

~ Possession ~

by Zee

Disclaimer -

Hi, welcome to my Halloween offering. This will be a bumpy flight and the reader may experience blood, guts, sex, and death. If this is not your desired destination today please hit the nearest back button or that small X box at the top right of your computer screen to exit. In case of emergency, please put both hands flat on your desktop and push back, and remember knowing is half the battle.

A big thank you goes out to my beta reader Ken and Cat; they make me look good. Take a big bow; you two deserve it.

Enjoy

Send feedback to zeeamy@gmail.com

The full moon rose in the sky, highlighting the dilapidated houses and two-story apartment buildings along Rose Hill Road. Roses hadn't bloomed on this street in nearly a decade. In their place, weeds choked the ground and filled the cracks in driveways and sidewalks. Streetlights and the occasional front porch light highlighted the buildings, with their cracking paint and sagging foundations. Like their homes, the people who lived on this street struggled under the weight of everyday life.

Yellow, like rotting teeth, and fully round, the moon climbed sluggishly, as if she struggled for every inch she gained in the night sky. It was the only heavenly body visible through the light pollution of the city. The few sparkling lights in the night sky were manmade; the baleful wink of airplanes gliding through the sky.

A dog barked at the sudden noise of a car backfiring. The strains of Pink Floyd's "Comfortably Numb" wafted out of an apartment window along with fragrant wisps of smoke. A man and a woman begin to fight, their words repeating like a broken record. They are loud and pierce the quiet hum of the night air, and the people living nearby might have been startled, except that the people on Rose Hill Road were used to it. Just about every night, the people at number 2312 Rose Hill Road argued and fought, it was a nighttime ritual for the neighbors to go to sleep to.

Then as the moon reached her zenith, she had a perfect view of the floorshow of humanity the people closest to number 2312 heard the inevitable a slap. The woman starts to sob, and they know it is over for tonight. They sigh and roll over in their beds, knowing deep inside that they should do something, but something had been done in the past and the woman was still there regardless of what some noble stranger tried to do. So now, it was just part of going to bed, like brushing ones teeth.

The shrill sobs slowly begin to deepen and then shift until the crying turns to laughter. Around the neighborhood, people sit up in their beds, goosebumps on their flesh and their hair standing on end. Some fumble for glasses to help them see... what, they do not know. Others cross themselves; that was not a laugh of good humor, it was a laugh of dark promise.

The man begins to cry and beg, until his cries become a wet, wrenching scream and still the evil laughter continues, driving into the unwilling listeners of Rose Hill Road.

As the sun was poking its head around the curve of the Earth, cops bustle back and forth, keeping the press and curious onlookers back on the other side of the yellow tape. A young man in a police uniform escorted a young woman from the coroner's office into the house, only to rush back out and heave into a sickly looking hedge. This causes the whispers among the people looking on behind the yellow tape to increase, adding to the chorus of official voices and emergency vehicles.

A middle-aged woman approached the tape, her bloodshot blue eyes taking in the scene. Black bags had taken up permanent residence under those eyes. Polished ebony shoes clicked on the broken cement of the drive, coming to a halt just in front of the tape. Blue eyes sparkled with amusement as the young officer stationed there yawned and then caught site of her, choking mid yawn.

"Captain," he sputtered.

"Relax..." She glanced down at his uniform for some clue for his name, feeling bad that he knew who she was, yet she had no idea who he was. "Curtis. I understand we've got quiet the mess going."

He turned a little green remembering his viewing of the scene.

She clapped him on the shoulder. "No need to say anything, your face gives it away." They looked at each other uncomfortably for a moment before she said half-heartedly, "Keep doing what you're doing." With her right hand, she lifted up the tape and walked under it.

The house smelled of blood, a lot of blood, so much so that she guessed that the house would have to be burned to its rotting foundation in order to get rid of that smell. She stepped past a hunched over crime scene technician wielding a camera, snapping shots of something that looked like an arm. The deeper into the house she went, the more bits of flesh, blood and gore painted the walls, floor and even the ceiling in places. Asking a pale looking photographer where the officer in charge was, she followed the direction of a pointed finger along a spattered hallway to enter a bedroom. The man she was looking for was deep in conversation with two other people, so she politely bade her time looking around the room. Her eyes came to rest on a framed photograph of a man and a woman; they looked happy, young and carefree. The man had all-American good looks with his chiseled chin, blonde hair, and blue eyes. The woman was petite, tiny, with creamy skin that spoke of a mixed heritage, dark curly hair, and rich brown eyes.

