

# ~ Is There an Archeologist in the Dig?

## Profile ~

by Red Hope

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### Disclaimers:

Violence ~ Nope, none, zip, zero violence.

Subtext ~ Nothing but subtext as maintext.

Copyright ~ Universal and MCA both own Melinda and Janice.

Series: **Other**

This is a collection of works I did during the duration of my Creative Writing class a while ago. The first item is a character profile on Melinda Pappas, followed by a monolog on her, next is a monolog on Janice. The fourth thing is a one-act play with Melinda and Janice and ending this is a short story about Janice and Melinda.

Overall, this collection is about how the two women try to seek out their destinies together. And as they do this they must contend with an archeology site in Greece together.

If anybody has comments about my story please let me know at:

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### Profile One on Melinda Pappas

January 6, 2000

Character Name --> Melinda Pappas (Southern Belle)

Age --> Twenty-seven

Family

Mother --> Sixty-one living in North Charleston, South Carolina

Father --> Sixty living in North Charleston, South Carolina

Siblings --> None

Occupation --> Doctor and teacher of Macedonian history at University of South Carolina.

Habitat --> Apartment in Columbia, South Carolina

Biggest Wish --> To find her soulmate

Biggest Fear --> Dying alone

# ~ Is There an Archeologist in the Dig?

# Monologue 1 ~

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## Monologue One on Melinda Pappas

Thursday, May 11, 2000

*Within the Appalachian Mountains, it's a cool day in Georgia, near the beginning of the trail. A tall woman dressed in khaki trousers, cotton white blouse with worn leather boots comes into the scene. A scene with a normal calm tarn, the water glistening in the noon sun. The large snow capped Smokey Mountains far in the background. The tall southern belle's dark hair wavers in the light breeze. Doctor Melinda Pappas comes to the edge of the tarn with an empty water canteen. She bends down by the water, the top coming off, and the canteen submerging in the cool water. Her blue eyes stare at her reflection. She lifts the full metal canteen out again, the ripples distorting her beautiful image. Her eyes are still fixed on her reflection as she leans on her knees.*

Melinda Pappas:

My Lord, why did I ever come here? *(sigh)* I know I wanted tuh get away from South Carolina, but goodness dis wasn't what I had reckoned. I probably outa have gone up yonder tuh New York, see them yanks. *(Stands up beside tarn still stares at reflection.)* Melinda Pappas, what tis ever gonna happen tuh yo? *(Eyes shift up to the mountains in the background.)* I hope Mamma and Poppa are all right, probably should phone them soon I reckon. *(She turns around and spots a large rock, shifts to sit on it, still staring at the tarn.)* I reckon I should have gone tuh Greece like Mamma said, would have been less of a hackle then dis. *(Her right hand goes to the lid of the canteen and is slowly screwed back on.)* Probably couldn't have afforded it anyway. Dat's what I get for worken at dat University. *(She places the canteen down on the ground beside herself. Then she lifts up a few small pebbles from the ground, and shifts them back and forth in her hands.)* I know it aint ever gonna get me no's where. *(Continues to stare at the reflection in the lake.)* Maybe I outa take dat job up yonder in New York, pay better in dat city. *(She goes quiet for a few minutes, then starts to toss the pebbles into the lake, her reflection being destroyed in the process.)* I outa lissen to Mama since she think dat I'd find more men tuh date in New York. My goodness if I don't find my soulmate soon I am gonna ended up dyen alone. *(She picks up three pebbles from the ground again.)* I aint probably gonna find my soulmate. *(Throws one pebble at the reflection, it ripples.)* Then there iz always duh problem of finden uh man these days, all fighten in dat damn war. *(She threw a second pebble at the reflection.)* Then maybe my destiny tis to be with a woman. *(A chuckle and a shake of a head.)* Thank the lord I aint able tuh look at women like dat, I'd be damned for life. *(Last pebble thrown in.)* Naw, Melinda Pappas, yo just gotta keep moven, you are only twenty-seven. *(She lifts the canteen up and stands up.)* Well I guess I'd better head on back tuh the cabin before it gets late. *(Her eyes fixed at the reflection. She sighs then looks up to the mountains again.)* Have tuh admit tis a beautiful area in these mountens. *(She looks down at the reflection again, her face saddens. She then*

takes a deep breath and strolls off the scene.)

## ~ Is There an Archeologist in the Dig? Monologue 2 ~

### Monologue Two on Janice Covington

January 19<sup>th</sup> 2000

*In the area of Macedonia, there is a small archeology site, people working with picks at a now brown barren ground. There are numerous brown tents off to the side of the site. Located inside one of the larger ones is a young woman. She is a Doctor of Macedonian history and an archeologist. She comes off as gruff, hard, strong, and can be stoic. Although on occasions this woman is known to lose her temper and what a temper that is. The archeologist is short, her electric emerald eyes hard while her long strawberry-blond hair is pulled up slightly, her body muscular from working so many sites. Doctor Janice Covington has her normal attire on at this very moment. That normal attire consists of high-laced light brown leather boots, cotton gray trousers, then tucked in is a dirty white button up cotton shirt. The collar of the shirt lies atop of her leather jacket she has on and undone. Her fedora is still on, that has a leather band around the top. Hanging off her right hip is a revolver inside of a holster yet on her other hip she has a coiled up well-used leather whip.*

*Doctor Janice Covington is currently inside of her tent, she'd just walked in. She moves to sit on her metal cot in the middle of the tent and sighs. Her eyes unfocus for a moment then refocus, she drops her head into her hands with a groan.*

Janice:

"Goddamn it, I'm never going to get this site finished in time. [Janice brings her head up again to stare at the tent flap.] I should just give up, it's not worth it. That university's grant will run out on me soon. [She stands up and slowly stalks over to her makeshift desk, on the desk is a collection of papers. She stares at them then sighs again. Her memory comes to life.] Then again Dad would never give up on something like this. [Janice cynically laughs then shakes her head.] Oh no, not my father, Doctor Harry Covington...the grave robber. [She roughly grasps the small wood chair from under the desk and flings it out. She sits in it and stares at the papers again.] Yeah the grave robber, just what I am as well. Always wanted to follow in Dad's footsteps. [She lifts up the papers and flips through them. She tosses them back to the desk and sits back in the chair. She says nothing for a few moments, her breathing a bit heavy. Her arms cross against her chest, she takes a deep breath. ] I'm not going to find the remains that's all there is to it. How could I be so stupid to think they would be this easy to find? Or to find them in this short period of time. [She drops her head back against the chair's headrest and stares up at the ceiling. Closing her eyes she sighs then lifts her head back up to stare at the papers. The top one's header reads; The University of New York.] That University will sock it to me once they find out I found nothing. Absolutely nothing. Then what the hell am I gonna do? I could do it Dad's

style and sell past artifacts to get money for the digging. *[She closes her eyes and takes deep breaths.]* I can't do that, only ruin my rep. *[Her dark emerald eyes open again.]* I need another grant, that's all there is to it. Oh right, who'd want to hire the grave robber. *[Janice lifts up the top paper, skims down it till she comes to the part that says; expiration of digging contract is on May 1<sup>st</sup>.]* Let's see that leaves me with....a week left of digging from May first. *[Janice carefully places the paper back down on top of the others. She then cross her arms against her chest, stares at the papers. Silence looms in the air. She takes a deep breath.]* Well one thing is for certain, I'm gonna need more money for this dig. I suppose I'll just have to find another University. Damn, I hate dealing with those pompous windbags of Deans at those Universities. *[Her eyes are still fixed on the grant papers. She blinks then brings up her right hand from her chest to rub her right cheek. With a sigh the archeologist stands up and puts the chair back under.]* Well I'm definitely getting nothing done real fast. *[Janice's eyes go to the expiration date on the paper. She grits her teeth while her eyes narrow.]* Goddamn University. *[She lowly growls and then turns on her heels to the front of the tent. She leaves the tent in a huff. Her small hands violently flinging open the tent flap. She leaves the tent cursing under her breath.]*

## ~ Is There an Archeologist in the Dig? One Act Play ~

### **One Act Play on Janice Covington and Melinda Pappas**

Creative Writing

Characters One & Three

Is there an archeologist in the dig?

