work was interesting; at other times a bit boring but overall Tommy Doyle had a good life.