She tried to wait patiently. She knew she could just stomp over, barge into the middle of their mini-meeting, and demand to know what was going on. She would be well in her rights, but there was a hushed tension contracting the air around her people, it was so tense that the air around them seemed to crackle when they moved.

A scowl clouded his features, as the detective in charge broke up the meeting, sending the others back to do their jobs. He turned and stopped, spotting the Captain, his scowl faded into a look of surprise.

In three quick strides, she crossed over to him and clapped him on a bulky shoulder, "Hell of a mess, Palmer." She winced at her choice of words as the scowl returned to his face; she really needed to watch what she said and how she said it.

"Is there a problem, Captain?" he ground out from clenched teeth.

"No, no" she reassured, "Just stating what I saw on my way in." That seemed to do the trick, and his face muscles relaxed a bit.

"Sorry, Captain. You're right; it is a real mess; blood and guts." He gave a small smile. "But we caught the person who did it."

The smile didn't last and that worried her. "That's great, but I sense a problem."

He blew out a heavy breath that caused his shaggy brown bangs to flutter and started to run a frustrated hand through his hair, but remembered the gore covered gloves he was wearing before he could actually do it. After a moment, he simply said, "The wife."

"The wife," she repeated, not getting it. "What about the wife?"

He stared at the ceiling for a moment, rolling his stiff shoulders, and looked back into the blue eyes of his Captain. "I've been told we have three bodies. Two men, we think to be the husband and the husband's brother, who has been living with them for a while, and a small female. We think the small female might be the brother's girlfriend. The first officers on the scene came across the wife in the backyard, covered in blood, and pummeling... something, which later was discovered to be a human torso..." he hesitated.

"Yes" she said careful to keep her voice neutral.

"Well, I'm not really sure what to think about this next part. When the officers told her to raise her hands, she turned on them howling like some mad beast and was speaking in tongues."

She blinked, not sure how to digest this. "Are you sure it wasn't Spanish or something? Nothing against our guys, but very few understand anything but English. We're not exactly culturally diverse."

"Well, it was Nick and George."

"Ah" was all she said. Nick was fluent in several languages.

"Anyways, they yelled at her to stop, put her hands up, all that good stuff and she attacked Nick before they could blink."

A sense of unease dropped into her stomach like a lead weight. "Are they okay?"

"I think so Nick took the brunt of it, and an ambulance took him to the hospital for some busted ribs. George was able to get to his gun and stop her. I honestly think if he hadn't, they'd be dead too.

"Fuck." Now she had a police shooting on top of a triple homicide. God, the press would be cumming in their shorts. "So the wife is dead?"

He shook his head. "No. It took three shots to put her down, but she was still alive and in critical condition when she arrived at the hospital."

She wasn't sure what was worse in this case, a live perp or a dead perp. "So they caught her in the act, but I'm sensing some doubt here."

He sighed again and shifted his bulky 5'9" frame from foot to foot. "She's five foot, if that, and maybe 90 pounds soaking wet."

She looked at him, not sure what his point was.

"Her husband and the brother were both over six foot, and I'd guess from the photos in the house, around 200 pounds. Forensics is telling me that these people were torn apart by somebody's bare hands."

She shuddered.

"So my problem is," he continued, "that it seems impossible that a tiny woman like that, no matter how pissed off or hopped up on drugs, could do that. Or that three adults would stand around and let themselves be killed."

She nodded understanding his problem. "Palmer, look. Maybe she drugged them, maybe she had help, or maybe, just maybe, she's innocent. Right now, that's what you need to find out, so stop over-thinking and start looking at the evidence. Your team is here to help you get it right, just listen to them." She looked at him to see if she had gotten her pep talk right.