Act I

Scene I

Setting

*Here we begin inside of a rather large building. Our scene on a hallway, down away is a door to some place we are not sure of. It is midday to say the least. Down this hallway there is a right corner leading to another hallway. As we gaze down this hallway that is when our Doctor Janice Covington reappears, she comes briskly around the corner. She has on her normal attire on that we last left her in. Her head is down, reading some small slip of paper that is on top of a stack of folders she is carrying in her arms.*

*As soon as she rounds the corner she slams into something rather tall yet soft and warm. Janice stumbles to keep a hold of her folders. She easily does and her sea green eyes lift up to meet with the thing she slammed into. Janice Covington is in a*

*minor shock for a second and quickly recovers.*

Janice [*Facial expression serious and hard.*]:

Sorry about that.

*[There before our archeologist is a tall female, midnight hair and sky eyes. She is dressed in a maroon skirt that is tight and reaching to her ankles. She then wears a white blouse with a matching maroon jacket on and a black pair of glasses. Melinda Pappas.]*

Melinda:

Itz quite alright. I reckon wasn't watching where I wuz going.

*[Melinda peers down into emerald green eyes.]*

Janice [*Faintly smiles to Melinda.*]:

Trust me, I wasn't watching where the hell I was going at all.

*[Melinda's back slightly stiffens up over Janice's cursing.]*

Melinda [*Bit flustered.*]:

Um well yes. Uh...do yo need any help wid anything? I work here at duh University.

Janice [*Smiles brightly to Melinda.*]:

Really? Well maybe you can. Do you know where this room is?

*[Janice hands the small slip of paper from earlier. Melinda takes it. Their fingers making contact. Melinda proceeds to read it aloud.]*

Melinda [*Slow voice.*]:

Room...three fifty-seven. [*Melinda looks up to Janice with a huge smile.*] Why yes of course I do. I wuz just there. Just follow me.

*[Melinda hands back the slip of paper, Janice taking it. They begin to pad down the long hallway.]*

Janice:

So you work here eh? What department?

Melinda [*Pushes her glass back up onto the bridge of her nose.*]:

I work in duh history department. My major iz Macedonian history.

Janice [*Eyes widen in surprise, she then goes stoic again.*]:

Well I am quite fond of Macedonian history myself.

Melinda [*Grins to herself.*]:

Dat's what I reckon. Archeologist of Macedonian history?

Janice [*Grins up to the other woman.*]:

You pinned me.

[*Silence for a while, their footsteps echoing off the walls in the empty building.*]

So why South Carolina?

Melinda [*Looks to Janice with a confused look then an understanding look takes over.*]:

Well I've been liven here my entire life. [*Pause.*] I reckon I'm jus' uh country gal at heart.

Janice [*Nods.*]:

I can understand that...a little.

[*The pair come to a door labeled, '357' with 'Doctor Nathan Johnson, Dean of the University of South Carolina' written underneath.*]

This is definitely it.

Melinda [*Looks from door to Janice.*]:

Yo have uh meeten wid Doctor Johnson, the dean?

Janice [*Looks to Melinda.*]:

Yup and on schedule for once. [*Pause.*] Um what's your name Miss?

Melinda [*Smiles brightly, eyes twinkling.*]:

My name is Melinda Pappas.

Janice [*Facial expression goes a bit shock, her voice in amazement.*]:

Pappas? [*Melinda nods.*] Are you related to Doctor Mel Pappas?

Melinda [*Keeps smiling.*]:

Yes I am, he iz my daddy.

Janice [*Goes stoic again.*]:

That's amazing.

Melinda [*Smile going into a grin.*]:

Yes well I've learned quite uh bit from my daddy. And yo' name iz...?

Janice [*Eyes harden a little up at Melinda under the fedora.*]:

Covington...Janice Covington.

Melinda [*Brow furrows as she stares at the floor.*]:

Covington...Covington...I don't recall an archeologist named Covington. [*Silence then Melinda looks up, her eyes wide and expression startled.*] Wait uh minute, you're duh daughter of Harry Covington the-

Janice [*Quickly cuts off Melinda with an angry tone.*]:

The grave robber. That's what everybody else calls him. Why not you?

[*Janice reaches for the doorknob, Melinda's hand quickly shoots out and rests on top*

*of Janice, stopping Janice from turning the knob.]*

Melinda [*Voice a bit harder.*]:

Well I'm sure it wuz just an unfair description or something.

*[Janice release the knob, Melinda releasing Janice's hand. Janice looks up to Melinda.]*

Janice:

Oh no, it was right on. [*Pause.*] He'd sell anything to get money, but it wasn't out of greed. No it was all to discover the Amazons' existence.

*[The two women's eyes locked. Their eyes searching the other's for a few heartbeats.]*

Melinda:

Well I believe yo Doctor Covington if dat means anything.

*[Melinda watches, as Janice's eyes seem to soften a degree, almost as if a wall dropped.]*

Janice [*Smiles.*]:

That does mean something Miss Pappas, thank you.

Melinda [*Warm smile, her right hand going out.*]:

Well I'd better let yo go Doctor Covington. Wuz nice meeten yo.

*[Janice gingerly takes the larger hand. Their hands shaking.]*

Janice:

Nice meeting you too Miss Pappas. Maybe I'll see you around eh?

*[Their hands were still clasped, a little longer then normal. Melinda squeezes for a second then breaks contact with Janice's hand.]*

Melinda:

Take Care Doctor Covington.



*[Janice nods her head. Melinda walks past Janice and heads back down the hall. Janice reaches to the doorknob. The knob turns, but the door doesn't open. Janice stares at the door and listens to the sound of Melinda Pappas' heels click down the hall. Janice sighs and shakes her head, she pushes open the door and steps through.]*

## Scene II

### Setting

*Doctor Janice Covington is now inside of an office, there is a hint of smoke in the air. The strong smell of cigars permeating the room, the kind Janice disliked very much. She now sat in a comfy navy seat in front of a wood desk, the Dean of the University sitting behind it.*

*The Dean is an old gentleman, in his mid sixties or so. White hair, almost bald, wrinkles certainly showing while he wore golden wire glasses. He had on a white button up shirt, brown trousers and a brown jacket as well, no tie.*

*His eyes were down studying the papers Janice had brought with her. The Dean's shaky hand lifted up a paper on the left and flipped it over and placed it onto the stack on the right side. His eyes moved across the paper as he read. He took a breath, looked up to Janice then leaned back in his old worn wood chair.*

Nathan Johnson [*Hard and slow voice, but stern.*]:

So explain to me Doctor Covington exactly what you plan to do over in Greece?

Janice [*Straightens up in the seat, looks directly to Doctor Nathan Johnson.*]:

Well Doctor Johnson I'm hoping to find the Amazons' Nation.

Nathan Johnson [*Nods, looks down to the papers and back to Janice.*]:

Well it says here that you already had a fund from [*Looks down at the paper and reads aloud.*] the University of New York, correct? [*He looks up to see Janice nod. Doctor Johnson leans back into his chair.*] And did you succeed in finding anything significant from this dig?

Janice [*Sighs inwardly, but replies with a hard tone.*]:

Not anything of much use Doctor Johnson, but I did find some artifacts dealing with the Amazons.

Nathan Johnson [*Nods.*]:

That's what your report confirms. [*Intertwines his hands and drops them into his lap.*]  
And what do you expect to find Doctor Covington that you didn't find on your last dig?

Janice:

I'm hoping to find more evidence-

[*Janice is cut off by Doctor Johnson.*]

Nathan Johnson:

Doctor Covington, let me make it more clear for yo. You did not succeed in finding any useful evidence from your last dig. What I don't see is how you expect to continue on with what little evidence you have found. There is nothing there for you to follow on.

Janice [*Her temper fuels up a little, eyes narrow. She closes her eyes and lies back in her seat. Taking a deep breath the woman opens her eyes again. Her response comes out a little harsher then she'd like it too.*]:

Doctor Johnson, it is a well known fact in history that the two greatest Amazon Nations existed either in the western part of Macedonia or in the eastern section. I have done a dig in the western half and little results. Now I'd like to go east where one of the great nations may have lay.

Nathan Johnson [*Sighs, shifts a little in his seat.*]:

First of all Doctor Covington, make sure you realize the difference between facts and guesses. They'll make a big difference in the long run. Now it is a guess that an Amazon Nation existed in the eastern portion, but that is all myths and tales. And as I said you have little to go on. I do not see this going anywhere Doctor Covington.

[*Nathan Johnson leans forward and begins to close up the folder of papers. Janice leaps up from her seat, she stomps up to the desk. She puts her hand down hard on the papers, stopping the dean from closing the folder. The Dean looks up to Janice, Janice's flashing green eyes look to the dean.*]

Janice [*Voice hard.*]:

Doctor Johnson, read that bit right there. [*Janice points to a section.*] Aloud please.

