

## NIRVANA

He lives in darkness as much as he is able.

He feels safe there, walking slowly down the shadowed halls of his house. In the dark, there are no people to ask the questions. How are you? What have you been up to? What's new? He knows the questions are all distractions, meant to fill the awkward silence of a conversation that is inherently, unnatural.

In the daylight, he thinks, there is no way to reach anyone. Each person stands on a separate cliff, crowded only with themselves, and around them, lies an empty abyss.

So, he chooses the darkness.

He works the booth at the airport car rental center.

*License please. Would you like the prepaid gas option? Do you wish to purchase insurance? Do you need a GPS?*

The people in their cars do not see him. They are too busy checking itineraries and scrolling through their cell phones. He is like a stop sign or a speed bump, an interruption to their hurried business of going nowhere. They are morning birds, anxious to fly to the naked branches of winter's trees where they can roost together and shiver against the cold.

He is glad they don't see him. He answers their questions in polite, clipped tones. He stays fully in the moment, scanning their cars, their clothes, their faces, and, if they inspire him, he writes down their addresses.

He drives to their homes, leaving directly after his workday and returns in time for his next shift. It is surprising, the short distances that people travel. It is not uncommon for him to see local zip codes two or three hours away.

He uses the bathroom before leaving work and if he

AN ATTENDED DEATH

needs to pee along the way, he uses a large cup brought for that purpose. He takes back roads, avoiding, tolls and business districts where there might be fixed cameras taking robo-shots of every passer-by. He wears a false beard and drab colored clothing and looks at no one directly as he drives.

He keeps nothing incriminating in his vehicle, memorizes the addresses and uses a road atlas to reach his destinations. He obeys traffic laws to the letter and if he is stopped on the way for any reason, he turns around and goes home.

He selects single women. As darkness falls, he drives past their homes. If there are multiple cars, he leaves. If there are no cars, he parks as long as time allows, and waits for them to return. If there is one car, he parks a mile or so away, and walks the distance back.

He is never in any hurry. He is not controlled by any thrill or lust compulsion, though he feels both and will satisfy each, if, the right moment comes. Fate determines his entry to the house. Nine times out of ten, he finds their homes secure; all

doors locked, and every window fastened. On those nights, he walks back to his car content in his purpose.

Rarely, that one time in ten, he discovers the soul seeking truth; awaiting the freedom that he offers. He is invited in through an open cellar, an unlocked second story window, or a key left under a mat or fake rock, and in instances of the most desperate-souls, through an open front door.

He practices meditation and has mastered his parasympathetic system. He can slow his heart rate and reduce his breathing to a single breath every 90 seconds. Inside, he stands motionless, listening to the sounds of the house, waiting for a phone call to end or a light to go out. Then, he remains still, tasting the air for the flavor of *rightness*. Sometimes, that moment does not come, and he leaves as soundlessly, as he entered.

When it *does* come, he dances gracefully between the settling timbers and moves inside the rhythms of the furnace or the air conditioner. He picks up his teaching instruments from sewing cabinets and kitchen drawers until, at last, he hovers over

AN ATTENDED DEATH

her mortal body, smiling down and waiting for her name to reach his lips. When it comes, it is always her *real* name, for it is the only name she has ever known in this, the *undistracted* present.

The darkness has shown him a singleness of purpose; a purity of each moment, and seeing this, he believes the evidence has been around him, his entire life. All beautiful things: art, music, sculpture, literature, and everything creative; come from one place.

Pain.

He looks down at the girl. She will be the thirty-ninth he has freed. She is younger than all before and sleeps facing the window. The streetlight outside shines enough to illuminate the bloom on her cheeks. He will speak her name; lay the cool blade on her lips to silence her screams. He will force her to undress, stripping away all vanity. He will ravish her, taking her most precious gift and bring her closer to the present moment.

Then, he will gag her, shutting off the voice of the secular world, forever.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Mazza grew up in Upstate New York, an avid reader from a young age. He began writing fiction in his Junior year of High School with a short story entitled “How the Sea became Salt.”

He would spend the next thirty years perfecting his craft. His writing philosophy is simple: “My stories are about deep secrets and the feelings we push aside. Characters walk into the doorway of my mind in clothes of their own choosing but ultimately, they direct us towards some, and often mysterious truth.

And there is nothing more fascinating in this world, my friend, than the truth.”

**Anthony James Mazza**

Copyrighted Material



Anthony Mazza grew up in Upstate New York, an avid reader from a young age. He began writing fiction his Junior year of High School with a short story entitled "How the Sea became Salt."

He would spend the next thirty years perfecting his craft before being discovered and published to the tremendous and immediate acclaim he has.

His writing philosophy is simple: "My stories are about deep secrets and the feelings we push aside. Characters walk into the doorway of my mind in clothes of their own choosing but ultimately they direct us towards some, and often, mysterious, truth."

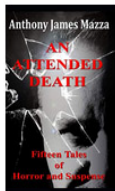
And there is nothing more fascinating in this world, my friend, than the truth.  
Anthony James Mazza

The perfect serial killer discovers that not all victims are the same.  
A stock jock encounters his true nature hiding inside a prison bus.  
A rookie cop sent to a dead woman's apartment battles for his soul.  
Deaf children hear the hysterical sound of revenge.  
A detective pulls off at a rest area to sleep and finds himself face to face with a gargantuan beast.  
A man on a fishing trip learns that he is no longer a man at all.  
Confession takes on an entirely new dimension for a disillusioned priest.

In *An Attended Death*, there are stories for readers of every persuasion including several heartfelt pieces about the fears all human beings face. The introspective mind of Anthony Mazza reaches into the worlds of good versus evil and explores the subtle shadows that can change our lives from what we understand to that which can never be believed.



Copyrighted Material



Anthony James Mazza

**An Attended Death: A Collection of 15 Short Stories Horror Fiction Lo...**

★★★★☆ 3 ratings

Paperback: \$12<sup>99</sup>



Add to Cart

Ships from and sold by Amazon.com.

[See more buying options](#)