He nodded, giving her a weak smile and she nodded in approval. "Remember, this is going to spark a media feeding frenzy. It's a small town, and while we have our issues, nothing like this has happened in a long time." She frowned, trying to remember if any thing like this had ever happened. "Be prepared for that and do it right the first time. Nobody wants a killer set loose, but on the other hand, nobody wants an innocent woman frying."

A frown marred his features again at her bluntness. "Do you have any doubts I'm up for the job?"

God, how had she gotten to be Captain? It sure wasn't for her ability to say the right thing. "No I don't, but I was starting to sense that you were doubting yourself."

They stared at each other for a moment, before grins broke out on their faces.

"Aye, aye, Captain."

She shook her head. "Keep me in the loop, but for now I'll leave you to do your job."

She picked her way through the bloody mess, her shoes echoing loudly on the tiled entryway. Finally, she was out of the house, relieved beyond words to be out of such a horrible place. The air seemed to taste sweeter than when she had gone in. She held up the yellow tape and crossed under it.

The flash of cameras drew her eyes across the street to where the three-ring circus had taken up residence. The media and haggard-looking neighbors who seemed in shock at the violence that had hit so close to home lined the sidewalk staring at her. In the grey pre-dawn, her blue eyes caught a flash of something black, a darkness out of place with early morning shadows. It was a pale figure in black clothes. What could be seen of a face not obscured by a hat, seemed to glow white, it was that pale. It was an odd figure, well, not odd, but here in this rundown neighborhood it was an anomaly. If this person had been downtown with the clubs and bars, she never would have thought twice about it, but here the figure stood out.

She took a step back and turned to Curtis. "Get me some shots of the crowd."

He frowned and nodded.

Pale lips thinned into a line of disgust. Too late, there were cops everywhere. She was supposed to bring that sack of shit in and she'd allowed herself to be fooled by what had been a false lead. Well, in hindsight, it had been an obviously false trail. Shoulders hunched, she edged through the early morning crowd, moving up to the media. After some effort, she managed to get a charming smile stretched across her face, and with the index finger of her right hand, she pushed up the brim of her beat up black fedora so her face could be seen.

"Excuse me" she started to say to a young blonde woman whose shirt buttons were just barely keeping her massive breasts from spilling out. The woman spared her a brief, withering glare.

"God, Pete, there's a newspaper reporter bugging me. Look pal, do your own work," she snarled before primping her blonde locks and returning to the mirror in front of her, where she practiced for her upcoming live feed.

Her mouth hung open. She was not used to that kind of response. "I... See here" she stammered, not quite sure what she was trying to say, the reporter's remarks had thrown her that badly.

"Hey buddy, no stalking the talent." A large man growled at her, setting down his large camera equipment.

"My name is Gigamore, not buddy and I am not stalking the talent," she growled back, standing up straight to meet the challenge. Still smaller than the hulking cameraman, Gigamore seemed to expand, her black eyes flashing and churning like the frightening unknown depths of the ocean and she grinned a toothy malevolent smile that held no humor. "I was merely returning home from work and wondering what was going on. Silly me, I thought I would ask the media," she lied.

The cameraman shrunk back instinctively, not wanting to tangle with whoever this person was. "Oh" was all he managed to squeak out as fear constricted his throat.

The field reporter snorted, "Grow a pair, Pete." She turned to the strange man, no, woman; she squinted, not really able to tell the gender. "We're not really sure, but there was a triple homicide and the wife of one of the victims was carted off."

Gigamore tried to look shocked and upset as any good neighbor would, but in reality she found emotions hard to grasp and even harder to convey. "That's awful," she said, sounding anything but shocked and upset. Actually, if she were to pinpoint the vague feelings she was having inside, she would say she was feeling rather annoyed. Now she was going to have to sneak into a hospital to finish the stupid job.

A flash of light broke her thoughts and she leveled a glare at the young man in a uniform shaking his camera. He grinned sheepishly, "Sorry folks, just trying to fix the flash. Looks like it's working now."

People in the crowd chuckled at his embarrassment, but Gigamore frowned. She smelled a liar, and her instincts were never off about such things. She did, after all, work for the father of lies.