Nathan Johnson [*Looks down to where Janice points, proceeds to read.*]:

It is a proven fact between the University of New York and Doctor Janice Covington's research that the Amazon Nation did once existed. This fact stands true due to the fact that Doctor Janice Covington at her dig site did recover some artifacts that are of the Amazon Nation. The artifacts listed below...

Janice:

Read the list too.

[*Nathan Johnson looks up for a moment into hard emerald eyes. He looks back down.*]

Nathan Johnson [*Reads list.*]:

Amazon sword, Amazon dagger, three bows, and a regent's Amazon Queen mask.

[*Finish reading and looks to Janice.*]

And yo' point is Doctor Covington?

Janice [*Locks eyes with the Dean.*]:

My point Doctor Johnson, is that the Amazon Nation did exist at some point in time. With that being true along with the *myth* of their location then I believe they can be discovered.

[*Moves her hand off the paper. Her arms falling against her side.*]

Besides Doctor Johnson, much of history starts out only as myths or tales told by drunken men in bars. Then somebody decides to prove it and that tale becomes history. It has to start some where.

Nathan Johnson [*Takes a deep breath, sits back in his seats. Stares up at Janice for a moment.*]:

I see your point Doctor Covington.

Janice [*Crosses her arms against her chest, her voice becomes quite hard.*]:

Personally Doctor Johnson, what I would like to know is why you will not give me the grant? It is completely obvious that the Amazon Nation can be proven real.

*[Uncrosses her arms, her hands going to the edge of the desk. She leans forward against the desk, her cold eyes leveled with the Dean's.]*

What's the problem Doctor Johnson?

Nathan Johnson *[Takes a deep breath. Breaks eye contact for a moment then looks back to Janice.]:*

There is no problem.

Janice *[Laughs sarcastically.]:*

No catch really? I don't believe that Doctor Johnson. You have all the facts right in front of you. Why? My guess is because of my father. You can't tell me I'm wrong.

Nathan Johnson *[Eyes narrow for a second. He sighs.]:*

It is your father.

*[Janice smirks then straightens back up, her arms cross against her chest again.]*

I would give yo the grant Doctor Covington, but your father's past has ruined your reputation too...sorry.

Janice *[Mumbles to herself in a low voice, eyes to the floor.]:*

My father's reputation sticks to me like flies to shit.

*[Janice looks back up, her hard voice filling the room again.]*

Doctor Johnson, I need this grant. What about an agreement?

Nathan Johnson:

What do yo have in mind Doctor Covington?

Janice *[Doesn't respond for a moment. She ponders and then her face brightens up, she quickly responds.]:*

What about Miss Pappas?

Nathan Johnson [*Sits up more in his seat, his eyes faintly widening.*]:

Miss Pappas? What could Miss Pappas do?

Janice [*Grins*]:

Well she has a major in Macedonian history correct? [*Nathan Johnson nods.*] And her father did use to run this University? [*Another nod from the Dean.*] Then of course she knows ancient Greek from my guess, right?

Nathan Johnson [*Skeptical voice.*]:

Yes of course, but what does that have to do with anything?

Janice [*Keeps her grin, eyes sparkling brilliantly.*]:

Miss Pappas knows her Greek history, has a stake in this University from her father and knows ancient Greek. She has a lot to do with this. Miss Pappas could be of great help to me on the dig seeing I could use help in translating ancient Greek and she knows her history. While at the same time she will be watching over the dig site and me because it is of the University's and she'll know what she's doing since this is her department. I'd say Doctor Johnson it would work out beautifully. We both get what we want.

Nathan Johnson [*Smiles and leans back in his seat.*]:

I'd say you have quite a wonderful idea Doctor Covington. But the one problem is, what would Miss Pappas think of this? [*A pause.*] I'll agree to this Doctor Covington. If you get Miss Pappas to agree to go with yo on this dig for the full time. Then I will agree to give you the grant yo need.

Janice [*Smiles a bit devilishly.*]:

That works for me Doctor Johnson.

[*Janice holds her hand out. The Dean stands up and shakes hands with Janice.*]

Nathan Johnson [*Releases Janice's hand, reaches for the phone at the edge of his desk.*]:

Let me ring up Miss Pappas. Y'all can go out tonight and discuss this over dinner. Come back to me tomorrow, the both of you.

[*Janice nods. Nathan Johnson dials a number, he waits then smiles and begins to*

*peak.*]

Hello Miss Pappas, I was wondering if you have plans tonight? *[A pause.]* No? Wonderful. I have here an archeologist named Janice Covington. She would like to discuss with you some plans that you can or may not agree to, that being up to you. *[A pause.]* Yes well, Doctor Covington would sure love your help on a dig if possible. *[A pause.]* Yes tonight if possible. Is that a problem Miss Pappas? *[Another pause.]* Great, I'll relay the message to Doctor Covington. Goodbye Miss Pappas. *[The Dean hangs the phone up and looks up to Janice with a smile.]*

Well Doctor Covington, Miss Pappas certainly seemed cheery to have arrangements with you over dinner. Please just put the dinner on the University's tab. Come back tomorrow morning with the results. Miss Pappas said to come to her office in room two ninety-seven, down at the southern wing right at six this evening.

Janice *[Smiles brightly.]*:

Great, thank you Doctor Johnson.

Nathan Johnson *[Nods then smiles.]*:

Quite welcome Doctor Covington. Have a lovely afternoon.

*[Closes folder and hands the three folders to Janice.]*

Janice *[Receives them.]*:

Thank you, you do the same. Bye Doctor Johnson.

*[With that, Janice headed to the door and stepped through. The dean called back.]*

Nathan Johnson:

Goodbye.

*[Janice flashes back a smile then closes the door.]*

### Scene III

#### Setting

*This scene takes place inside of a small quiet restraint, a few people here and there at round tables or booths. Janice Covington and Melinda Pappas walk into the restraint and directly to the host's desk, a hostess standing behind the desk already. The*

*hostess looks up with a smile to the two women.*

Hostess:

Good evening ladies. Dinner for two?

Janice [*Smiling lightly.*]:

Yes, just us two and...[*Turns to Melinda.*]

Is smoking fine with you? [*Melinda nods in agreement. And Janice turns back to the hostess.*] And smoking please.

Hostess [*Nods and picks up two menus.*]:

Right this way.

[*The hostess heads into the middle of the restraint then turns right. Melinda and Janice following behind. They clearly come into the smoking section, the air reeking mostly of cigarette smoke. The hostess brings them to a small booth.*]

Enjoy your meals.

[*The hostess places the menus down on the table while Janice and Melinda shift into the seats, opposite of each other.*]

Melinda [*Opens menu then looks across to Janice.*]:

So why smoken section?

Janice [*Opens the left side of her jacket and reaches in. Pulling her hand back out she produces a small cigar.*]:

This is why. You don't mind?

Melinda [*Shakes her head.*]:

Naw go right ahead, I'm use tuh them. My daddy smokes them all duh time.

[*Looks back to her menu.*]

Janice [*Smiles some.*]:

Mine too.

*[Janice reaches into her right pocket on the outside. Her hands come back out with a pack of worn matches. She then quickly lights the cigar. She then proceeds to blow out the lit match and drops the remains to an ashtray off the side of the table. Janice takes a drag on the cigar then looks to her menu.]*

So your father was the Dean of South Carolina before Doctor Johnson?

Melinda *[Looks up from menu to Janice.]*:

Yes he wuz, not to long ago he retired. Daddy and Mom are liven in Charleston.

*[Janice nods. Her eyes going back to the menu. She finds something on the menu that strikes her fondness. Melinda herself finds something enticing for dinner and smiles to herself. She looks up from the menu to Janice.]*

What about you Doctor Covington?

Janice *[Places the menu down on the table. She pulls the cigar out of her mouth.]*:

What about me Miss Pappas?

Melinda *[Drops her own menu to the table and smiles.]*:

Well what about your father Doctor Covington?

Janice *[Places the thin cigar back in her mouth. Janice takes another drag on the cigar. She then speaks through the cigar.]*:

First of all Miss Pappas, I'd prefer you to just call me Janice. I do believe we can move on to a first name bases.

Melinda *[Grins.]*:

Well I'd fancy yo calling me Mel if I am tuh call you Janice.

