

# Mother Knows Best: A Short Story [B2]

Una tragedia ha colpito la comunità di Lacey Park la notte di Halloween, quando il corpo di una giovane ragazza del posto è stato trovato nel parco.

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"I hate you!" Melanie screamed at her mother. Her mother, Sally-Anne, [sighed](#) "Oh honey, all girls hate their mothers sometimes. I'm just doing what's best for you." "Oh, because 'Mother knows best,'" responded Melanie, sarcastically. It was something Sally-Anne always said, [whenever](#) she had to refuse her daughter permission to do something. "Well, yes. You are too young to go to a Halloween college party." "I'm seventeen, Mum. Literally all of my friends are going. You're such a [control freak](#)." Melanie was right. Sally-Anne was a [control freak](#). And she was going to control her daughter's life as much as she could for as long as she could. It was for her protection. As an administrative assistant at the local police station, she knew better than most the terrible crimes people were capable of, and how frequently girls like Melanie were victims of those crimes. The [argument](#) finished in the usual way, with her daughter going to her bedroom and [slamming the door](#). "It's Halloween night!" Sally-Anne shouted. "Let's at least watch a horror film together." She received no response and went to bed early, hoping her daughter would have forgiven her by morning. Incredibly, Melanie did seem to have forgiven her because the next morning she made no mention of the party. Sally-Anne drove her to school and then went to work at the police station, where she was surprised by the number of police officers and the tension in the air. "What's going on?" she asked her colleague and friend Leon. "You haven't heard?" said Leon. "Someone was murdered last night." "What? Where?... Here? Surely not here." "In Lacey Park." Sally-Anne [gasped](#). Lacey Park was just a few minutes from her house. "Oh my God!" "A man heard someone scream around midnight and went to see what was going on. He thought it was probably some kids [messing about](#). It was Halloween, after all. But when he got there, he found her: a local girl. She'd been [stabbed to death](#) Name is Terry Kane." "Terry Kane?" "You know her?" "Not really but..." Terry was a few years older than Melanie and had gone to the same school as her. She'd tormented all the younger kids, including Melanie, and Sally-Anne had confronted her mother

about it — not that it did any good. “Her mother, oh God!” Even if Terry was a **bully**, she didn’t **deserve** to be murdered. And her mother didn’t **deserve** to lose her daughter. This confirmed all of Sally-Anne’s fears, and justified her protectiveness of Melanie. Mother really does know best. A few days later, Sally-Anne was at home when she got a call from Leon. “You didn’t hear this from me but Sally-Anne... they think Melanie murdered Terry Kane. They arrested her at school and are coming to your house with a **search warrant**.” “What? No! Melanie was at home on Halloween night.” “There’s a video of her running away from the park. She’s covered in blood. And she’s holding a knife.” “It can’t be her.” “I’ve seen it. It’s her. They’ll be there in an hour.” Sally-Anne ended the call in a panic. What was she going to do? What if her daughter **had sneaked out**? What if...? Sally-Anne couldn’t finish the thought. **Regardless** of what Melanie had done, it was Sally-Anne’s responsibility to protect her. A video was probably not sufficient evidence to convict her, and Leon had told her earlier in the week they hadn’t found the murderer’s DNA on Terry’s body. Sally-Anne went to Melanie’s bedroom and began searching for evidence. And then she found it, under the bed: **bloodstained** clothes and a knife. She needed **to dispose** of them. But where? How? And then she knew. Tonight was 5th November, Guy Fawkes Night, and her neighbour Sam had built a **bonfire** in his back garden for the occasion. Careful not to be seen, Sally-Anne went to the **bonfire** and **buried** the clothes and knife in the centre of it. Sally-Anne waited for the police officers, many of them long-time colleagues, to arrive and **feigned** shock when they told her why they were there. Later, she went to the police station to see her daughter and her daughter’s lawyer, Jacob Allister. “I didn’t do it,” were Melanie’s first words to Sally-Anne. “I know, honey,” said Sally-Anne. “Tell me what happened.” Her daughter told her: she **had sneaked out** on Halloween night to go to the party. “I thought I could **thumb a lift**. But then I started thinking about everything you’d told me about ‘the perils of thumbing’,” she said, imitating her mother. “I got too scared to do it. It was Halloween so there were lots of people out, families, teenagers... I didn’t want anyone you knew to see me so I hid in the park. Then, around midnight, I heard a scream and ran home.” “As the video shows,” said Allister. “But the **bloodstained** clothes? The knife?” said Sally-Anne. “My Halloween **costume**, **duh**,” said Melanie. “It wasn’t blood, it was

red paint. And the knife was a toy." Allister summarised the case. "There's no DNA. No motive. Sure, the victim bullied Melanie, but she bullied every kid at school. All we have to do is produce the Halloween [costume](#), show there's no blood, that the knife isn't a real weapon... They searched the house earlier, right?" Sally-Anne gave a horrified scream. She ran out of the station and drove to her neighbour Sam's house, but it was too late. As she arrived, she could see the flames of the [bonfire](#) from the back garden, burning the only evidence of her daughter's innocence. Mother doesn't always know best.

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# Glossary

- **sighed** = sospirare
- **whenever** = in ogni momento
- **gasped** = sussultare
- **bully** = prepotente, bullo
- **search warrant** = mandato di perquisizione
- **Regardless** = indipendentemente
- **control freak** = maniaca del controllo
- **messing about** = trafficare
- **stabbed to death** = pugnalarlo a morte
- **had sneaked out** = uscire di nascosto
- **to dispose** = disfarsene
- **thumb a lift** = fare auto stop
- **slamming the door** = sbattere la porta
- **bonfire** = falò
- **buried** = seppellire
- **argument** = discussione
- **deserve** = prepotente
- **bloodstained** = macchiato di sangue
- **feigned** = fingere
- **costume** = maschera
- **duh** = ma davvero?, ma non mi dire