She huffed, tilted the worn out fedora down over her pale face, and turned, walking away.

"What are you saying?" The woman in the harsh white hospital gown yelled at him in a high-pitched hysterical voice. "There is no way I murdered my husband."

Yeah, he didn't believe it either, deep down in his gut, but the evidence pointed to one person. One person tore apart Mitch Dawson, Cody Dawson, and Gina Weatherly with their bare hands, and sometimes this person had used their teeth just for kicks. That person was the distraught woman sitting before him. If her heart monitor was any reference, she was very distraught.

"Detective Palmer, please tell me you have more than my client's prints on the bodies? Since she lived with the victims, it stands to reason that she may have had cause to touch them on occasion. What is her motive for killing her husband and her brother in-law?"

'Goddamn mouth-breathing, snake humping, vampire lawyer,' he thought, before meeting the woman's steely gaze. "Your client has already admitted to the violent fights she and her husband were having on a nearly daily basis." Secretly he was thrilled Mrs. Dawson had stuck it to her abusive prick of a husband. If the neighbors' statements were to be trusted, the guy was a real winner, but she didn't need to take the brother and his girlfriend out as well.

"For the last time, I didn't murder my husband. So stop harassing me and get off your fat ass and start looking for the real killer." She crossed her arms over her chest, wincing as the movement pulled the stitches in her chest.

Palmer flinched at the tone, noticing the woman's bitch lawyer did the same. That was a powerfully angry tone there, it almost didn't seem like it had come from Mrs. Dawson. He blinked, and flipped his notebook closed. "Evidence doesn't lie, Ma'am and all of it is pointing at you." He got up and left the room, the sounds of Ms. Dawson's sobs catching his ears as he shut the door.

As he exited the hospital, his right hand automatically reached in his jacket pocket for the crumpled pack of cigarettes. Quickly he shook one out and placed it to his lips, only to groan as he remembered that putz, Freddy, hadn't returned his lighter after lunch.

Looking around he asked the first person he saw, "Hey buddy you got a light?"

Dark eyes looked up from beneath a beaten up black fedora, "Sure, Officer."

"Great, I lost mine." He gave a shrug, "Lighter's are like women, they're always running off." He grinned at his joke.

"Being a woman, I think your joke was a little out of place." A large orange flame shot up from cupped hands.

"Ehhh, sorry." He shrugged self-consciously, who could tell anymore? Boys dressing like girls and girls dressing like boys, it was a fucked up world. "Hell of a lighter you got there," he said, trying to change the subject. "How far does that thing go?"

The flame disappeared, and cupped hands opened to reveal nothing but the smooth flesh of the palms. "As far as I want it to go." She gave him a mysterious smile.

There was something about the smile that tempted him, and then he caught a whiff of something nasty. "God, what is that? Did a skunk fart?" He wrinkled his nose.

Eyes, smile, and face disappeared back under the shadow of the fedora.

They stood for a moment more, "You here to see someone?" The cop in him always questioning.

"Yes."

"Sorry, being at a hospital is never good."

"It's a distant relative, more of a family obligation than anything personal."

He could believe that, the voice held no tone of warmth or caring, just a monotone of facts.

The fedora nodded "Later, Detective."

He grunted. Yep, a sucky-ass-day and, to top it off, it looked like it was going to rain. It could be worse, now that Mrs. Dawson had woken up from her coma, they could get started on putting her away. After almost a month of the press and the Mayor hounding him to put this case away, it looked like the end was in sight. That would be a relief.

With long strides, he stepped away from the curb towards the parking lot; he could see the full moon starting to rise into the darkening sky. God, was it that late already, time for a beer and some food.

By the time the moon had hit her stride and was on her way back to bed, the third floor was washed red in blood, starting in room 313 where Mrs. Dawson had been talking with her lawyer. Briefs and other legal documents were torn and crumpled, much like their owner, Debby Greenly.

Smoke hung around the bar. Unable to escape, it rose to the ceiling, then as the layers built up, it trickled down, obscuring everything. Figures could be seen in the haze, forms and outlines seemingly monstrously distorted; one shadow form seemed to have four arms, another seemed to have horns curling from its head, and yet another did not seem human at all.