*[Janice nods.]*

Janice *[Smiles a little. Removes the cigar from her mouth again.]*:

So my father you would like to know about? *[Melinda nods.]* Well as you know he was known as the grave robber. Well to sum my father up, he was quite the intelligent man, witty, determined and very gentle and loving.



Melinda [*Nods then smiles lovingly to Janice, making the archeologist feel warm.*]:

Now I know where you get yo' intelligence and determination.

[*Janice is about to reply but their waitress steps up to their table. She removes a pen and a small white tablet from her back pocket.*]

Waitress [*Smiles pleasantly enough.*]:

Good evenen ladies. What can you get you for drinks?

Janice [*Looks up to waitress.*]:

Can I just get some scotch?

Waitress [*Nods, writes down drink then looks to Melinda.*]:

And you Miss?

Melinda [*Smiles.*]:

I reckon I could go for uh glass of Chardonnay.

Waitress [*Nods then writes down Melinda's order.*]:

Alright I'll be back in a moment with your drinks.

[*The waitress walks away from the scene. Janice places her cigar back into her mouth, smoking on it.*]

Melinda [*Smiles to Janice.*]:

So what about the rest of yo' family Janice? Any siblings?

Janice [*Breaks her eye contact then looks back to Melinda. She removes the cigar, grasps the ashtray bring it closer to her. The ashes from the cigar falling into the small gold tray.*]:

No siblings. [*A pause.*] My mother...well lets just say she ran out on us when I was young.

Melinda [*Nods, stares at the table then looks back to Janice.*]:

I'm sorry Janice.

Janice [*Takes a puff on the short thin cigar. The smoke leaving her mouth as she takes the small remains of the cigar and snubs it out hard in the tray. Her fingers going white at the joints as she speaks.*]:

Well you become accustom to it after awhile Mel.

[*Releases the cigar butt and then pushes the tray back to its home from earlier.*]

Melinda [*Drops her eyes to the table.*]:

I reckon you're right Janice.

[*Silence sinks in. Janice leans back into the booth as her gaze is fixed on Melinda. Melinda looks up to Janice, her face constructed into curiosity.*]

So how can yo be so...I don't know how tuh quite describe it. I reckon itz yo' being so stoic and having uh strong attitude.

[*Yet again as Janice was about to answer the waitress reappeared with a glass of wine and scotch. She places them down in front of Janice and Melinda. She then retrieves her order pad from her back pocket with pen.*]

Waitress:

What can I get y'all for yo' dinners?

Janice [*Smiles to Melinda.*]:

Mel?

Melinda [*Smiles back to Janice then looks up to the waitress.*]:

I reckon I'd fancy the steak.

Waitress [*Writes down order.*]:

How'd you like that cooked?

Melinda:

Medium-well would be great.

Waitress [*Nods and scratches something down. Looks to Janice.*]:

And you Ma'am?

Janice:

I'll have the same actually, cooked the same too.

Waitress [*Writes down Janice's order. Reaches down to pick up the menus.*]:

Yo' dinners will be ready in a while.

[*Janice nods and the waitress stalks off to another table.*]

Melinda [*Lifts her wineglass, taking a sip of the white wine. She carefully places the glass back down and looks to Janice.*]:

Do I get an answer tuh my question?

Janice [*Her hand reaches out to her glass of scotch. Her fingers just lifting the glass, she tilts the glass left and right, rolling it on it's base. Janice looks up, her eyes quite hard. Hard enough to cause Melinda to shift uncomfortable in her seat.*]:

Hard times bread hard people Melinda. But from what I know of the Pappas family they roll around in the dough. So my guess is you wouldn't understand something like that being sheltered with money most your life.

Melinda [*Eyes drop to the table. Janice lifts her glass and takes a drink of her scotch. The glass going back to the table.*]:

You know I would understand something like dat Janice. Believe it or not. I may come from uh wealthy family but it doesn't mean I don't understand. [*Melinda looks up to Janice.*] I'm not rolling in duh money right now, I live on my own. I get no money from my parents. I know hard times too Janice.

Janice [*Nods. She reaches up with her right hand. Janice removes her hat and places*

*it on the seat beside herself. This being the first time Melinda sees Janice's long hair. Melinda's mind quickly describes it as strawberry-blond like a gorgeous sunset with shades of oranges and yellows mixing together.]:*

Well then I apologize Mel. [*Janice looks up to lock eyes with Melinda then breaks the contact.*] I've never had much money, constantly on the go. Dad was determined to find the Amazon Nation. Now I plan to find it and show that my father's quest wasn't in vein. [*Janice looks back to Melinda.*]

Melinda [*Smiles then lifts her glass and drinks from it. She places the glass back down and sighs.*]:

I reckon dat you and I both are following in our daddies' footsteps.

Janice [*Smiles sadly.*]:

I suppose you're right Mel. [*A pause.*] So you plan on becoming the dean in the future?

Melinda [*Chuckles.*]:

Naw not quite. I'm more aiming tuh become an archeologist...translator like daddy was. But wid my luck I don't reckon I can.

Janice [*Furrows her eyebrows at Melinda.*]:

Why is that?

[*Takes a sip from her scotch as Melinda replies.*]

Melinda [*Sighs.*]:

Because it iz very hard these days for women tuh become archeologists or even a translator. I've tried numerous times tuh talk tuh Doctor Johnson on giving me uh chance. But unfortunately itz always the same thing.

Janice:

They say you can't because you're a woman? That's a load of crap.

Melinda [*Shakes her head.*]:

What they say Janice iz dat the University is short hand of teachers from duh war.

When in fact duh University could easily get somebody tuh replace me. The subtext tuh it Janice is duh fact I am uh woman, but the University would never come out and say such uh thing. Even more so considering who I am.

Janice:

Well why not just go stomping into Johnson's office demanding a chance using your name?

Melinda [*Sighs and shakes her head. Her right hand grasping the stem of the wineglass, her thumb running up and down the stem. Her voice going serious.*]:

I aint gonna do that Janice. Dat aint my style. I fancy tuh earn my way through life rather then flaunt and bribe my way through life.

Janice [*She smiles lopsidedly.*]:

I can understand that, I've been doing it all my life. Even though I have nothing to flaunt.

[*Janice then chuckles at herself and shakes her head some. She looks back to Melinda with a huge grin.*]

So looks like this dig will be benefiting you as well.

[*Melinda's face constructs into questioning.*]

Mel, you'll be able to prove to the University you can do a dig. I'll also teach you if you'd like.

Melinda [*Smiles deeply.*]:

I would love it if yo did. [*A pause.*] Doctor Johnson did say you wanted tuh convince me tuh go on this dig.

Janice [*Grins.*]

Yup. [*Takes a drink from her half filled scotch.*]

Melinda [*Grins but more devilishly.*]:

So convince me.

Janice [*All of a sudden Janice chokes on her scotch. She pulls the glass away from lips and begins to cough. Janice puts the glass down on the table. She coughs a few more times. Clearing her throat she looks to Melinda, her eyes a bit wide.*]:

What?! I thought you just agreed?

Melinda [*Chuckles, her eyes twinkling.*]:

No I agreed tuh learn how to dig. Not tuh go tuh Greece on duh dig. [*Melinda then takes a sip of her wine.*] Besides Janice, I can't go into Doctor Johnson's office and tell him dat I'll go on duh dig tuh learn how tuh be an archeologist. It aint gonna fly. [*The wineglass' base makes contact with the table again.*]

Janice [*Recovers from her small shock.*]:

Alright, so you want me to convince you. [*Grins.*] So what do you want to know?

Melinda:

Tell me how dis dig will help duh University? I do have tuh look after dis University's best interests.

Janice [*Brings up her hands to rest on the edge of the table, her small fingers interlacing.*]:

Well it'll help the University be more recognized. Probably bring more people flocking to the University. And just maybe increase the history department's funding.

Melinda:

Dat iz if you find duh Amazon Nation.

Janice [*Nods.*]:

And I will.

Melinda [*Chuckles.*]:

Yes well what use would I be tuh you if I go...and duh University's use?

Janice [*Grins.*]:

You'd be helping me run the show, I can always use a second hand. Not to mention I could use your skills in translating ancient Greek. And for the University you'll be watching over their...assets.

Melinda [*Nods.*]:

I could use some brushen up on my translating. [*Crosses her arms against her chest.*] And how long do you expect dis dig tuh take?

Janice [*Looks down and reflects. Takes a deep breath then looks back to Melinda.*]:

I'm not quite sure. Could be between a month to...six months. It all depends on what we find, weather, number of workers. Many things.