At the pitted, carved oak bar, a bartender moved back and forth like a night watchman on post. His skin was dark and seemed to have the consistency of tooled leather. On top of his bald head, six black hairs stood defiant. One walnut brown eye darted back and forth in its socket, the other was covered by a black eye-patch. His one good eye kept coming back to the figure at the end of the bar. He knew who it was, and had known who it was from the moment she walked into his bar. He was pissed off on sheer principle. Not that he would be the one who told her to leave, he liked all five of his limbs right where they were.

Gigamore lifted her right hand and shook the now empty glass. The bartender glided down the length of the bar and took it from her silently, his single eye trailing over her face before it darted away. The fedora was off, sitting complacently on the stool next to her. Her pale moon-washed face was bruised and deep lacerations crisscrossed each other. The deeper wounds looked reddish-orange, like banked coals in a hearth and wept a thick liquid that looked black in the hazy bar light.

Thick hands grabbed a stack of napkins from under the bar. "Sweet mother of God! Stop drippin'

all over my bar. You'll ruin the wood." His voice carried a thick accent of a civilization now dead and dust.

"I bet you knew her, too." Gigamore said with a smile that looked forced while she grabbed the top of the stack and dabbed at her face.

He gave a wistful smile, "A beautiful lass. Why she gave it up for him, I'll never know. Thought she was smarter than that, then that carpenter rolled into town..." His smile turned into a scowl, "but that is a story for another time." He set the glass down so the ice clinked together. "Nothing personal, but why don't you go see a doctor instead of coming her and getting my patrons all into a fit?"

She reached into the glass, scooped out the ice, dropping it on to the rest of the napkins, which she then wrapped up and then held to her swollen right eye. Not that she felt much of anything anymore, but she did feel pain. That useless pile of shit had gotten the drop on her in the hospital; cracked her good and tossed her out a barred window. The muscles in her back winced just remembering the bars. Black eyes refocused in the here and now as she realized that the bartender was still looking at her. "I come here, sweet Horatio, because I can. I will heal well enough on my own; my boss doesn't like it if we show weakness."

He grumbled, knowing that she wasn't going to leave and then slid away muttering, "Fucking damned souls."

Her eyes flickered away from the bartender's departing frame to the muted TV. Court TV was on, and it was showing the trial of the century. Of course, every week it was showing a new trial of the century. This was what she had been hanging around the bar for. The announcer on the screen, thanks to closed captioning, was saying these murders were the bloodiest since Jack the Ripper had haunted London. She had to snort in amusement at that, the reporter really need to do a bit more research or at least crack open the internet, there were a lot more recent murders that he could have used for illustration. The trial of the Full Moon Killer was about to start.

"Oh, for the love of the bleeding sands, get this crap off the TV. Iran is playing Argentina in the soccer finals." A voice barked out over the bar patrons.

Horatio's good eye slid from the glass he was cleaning to Gigamore's face, and then back to the glass.

A figure moved out of the haze, covered from neck to ankle with a worn grey trench coat, its face, hands, and feet covered in dirty bandages. The gap in the bandages where the eyes should be glowed red, as if a hot fire was contained inside. As it reached the bar the filthy bandaged hands came down, banging loudly on the wood. "Didn't you hear me old man? I said turn on the soccer game."

"He heard you but he's more scared of me than of you." Gigamore said turning in her barstool.

The creature turned, facing the beaten soul at the end of the bar, and then dismissed her.

"Horatio, change the channel. Don't make me have to come over the bar and do it myself."

A hand with swollen knuckles reached over, picked up the beaten up fedora, and placed it on top of a blonde head, creating a deep shadow over the face, hiding it. Slowly the whip thin body slid off the bar stool, the black leather coat whispering against the wooden stool as she got up.

Horatio muttered something that sounded like "Oh shit" before he decided to get that case of light beer from the back.

A bandaged fist pounded harder on the bar top. "Horatio! Horatio! Darkness be damned, where you going? Son of a Bitch." The fist stopped pounding and reached for the swinging door, opening it with a gentle push. "Missing the damn soccer match" a voice whispered out through the rags.

Gigamore scowled, hatred burning inside her, rising up so it was just under her skin. How she hated the thing under the bandages. How it carelessly enjoyed the life flowing around it, the tastes and flavors of the living world. "Hey shithead, I'm watching that."

The thing under the rags turned a nasty comment on its fiery lips, only to find a booted foot coming at its face as Gigamore vaulted over the bar. Hand firmly on the bar, pressing and pushing, hips in motion, and legs kicking; while the black duster fluttered out behind her moving body, like a nervous animal. With a snap of her hips, her feet finished coming around and slammed into the cloth wrapped face. A cry of surprise and pain erupted as his head snapped backwards and then the body followed crashing into the glass shelves holding assorted liquor bottles. Momentum carried her over and she landed, her booted feet crunching on broken glass. For a second, she observed the destruction with an impassive eye, and then she moved forward two slow steps, her feet crunching on broken glass with each step. A booted foot lifted up for a third step and came down slowly and heavily on the prone body, pressing it down steadily onto the broken glass it was laying on.

Jerking and hissing the thing in the bandages tried to get away but its bandaged fingers scabbled uselessly at the foot. Reddish-orange blood streamed out from under the struggling body, flashing like fire where the light hit it.

"You useless piece of shit look at how you abuse the flesh you're given. Squander the gifts of being alive: the food, the wine, and women. All those things you get to enjoy, taste like ash on the tip of my tongue." With each word, she pressed down harder, twisting her foot so more blood leaked out.

Taking a breath, she looked up and saw that she had missed the "Trial of the Century"; the reporter was now moving onto the celebrity report. "Son of a Bitch." She sighed out. "You made me miss my show." Her dark eyes narrowed and she focused on the figure under her foot.

The early morning skies were blanketed in gray clouds, giving the newly started day a washed

out feeling.

A bus rumbled to a stop at a cement walkway flanked on either side by a bleak iron fence topped with vicious barbed wire. At the other end of the walkway a heavy door opened, squealing and groaning, as if it moved only at great protest.

Herded by two impressively large guards, the petite Mrs. Dawson appeared out of that opening door. She shuffled along, the chains around her ankles and arms clinked softly as they swayed with her movement. Her face was drawn and thin, her eyes glazed, and the circles under her eyes were deep and black: it almost looked as if she had two black eyes.

The guards kept her moving forward towards the white prison transport bus, wanting this to be over. They wanted this woman gone, removed from their presence. Not that they were superstitious or afraid. They were just deeply practical; for whatever reason the tiny, seemingly sweet and gentle Mrs. Dawson went absolutely butt fuck nuts when the full moon rose, and tonight was the night of another full moon. They wanted her out of their humble little detention center and in to maximum security so she was no longer their problem.

They moved down the walkway at a constant rate getting closer to the rumbling bus, and with each step they felt their worry lessen.

She was in a state of shock. Over and over, her mind tried to process what was going on in the world around her, but it seemed so unreal. The trial had ended two days ago and the horror of the experience still gripped her, all those horrible things said about her. Why would no one believe she was innocent? How could that jury believe she was capable of such awful things? True, she had married a royal bastard, but she hadn't killed him.

Suddenly she became aware that they had stopped moving. Blinking, her eyes focused on the bus in front of her. As the door swung open she cringed, but a firm hand was there pushing her forward. She stumbled and tried to catch herself only to again realize the limited mobility of the shackles. With an awkward hop step, she caught her balance and struggled up the steps.

A shotgun greeted her at the top of the steps, held in the solid unwavering grip of a guard. The guard did not smile or offer any words, her sturdy face grim, and her hazel eyes cold and shuttered.

"Welcome to the rest of your life." A voice said. The cheerful tone grating as it broke the silence.

Her eyes swung away from the deadly silent guard to the voice coming from the driver's seat.

The man in the driver's seat was so thin he looked cadaverous, with a face like a basset hound's all long and droopy.

"Take care with Tully here, you pull any shit and she'll pull the trigger. Life from now on is all easie-peesie like that. You got it?" The man with the basset hound looks asked.

She nodded numbly.

"Goody, good."