Melinda:

My problem Janice iz I aint in tuh spending quite such uh long time from home.

Janice [*Sighs. Reaches out to drink from her scotch, her glass going back to the table. She looks back up to Melinda with serious eyes.*]:

Well do you have a problem with learning to become an archeologist, finding the Amazon Nation, creating history, hanging around me, and being in Greece with fine food?

Melinda [*Grins.*]:

Oh no, I don't mind them things at all.

Janice [*Grins as well.*]:

Well then Miss Pappas, I'd say you have little to lose from this expedition, just a little time. You get a shot at being an archeologist, maybe get a promotion from the University, go to Greece, use your translating skills and have it all paid in full only to get a little home sick. I wouldn't pass something up like that myself. And I believe you've been dreaming of something like this for quite sometime now.

Melinda [*Chuckles then nods a few times, her lips forming into a huge grin.*]:

I do reckon you pinned me Doctor Covington.

# ~ Is There an Archeologist in the Dig? ~

Short Story on Janice Covington and Melinda Pappas:

## Is There an Archeologist in the Dig?

By

Red Hope

The small woman turned to her left by her nightstand, she reached down to lift up her revolver. The revolver gleamed for a moment then was inserted into a holster. What was lying underneath the gun is a map, the center of the map focused on Greece. There are a group of eastern mountains underlined then to east of that is a circle drawn with an "X" through it. In small print in the circle is written *Amazon Forest, main dig site*.

The small female studied the map for a moment then turned around and strolled out of the tent into the cool day. Heading straight ahead, this small female came to a deep trench. She bent down to one knee and peered inside. "Mel?"

The southern belle had heard her name, so she turned around to see her friend. "Hey Janice."

"How's it going down there?"

Melinda grinned. "Ain't bad." She paused. "Why don't yo come down yonder here?"

The archeologist nodded her head. She then put her right hand over her head to hold her hat down. Next she jumped down into the digging trench, her hand falling back to her side. Janice padded over to the southerner's side. "What's up?"

"Nothing right now. We haven't hit uh thing but rocks."

"You probably won't for awhile."

Melinda bobbed her head up and down a few times. "Dat's what I reckoned." She took a deep breath. "Yo reckon we're really diggen in duh right area?"

Janice crossed her arms against her chest. "I know we are Mel. I've been doing enough research to know."

"I know." The southerner then sighed.

Janice then turned her gaze away, she looked up and down the trench's length, she watched some of the workers. Looking to the trench's depth, she tried to figure how many feet deep it is. She estimated it to be around four feet as of now maybe three and half. The archeologist then looked up to Mel. "Help me out with something Mel."

Melinda nodded. "Love tuh."



"Great." Janice then hauled herself out of the trench with Melinda following behind.

Once the southerner stood up on the level ground she brushed off her pants and looked to her friend.

"Okay I'm trying to decided where to start the second trench." Janice turned her attention back to Mel. "So where do you think I should start it?"

Melinda looked to the other woman with wide eyes. "Why yo asken me?"

"Because you wanted to learn how to be an archeologist. So here you go. Where do I dig?"

The belle brought her arms over her chest, she gazed around in the cleared dig site within the massive forest. She then spotted something odd, rather odd. Melinda uncrossed her arms and started to walk closer, Janice followed. "Dat's real peculiar Janice."

The archeologist nodded. "So? There's a lump in the ground. Why does it matter?"

Melinda studied the way the ground rose up in this one particular spot then was level every where else. "It matters 'cause something iz probably underneath."

"Yeah, a bunch of dirty maybe."

"No no." The southerner took a deep breath as she put her facts together. "Duh ground around here iz all leveled. Then there iz dis one spot that ain't. Duh only possible reason dat itz like dat iz 'cause somebody... or something dug there." She paused for a moment. "Something iz taking dat space up under duh ground Janice." Mel looked to the archeologist. "Right?"

The archeologist looked away from the mound in the ground and peered up to Melinda. "You're right Mel." Mel grinned. "Good job." Her eyes averted back to the lump. "Let's get some workers on that area."

Melinda nodded. "I'll take care of dat." She then spun around on her heels and strolled back into the main part of the dig site. Collecting a few works, she pointed to the area and turned her head back to the workers and continued to talk.

Janice though, she had just turned around to watch Melinda leave. She studied the southerner as she took control of the workers. It made the archeologist grin to herself.

To Janice, Melinda follows with a beautiful grace, floating on air. She dips and dives here and there in the air as her colors run deep through her wings. Making Melinda Pappas seem so elegant.

Things are just perfect.

By late afternoon things were still perfect. Numerous works were uncovering the mound Melinda had spotted. The first trench still being worked on. The day rolled on along with the clouds, they seemed to become denser and darker. That in turn had worried the archeologist and the southerner, the two deciding later tonight that they needed to cover the trenches for protection.

Then there was the dusk of the day that came. That's when everything became quite fascinating.

"Janice, look at dis."

The archeologist propped her shovel against the side of the trench, she walked over to Mel's side. She looked down to the same spot Mel was staring at, her eyes in amazement. "Jesus." Bending down to one knee, she studied the object stuck deep in the ground.

Melinda herself bent down to one knee. Her hand carefully grazed across the object, a cool silver metal. It sparkled up to her as if greeting after being trapped under the earth for so long. "Janice iz dat a serpent embossed in duh metal."

Janice signaled her agreement with a bob of her head, her hand carefully touched the serpent design on the metal. "It definitely is." She lifted that same hand to rest on her knee. "It's amazing the condition this metal is in, no dents." Looking up to Mel, she smiled. "Good job Mel." She turned her head to looked back down. "Let's get this dug out before dark."

Melinda nodded her head. "We ain't got much time."

"We'll get it out." Janice stood up and looked to her workers in the trench. "Boys, we've got something over here that needs to be dug up and carefully removed. Let's get it out before dark!"

All the workers nodded and shuffled down the trench to the silver object in the bottom of the trench, they all began to work around the metal, digging it up with small hand shovels. And well by nightfall the item was excavated. A silver shield with serpent designs going all along the trim, it was something to behold.

Both Mel and Janice had an idea to what this shield, but didn't discuss it till they were in Janice's tent, alone.

"Mel it couldn't be." Janice exhaled slowly.

The southerner nodded her head "What else could it be Janice? It wuz in perfect condition like it wuz made tuhday."

Janice shook her head. "Mel it is not the damn Aegis. Zeus's shield is just legend you know that."

"Okay, I reckon dat Janice. But wuzn't it yo dat wuz in Doctor Johnson's office tellen him dat duh Amazons ain't just uh legend? Janice you're an archeologist wid proof right before your eyes." The sound of thunder filled the air after Mel spoke.

"That's a hell of a lot different Mel." The archeologist brought her arms up to her chest, crossed.

Melinda's hands went to her hips. "Iz it really?" Thunder again.

"Mel even if it is the Aegis. Why is it here in the old Amazon Nation? The Amazons' goddess was Artemis not Zeus." Thunder sounded again with lightening.

The southerner sighed as she dropped her hands to her sides again. "Well Zeus did give Athena his shield in mythology."

"Yeah Athena not Artemis."

Melinda huffed. "Okay they were sisters Janice. Yo figure it out since you're duh archeologist." She shifted to the tent flap, about to leave. She had second thoughts as rain came pouring down.

Janice sidestepped Mel and went to the tent flap, she opened it and looked out.

Melinda came up behind Janice and looked over the small woman to see the rain coming down. There was lightening and then thunder, the rain coming down even hardier. "Oh my."

"Damn it. This would happen." The archeologist closed the tent flaps roughly and whirled around to stare up at Mel.

Melinda saw the anger in Janice's eyes. "Duh trenches will be fine Janice. We covered them."

Janice sucked in a deep breath. "I know, this will just slow things down. Hell, I hate rain." She walked pass Melinda and went to sit on the bed.

The southerner released her breath slowly and shifted over to Janice. "Janice it could be worse ya hear. We could have never covered them trenches then we'd be in real trouble."

The archeologist sighed. "Yeah you're right." Again she sighed. "Look sorry about earlier Mel. It's just, it's a crazy idea. You know?"

Melinda nodded. "I know but they say anything is possible."

"It is." Janice then looked up with smile but she raised an eyebrow. "So what you going to do about getting to your tent?"

Melinda placed her hands on her hips again with a devilish smirk. "I aint gonna go in dat rain."

"Mel, you can't stay in here."