Dawson shuffled around nervously as both guards continued to eye her.

"Well, Tully, let's throw her in the back with the other animals. If all that stuff on TV is true she'll freak out in about 12 hours and it takes us seven to get to Nowhere." He bit his thick bottom lip in thought looking the prisoner up and down. "Although I'm truly at a loss as to how such a tiny thing could do so much damage, but as Hamlet said, there are stranger things between heaven and hell than exist in the grasp of our pitiful human philosophy. Or something to that effect."

Tully said nothing, remaining a silent juggernaut next to the thin man, but she did move to the side to let the driver stand up and move to the cage door that separated them from the prisoners. He grabbed a thick set of keys hanging from his belt and quickly found the key he wanted and unlocked the gate.

"There you go." He held the gate open motioning for her to step through.

She went still with fright. On the other side of the open door, she could see four sets of eyes staring at her, all hungry and cold, predator eyes.

"No," she moaned, the first words past her lips since the judge had read the guilty verdict. "I don't belong here, this isn't me" she whimpered.

Her only answer was the man's continuous grin and the cool barrel of the shotgun coming to rest on the side of her head.

"I'd get in there. We don't care if you're guilty or innocent, we just drive the bus, but I would really advise you to move."

Slowly she was able to get her body to move and she shuffled into the back of the bus, feeling small and mouse-like next to the huge hulking women who were sitting quietly, their predator eyes watching her.

The cheerful, grinning driver led her to an empty seat in the middle, all under the watchful eye of Tully and her shotgun.

She shrank back as a thick woman, with a shorn head and dead blue eyes leaned into the walkway and whispered, "Fresh meat."

Then she was sitting, her handcuffs adjusted so that she was now attached to a bar in front of her seat.

He gave her a pat on the head then returned to the front of the bus. The gate was shut and locked,

and with a trembling lurch, they were moving.

Whispers started up around her, she tried to make herself look small and non-threatening, just like she used to do with her husband.

Gigamore sighed as she watched the bus take off. There really wasn't anything she could do, unless she wanted to cause a scene, and her boss frowned on scenes. He was more of a horror of the unknown and the dread of uncertainty kind of guy.

Rubbing her head, she grabbed the day old paper on the seat next to her and stared hard at the full-page article on the 'Full Moon Killer'. "... where she will serve out her three life sentences in the maximum security prison dubbed Nowhere. Called such by guards and prisoners alike for the fact that the people inside were going nowhere."

She huffed and pulled out various maps until she found the one for Nevada. Black eyes stared unblinking at the crooked lines that symbolized roads until she found what she was looking for. With a finger poised over a tiny dot that could have been the guts of a squashed gnat, she smiled. Banner Rock, Nevada would be where she would lay her trap. One bridge in and one bridge out, it left little to the imagination.

With a grin that almost made her look happy, she started the engine and peeled out, tossing the map in the back. It fluttered and took its time landing softly on the bloodied body in the back seat.

The beat up Buick raced through the city, out onto the highway, various pit stops and towns blurring as she passed them. At some point she came off the highway and drove through the countryside, and up into the high scrub desert. Finally, after bouncing along a forgotten dirt road, she came to a stop. The front end of the car looking down the side of a mountain; pebbles and dirt falling away only to crash back into the side of the mountain far below. The car door flew open and she stepped out, boots sounding loud on the dirt. She took off her fedora and laid it on the trunk of the car while her dark eyes looked up into the sky, spotting a few dark clouds.

All around was silence and the world seemed to hold its breath; no birds chirped, no insects buzzed, even the wind had died down.

Then she was running, her booted feet crunching on the dirt and rocks, running straight at the edge of the world. Her feet left the solid earth behind, and as she fell, her coat rose up, flapping against the wind. The blackness of her eyes seemed to bleed away, running in rivulets down under her skin; where it twisted and bubbled and burst through her pores like oil, and in seconds her skin was black. Her eyes were now hollow and red, and two points in her forehead bulged and then split letting two small horns emerge twisting and curving back towards now black and pointed ears. Leathery black wings pumped and she was no longer falling now, but flying. Flying up towards the gray, heavy looking clouds.