The southerner arched an eyebrow suggestively.

Janice's face dropped. "Don't even think about it Mel. No never. You can get to your own damn tent." For emphasis she crossed her arms against her chest.

Melinda Pappas just grinned in return.

Janice sighed. How'd she let this happen? She had no idea how. Now she crossed her arms against her chest and closed her eyes again. For a brief moment she listened to the rain and thunder outside. "Mel?"

"Mmm?"

"You owe me big for this."

Melinda grinned. "Now Doctor Covington, remember who got yo here in duh first place."

"Very funny Mel. You wouldn't be here either if it wasn't for me."

"True, I won't argue wid dat." The southerner then shifted her shoulders some. "Janice scoot over."

"Mel, if I scoot over any more I'm going to fall square on my ass on the floor." Now she opened her emerald eyes. She stared up at the top of the tent. She still had yet to figure out how she let Melinda Pappas talk her into sleeping in the same bed with her.

"Well I'm 'bout tuh fall out of dis bed Janice."

"Same here. We fall out of it together."

The southerner chuckled. "If we ever do an expedition again together we'll have tuh put in extra money for larger beds."

"Right Mel. I'll try and remember that." Janice then tried to roll to her right, she soon was staring down at the floor, her side right on the edge of the bed. "This isn't going to work."

Melinda sighed. "We need tuh figure something out here."

"Yeah I got it, I'll sleep on the floor and you can sleep on the bed."

"I ain't gonna let you sleep on dat floor." She turned her head to the right to see Janice on her side, her back to Mel. The southerner then rolled to her right so that she faced the other woman's back. "I gotta idea."

"What's that?"

"Come here."

"What?"

"Jus' come here Janice." Mel then brought her hands forward to grasp Janice's side, she pulled.

Janice gradually released her breath and followed the physical command, her back soon pressed into the taller woman's body. She then felt Mel wrap her arms around her waist, her own head tucked under Melinda's chin. "Well this is just great." Bad sarcasm seeped into Janice's voice.

"Well do you have uh better idea dat doesn't involve duh floor?"

"I'll go sleep in the rain."

In answer, Melinda tightened her arms around Janice's waist. "You'll get sick then and I don't wanna reckon what you're like when you're sick."

"What's that suppose to mean?"

"It means you're uh grouchy archeologist."

"Well like this is normal Mel?"

"Are you really complaining?"

Silence.

Melinda then mentally slapped herself for that one. Realizing what she just said aloud. Stupid move number one. She then felt her own pulse pick up because of the silence.

Janice opened her eyes again and took a deep breath. "I'm not going to answer that one. Neither of us could handle it."

The southerner sighed. Out of relief or sadness? She then shifted her body a little and Janice's body then seemed to perfectly mold against Melinda's. "Good. Sleep well Janice."

"Night Mel." She closed her eyes and began to relax. Soon sleep would come to take them away from this world.

The next morning the pair woke up earlier but not early enough. Neither sure why but yet they had their guess as to why they slept so late. Well not late in the way of later morning but they weren't up at the crack of dawn like they should have been.

Mel had gotten up first and rolled out of bed, she turned around to stare down at her friend. "Yup, she looks like uh child." That had been a whisper as the southerner studied the archeologist still sleeping.

Janice Covington, with a front stage and back stage. She has her front stage with an interesting play going on. But then there's the hidden back stage. A back stage that is worn, messy, and cluttered with chaos. Just how much would it take to clean and repair the damage to the back stage? That is something Melinda wanted to know.

Yet as Melinda stood there staring at her friend, she could see how peacefully Janice slept. Almost like a child. Sleeping as if she were back in her young years where there's so much innocence surrounding her. That idea had made Mel chuckle. Janice Covington innocent? Right, that would never happen. Then again...

The woman took a long breath and slowly released it. She then strolled to the other side of the bed and carefully grasped her friend's closes arm. "Janice?" She got a low mumble in return. "Come on Janice you seriously need tuh get up." A question entered Mel's mind on exactly how this other woman ever got up earlier anyway. Decided this wasn't working, she bent down to one knee and became eye level with the archeologist. Melinda ran her right hand through Janice's sun-kissed hair. "Janice wake up."

Very, very slowly sparkling ivy eyes opened up and studied Mel. "Morning."

"Morning back at yo." Melinda smirked and shifted her hand to rest on the other woman's shoulder. "Slept well huh?"

The archeologist snickered which shook the frame of her small body. "Yeah, how'd you know?"

"I ain't sure, jus' uh lucky guess." Melinda smiled warmly. "We are late in getting up."

"Hmmm, what time is it?"

"I ain't sure, but it ain't dawn."

Janice rolled her eyes then closed them. "Tell me when its noon."

"Very funny Covington." She stood up. "Yo better get up or I'll help yo get up."

Janice chuckled. "Yeah? Maybe I won't then just so I can see what you would do." Her eyes opened again and sparkled with mischief to Melinda.

The southerner arched an eyebrow. "Don't tempt me."

But Janice was still grinning. "Uh huh."

Melinda's eyes went a bit darker, then her expression went serious. "Get up... if you want." It came out hard and she turned on her heels to stomp out of the tent. Mel headed to the food tent and got breakfast. She'd eaten quickly and went to the first trench. She knew that Janice would be at the second but she didn't want to be near the archeologist right now.

And Melinda had been right. After Janice had breakfast she went to the second trench to work there. She knew her friend was angry with her. One of the best things she figured was to leave the southerner be so she could calm down. But after an hour or so Janice began to notice that the workers had stopped working on one specific area of the second trench. Janice went to that area to find out what was going on. She quickly found out why and called for her partner. "Mel?"

The southerner left the side of the first trench and came over to where she heard Janice yell for her. She came to the edge of the trench and gazed in. There was Janice Covington standing beside what looked to be a door in the ground. "My lord. Iz dat uh door Janice?"

"I don't know Mel." She glanced up. "Get down here."

Melinda nodded and hopped into the trench. "There's gotta be some latch or somethen Janice." She looked around in the dirt, Janice following her example. Then something gleamed up to Mel, she bent down to one knee and found a brass bar. "Janice?"

The archeologist lowered down beside her and grinned. "Bingo."

They grinned to each other then went about removing the dirt more. Soon a handle to the door appeared, the door more of a hatch then anything. The pair figured it must be a door to a tomb. Of what they had no idea of.

"Okay Mel, we're both going to have to grab this handle and pull."

Melinda nodded and grasped the handle with both hands.

Janice did the samething. "Count of three. One...Two...Three!"

The two women pulled hard on the handle and they could hear a scrapping sound as the door started to give way. Both women gritted their teeth and pulled hardier. The scrapping switched to a sound of air hissing. That's when the archeologist knew the tomb had been airtight. Then the door gave up, it flung open and let air in.

"Jesus, that's a hell of a door." Janice rounded the door on one side.

Melinda walked on the other side, she looked in. Then turned her attention to Janice with huge round eyes.

The archeologist was still staring down, she grinned and looked up to Melinda. "It starting to look like a good day of digging." She chuckled and peeped back down into the dark hole. She couldn't see much but a set of marble stairs that led down. The archeologist then stepped up beside her friend. "Let's go get some lamps huh?"

The southerner simply nodded.

Janice climbed out of the trench with Melinda following behind. The pair went through the camp and made their way directly to the tent that held different archeology tools. They went inside and went to the far end of the tent where a table of different lamps lay.

The archeologist shifted to the table then turned to Melinda beside her. "Sorry Mel." It was a low whisper.

The tall woman averted her eyes away from the table to Janice. "It's alright Janice."

"I guess I found my line this morning." Janice grinned up to her friend.

Mel grinned back for a moment then went stern. "We both did Janice."

The archeologist's head bobbed up and down as she slowly let her breath come out. She turned back to the table. "Right."

The southerner brought her arms up against her chest. "It's uh line but it ain't permanent."

Janice nodded sadly. "Right." Same word bad sign. She reached forward and lifted up a lamp and turned back to Mel. "Get two lamps." She then started walking to the tent flap.

Melinda arched an eyebrow at seeing that total switch in attitude, she didn't like it. "Janice Covington." It came out hard and almost commanding.

The archeologist sighed and slowly turned around to her friend. "Yes?"

Slowly the tall southerner walked up to her friend. "What wuz dat 'bout?"

"What?"

"You know goddamn well what."

Janice blinked. Did her friend just cuss? Did the southerner bell just cuss? She wanted to almost laugh but this wasn't the time. "I don't."

Melinda sighed. "Why are you being so thick headed Janice? I gave you an opening in our relationship."

The archeologist shifted her stance uncomfortable. "It wouldn't work Mel."

"What? Our friendship becoming... more?"

"Oh Christ, listen to yourself Mel!" Janice huffed and stomped over to another side of the tent. She whirled around to face her friend. "It is crazy Mel and just stupid."

The southerner nodded a few times as she thought about that. She lifted her eyes to Janice. "Thank you." She paused. "Now I know where I stand wid you and it sounds like I ain't worth Doctor Janice Covington's time." Now it was Melinda's turn to move to the tent flap.

"Mel wait, that isn't what I meant." Janice took steps closer to her friend.

Melinda sighed and released her hand from the tent flap, she gave Janice her attention. "Then what you mean?"

"I meant..." Janice took a long breath. "Its just it is the forties and well... Realistically it wouldn't work Mel. We both know that."

Melinda's hands went to her hips. "Yes well I told myself duh samething but yo never know till yo try something."

The archeologist arched an eyebrow. "Mel it would be to hard for the both of us."

"Maybe... maybe not Janice. But I reckon we'll never find out since... since well yo drew duh line... permanently."

Janice's closed her eyes for a second then opened them again. Those words stung deep. She walked over to a table and placed the lamp there. Her hands grasped the edge of the table tightly as she leaned forward closing her eyes again in frustration. "It's to hard." A whisper.

Melinda lowered her head for a moment then turned her eyes to her friend. Slowly she walked up behind Janice. "We can't be sure Janice." She paused then she decided to question that. "Don't you reckon dat Janice?"

The archeologist's ivy eyes opened once more. "I don't know Mel, really I don't."

The southerner didn't respond right away she chewed on the words spoken since they first entered this tent. "Dat's why we would try. Tread duh water Janice." She let her right hand come up to rest on the other woman's right shoulder. "What you have tuh lose Janice?"

The archeologist turned around and locked eyes with Melinda. "You."

"Same here Janice." Melinda sadly smiled. "We're both in duh same boat. So..."

The small dropped her eye contact and stared at the floor below. Is she crazy for even considering something like this? Or is she crazier for trying to ignore somebody like Melinda Pappas? Melinda Pappas whom she has a deep strong draw towards. She answered those questions to herself and slowly raised her head to the waiting woman.



Janice let a fine smile crease her lips. "So... we try."

The southerner smiled warmly. "Sounds like uh plan."

The small woman chuckled. "Uh huh."

Melinda grinned and leaned down a little to place a light kiss to the other woman's cheek then she pulled her in for a hug.

Janice grinned then pulled back from the embrace. "Come on enough of this crap. We have things to do."

Mel chuckled she turned to the table and gathered up two lamps. "Yes Doctor Covington."

The archeologist shook her head and took her lamp as well. "Let's go Miss Pappas."

And they did, the two females left the tent quickly and headed back to the second trench.

Janice turned to her right, she bent down to one knee and placed the lantern on the ground. Upspring to her feet, she gazed around listening to the sound of her partner coming down the stairs. The room was dark still with a dry almost cough like air, dust filtering in the air. The archeologist averted her eyes to her left as Melinda came down with two other lanterns, the room brightened.

"Oh my." The southerner rotated her head left and right in inside of the tomb, she still stood on the bottom step.

Janice grinned as she finally could see everything. It's a basic small square tomb. Janice stood in the center, to her left were the stairs, in front of her is a wall. The wall had a number of holes with scrolls inserted into them. To the archeologist's right is another wall with writing on it. Then behind Janice... well she turned around to find out.

Once she did turn around, she took a stride back with her eyes wide. "Mel?"

The southerner came down the last step and stood beside her friend. She looked to the same wall, her own eyes wide. "Iz dat what I reckon it iz?"

The smaller woman nodded. "I think it is Mel." Janice took a step forward her hand reaching out to carefully skim across the smooth wall and over the niches in the wall. She took a step back into her original spot. "It's a good drawing of a Gorgon though."

"But why Janice? Duh Amazons ain't got anything tuh do wid duh Gorgons. And which Gorgon iz dat?"

The archeologist shrugged her shoulders, her arms crossing against her chest. She stared at the perfect drawing of a snake haired female warrior. "I don't know Mel. There were three Gorgons."

"Medusa, Stheno, and Euryale. But it can't be Medusa Janice she wuz killed in mythology."

"Yeah in mythology Mel." Janice turned around to the wall that held the scrolls. "My guess is the answers are in those scrolls." She walked over to the wall and pulled out a scroll, unrolled it, and began to read the ancient Greek.

Melinda though, she sauntered over to the other wall that had writing on it. She dropped the lantern in her left hand on the ground and raised the one in her right hand to read the writing. She began to read it aloud. "Beware.... Of the... ancient duo." Mel pushed her glass up onto her nose to keep reading. "Of the immortal Gorgon sisters." She turned around on her heels to gaze at Janice. "Janice dat ain't good."

Janice nodded, she was still staring down at the scroll. She shifted to Mel's side as she saw the southerner lift up the second lantern from the floor. "That isn't all of it Mel. Here's the story of this tomb." She took a deep breath and read from the scroll. "After Medusa's death... the two Gorgon sisters, Stheno and Euryale, swore revenge for their sister's death. So they set out to go after... Athena first since she helped in the death of Medusa. Uh... it goes on to say Athena couldn't kill them because they're immortal. So she asked the help of her sister, Artemis, to lock them both up. Artemis agreed and then... Athena and Artemis decided the best way to stop the Gorgon sisters was to lock them in separate tombs. Artemis said her Amazons would take one Gorgon and bury it in their forest." Janice stopped reading and peered up to Mel.

The southerner ran her right hand through her hair. "Well where's the other sister?"

Janice shrugged her shoulders and began to roll the scroll up. "Doesn't say. The rest of the scroll went on to say if one Gorgon is freed then the other would be and the two of them would destroy the world." Janice sighed. "Sounds like a bunch of hocus pocus to me Mel."

Melinda arched an eyebrow. "Janice, yo probably jus' jinxed us."

"Oh Christ...." Janice stopped in mid sentence as something caught her eye. She sidestepped the other woman to go to the wall with the writing. She lowered herself down to one knee as she noticed something. "Mel give me one of your lanterns."

The southerner turned to face the wall, bending down beside Janice with her lantern. "What iz it Janice?"

"Look." Janice pointed to a crack in the wall, a very large crack.

"It's uh crack. So?"

"So? Christ give me a lamp." Janice took the handed lantern and held it close to the crack.

Melinda studied hard at the wall as the archeologist held the lantern close. She then realized she could see through the crack. "There's uhnother room."

"Not just that Mel, but this wall is paper thin." The archeologist stood up. "Back away Mel." Janice watched her friend take a step back. "Hold this." She handed the lantern to the southerner then glimpsed back to the wall. A grin spread across her lips as she took two steps back then rushed forward. Janice closed her eyes as she felt herself ram into the wall then it crumbled in. Janice went tumbling into another room, the brown wall's bits under her body as she lay on her stomach on the floor.

"Yo know I could have helped yo Janice." The southerner stepped into the room with the two lanterns stared down at the smaller woman.

Janice rolled her eyes as she stood back up. "Oh no, I'm the tough one. Remember?" She grinned and took one of Mel's lamps.

The pair then gazed into the room they just discovered. Together they walked into it and found what appeared to be an actual sarcophagus in the center of the room.

Janice walked over to it and looked down on the lid, she felt herself shaking now. Maybe, just maybe that scroll was true. She began to study the engraving of yet another Gorgon. This can't be good for sure. Melinda though took a quick glimpse, but something else had caught her eye. She went to the opposite side of the wall with her lamp. Her glass were pushed back up onto the bridge of her nose as she studied an object on the wall. She lifted her right hand to the object, there were three snakes making a circle design. Mel began to bring her hand to the center, which seemed to be... "Janice?"

"Yeah Mel?" Janice turned around towards Mel to see the southerner bring her hand to the center of a snake design ornament in the wall. "Mel don't-" Her words were cut off as a scraping sound was heard. "Touch that button." She said it with frustration.

Both women though turned around to the direction of the scraping sound, which was the coffin. The lid slowly was sliding off.

Janice then began to hear a hissing sound like a snake. "Shit!" She jumped to Mel's side and grabbed her arm. "I think we wore out our visit Mel. Run!" The archeologist began to run, Mel dragging behind.

The pair raced out of the coffin room into the scroll room and ran up the marble stairs into the trench.

"Janice wuz wrong?" Mel was breathing hard as she came up to the trench.

"What you mean Mel? You just released a Gorgon! What could be possible wrong!? This is normal!" Janice then saw all the workers in the dig site stiffen up, turning their heads around frantically. "Mel move!" She grabbed the southerner again by the arm and hauled her out of the trench.

"I can run on my own Janice Covington." She stood at the edge of the trench on the level ground.

"Then come on for Christ sakes Mel!" Janice released the other woman's arm. She began to run with Melinda right beside her.

"Where we going Janice?" She kept running beside the archeologist.

"To my tent. I need to get my gun."

The two females ran to Janice's tent. They went inside and once they did they heard the workers all screaming and running around. They all spoke in Greek and Janice translated the Greek in her head as she frantically searched in the tent for her gun.

"What they saying Janice?"

"That there's a creature and to run." Janice went to her nightstand to find her gun. She quickly snatched it up and opened the chamber to find it filled with bullets. Closing the chamber, Janice spun it to hear it click.

"Janice?" Mel had spoke in a gasp.

The archeologist glanced up to Mel saw her staring in one direction and she looked in that same direction to see a shadow. Janice's eyes turned into wide orbs with her attention going back to her partner, she could see Melinda was about to scream. So she quickly rushed to Melinda's side and lifted her right hand up over the southerner's mouth to keep her quiet. Janice then looked back to the shadow of a thin woman marching slowly by the tent, the great part was her hair was wavering high up in the air and hissing.

Melinda sighed as she closed her eyes, trying to block out the image. She took deep breaths to calm herself, her hearing picking up on the screams of the workers. Slowly she opened her eyes again and watched the Gorgon walk past the tent to go somewhere else. A sigh came again from Mel.

Janice slowly removed her hand from her friend's mouth. "You okay now?" She'd whispered the question.

Mel nodded. "Yeah." A whispered answer back. She then looked down to Janice. "What we gonna do?"

The archeologist slowly let her breath out as she reflected. "I don't know." She took a long breath. "We need some sort of mirror."

"Janice, the Aegis." Her expression had brightened up.

The archeologist grinned. "Perfect, that's what killed Medusa." Her expression then dropped. "Damn, the shield is still in the artifact tent. We need to get to it Mel."

"How we gonna do dat?" Melinda placed her hands on her own sides. "We need tuh distract duh Gorgon Janice."

"Hold on Mel." The archeologist took a deep breath. "If you sneak back around to the artifact tent through the woods. I can distract the Gorgon with my gun. It might work."

"What if ain't gonna work Janice?"

"Then you better get out of here Mel."

The southerner's hands fell off her hips. "I ain't gonna leave wid out yo. I wouldn't be much of uh partner then." She grinned.

Janice sighed with a grin. "Sure, sure Mel." She then shifted to the tent flap, opening it a crack. Looking out, her emerald eyes narrowed. The scene outside was a numerous amounts of workers but statues now. She turned her head to the right some, to the center of the dig site, there she spotted the profile of the Gorgon. Backing up she looked to Mel. "Okay, the Gorgon is near the trenches. You go into the artifact tent and get the shield. I'll keep her busy till you do. Once you get the shield get her to look at her reflection Mel."

"Right." The southerner moved to the tent flap beside Janice.

"Mel?"

"Yeah?"

"Be careful alright. Stay behind that shield too."

Melinda smiled. "Don't worry. Be careful too."

Janice smiled back warmly. "Let's go."

Melinda nodded and the two women stepped out of the tent at the same time. Melinda went to her left into the woods.

Janice slowly crept to her right towards the Gorgon with her gun up. She quickly darted across an open area to go behind another tent, the creature had her back to Janice. Raising her gun, Janice pulled the hammer back and pointed it at the Gorgon. "I hate uninvited guests on my sites." She pulled back on the trigger. The gold bullet sped through the air and made its mark in the beast's back.

The Gorgon flinched from the bullet landing into her back but no blood came out. She quickly spun around from the direction it came from with gleaming red eyes. Even the snakes themselves acted as the Gorgon, searching.

Janice though had hid back behind the tent. She was breathing hard while the adrenaline pumped through her body. Then she could hear the Gorgon moving in her direction even more so by the sound of the hissing snakes coming closer. Janice though couldn't tell how close the Gorgon was without peering to the creature. But she came up with a quick improvise and lifted her gun so that she looked at it from the side, she carefully tilted it. The reflection came and she saw the Female creature making her way to Janice and about fifty paces away. The archeologist's eyes widen and she quickly ran around the tent, she then looked to the trenches and started counting.

"One... two.... Three." She broke off running to the first made trench. She literally fell into it making a loud noise from the stones and dirt falling into the trench at the edge. Janice pressed her back against the trench as she listened, her gun up. Her thumb came up slowly to pull back on the hammer.

The Gorgon had heard the noise and whipped around to face the trenches again. She narrowed her red eyes and started to slowly pursue in that direction.

Janice again tried her trick with the gun. Lifting it in front of her face, she tilted up and down till she got the reflection of the Gorgon coming towards her. She took a deep breath as she guessed the Gorgon to be fifty yards away. Bring the gun's barrel to her lips, she closed her eyes and sighed. Springing to her feet she whirled around, her eyes still closed and she shot her gun in the direction she thought the Warrior Gorgon to be in.

Janice heard a low hiss from the Warrior Gorgon as she plopped back down into the trench. She opened her sea green eyes and grinned. "Hit two." She sighed. "Where are you Mel?"

The Warrior Gorgon though, grinned to herself. She then decided to take another route, she began to walk down to the end of the trench instead of going directly towards Janice. She quickly power-walked though and came to the end of the trench and looked down it to see the woman with a gun not noticing her.

The Warrior Gorgon was about to jump into the trench, but a yell filled the air. "Hey ugly! Why don't yo try me out?"

The creature's eyes narrowed as she brought her sights up to see a tall dark haired woman standing at the corner of a tent. She wasn't looking at the Gorgon either. Slowly the Gorgon rose up from the trench's edge and started stalking towards Melinda.

Janice ducked deep down into the trench as the Gorgon strolled passed her. Once the Gorgon was far enough away she quietly climbed out of the trench to watch the back of the Snaked haired woman walk to Melinda. The archeologist pulled back her hammer on the gun just incase something went wrong.

The Gorgon walked towards Melinda with a grin. As she neared she brought her hands up.

Melinda watched the Gorgon's shadow coming to her. She stood tensed at the corner of the artifact tent, half her body visible to the Gorgon, the other not. The shadow came close and she took a deep breath. Quickly twisting to her right, Mel swung her right arm in front of her body as she ducked her head into her body while bending down. Attached to her right arm is the Aegis. The Aegis itself was placed on the ground pointing in the Gorgon's direction with its owner safely hidden behind.

"Take uh good look at yourself beautiful!" Melinda grinned at her own words as she heard a scream fill the air. It lasted for seconds then the scream slowly faded out as if somebody were drowning.

"Its okay to look Mel." Janice lowered her gun, placing it back into her holster, and ran towards her friend.

Gradually the southerner rose up while removing the shield, she dropped it to the ground. The relief of tension led to her body shaking in reaction. Janice ran up to her side and both women faced the creature.

The Gorgon was a statue now, her face in pain with a scream still trying to escape. The snakes in her hair were all straight up. Then the Gorgon's eyes went red and very fine cracks began to creep up and down the length of the Gorgon statue.

"Christ!" Janice turned to Mel and half jumped half pushed Melinda to the ground. She covered her body over top of the southerner's to protect her. The statue of the Gorgon then exploded without another warning. It shattered into millions of soaring pieces that neatly landed to the ground close to the partners. Then the statues of the workers began to slowly materialize from stone to human forms.

Mel opened her eyes and gazed up to her friend. "Well dat wuz more then I bargained for."

Janice lifted her head and smirked down at the other woman. "Well that wasn't

anything compared to my regular days."

"Please spare me." Melinda chuckled.

"Well we'll have to do this again sometime Miss Pappas."

Melinda Pappas groaned and closed her eyes with a chuckle. Janice Covington though laughed and dropped her head against her friend's shoulders.

Was this another average archeology dig or more? More in the way of archeology or more in the way of relationship? For you are entitled to make your own conclusion to these questions. For these two women just went through a roller coaster flying with a thrill. Who knows what their next ride will be.

**The End**