She sliced through the clouds rising up, feeling its damp wetness on her hard scaly flesh. When

she burst through to the other side, she flexed her feet and wicked talons speared into the misty flesh of the cloud. Straining, she began to pull the cloud to where she wanted it to be, she was going to make a storm of biblical proportions. She was going to flood the wicked and probably the good, but she really didn't care.

Terri watched the clouds roll in quick, and knew they were in for a bad storm. She swore and stubbed out the butt of her cigarette. This would mean lousy tips. The truckers wouldn't come through if there was a storm. They wouldn't risk the bridges flooding. Banner Rock was a great short cut if the weather was good but it sucked when the weather turned bad. She ran a hand through her short dark hair and then over her face, her Indian heritage gave her a proud face with piercing dark eyes, and high cheekbones. The truckers seemed to like it if the number of bad pick up lines they threw at her was any indication.

Another cloud rolled in and angrily bumped into yet another cloud. To Terri the way the storm was forming seemed wrong and unnatural. Then the roiling, angry clouds seemed to rip open and the rain began to pour, distracting her thoughts. With another curse, she grabbed her purse from where she had tossed it on the hood of her car while she grabbed a smoke and started to run towards the truck stop trying to shield her body from the sudden onslaught.

She ran smack into an immovable object; she staggered back a few steps and shook her head. She brushed wet bangs out of her eyes and peered at the person she had run into. The rain obscured much of her vision, the person was average height, a little shorter than she was with white blonde hair that was plastered to the skull, and dressed in black.

"I'm sorry," she shouted into the storm, but the body did nothing to indicate that she had been heard. She hesitated for a second, and then started to walk to the truck stop again. A hand grabbed her by the shoulder and turned her around. The strength of the move frightened her and she tried to shrink back. The pale face looked up into her face, black eyes void of anything; no emotion, no warmth, no coldness, just nothing. She felt like she was falling, being surrounded by that never-ending blackness.

The back door that the truck stop kitchen used for deliveries banged open helped by the wind and Terri crossed into the warmth of the building. The dishwasher looked up and smiled a greeting. "Terri, what's going on?" He frowned at her seeing her soaked clothes soaked. "Is it raining?"

She smiled a wide smile her eyes darting everywhere. "Hey..." She faltered searching for a name to go with the face. "Juan. Rain, yes, it's raining a lot. Isn't it wonderful? Cool, wet, rain."

"Terri, you hate the rain." His accent gently rolling the R's just a little bit.

"Not today." She walked over to his dish station and pulled a soggy French fry off a plate then popped it in her mouth before he could react. She hummed in pleasure as the salty ketchup swished against her tongue.

"Eww, Terri, that's gross."

She shrugged and walked off. He watched as her as he sprayed a tray full of dishes. He couldn't put his finger on it, but she just wasn't acting her usual self.

The bus swerved and hit a pothole causing the passengers to jerk and bounce. Some of the women were muttering loudly complaining, but it went silent the moment Tully stood up and glared at them. Her shotgun never wavered in her grip.

The rain pelted the window clinging to it, no matter how hard the wipers worked: visibility remained next to nothing the driver swore behind the wheel. They had passed Banner Rock without stopping. Normally he got a cup of coffee there, but he knew he needed to keep driving, especially with the weather turning bad so quickly. He only had a small window or the bridge would flood out, and then he would have to turn around and go the long way. There was no way he was going the long way, not if he had some nutcase that might lose it the minute the moon rose. He was losing time as the bus crawled through the torrential rain and bounced through potholes.

Just ahead he could see the rise that proceeded the drop that lead straight down to the bridge. He smiled. It was nothing but ponies and rainbows from now on. The bus came to the top of the rise and his smile fell to his knees as his foot hit the brake. The bridge was out, not due to the rain, but from a semi that had apparently lost control in the mud and crashed into the bridge supports, blocking the road and probably making the bridge unsafe. He swore as he fought the steering wheel as it tried to twist and wrench out of his hands.

In the back, the women all held on for dear life as the bus bounced and jerked, skidding in the mud the vehicle came to a jarring stop. Tully smacked the back of her head and lost her grip on her precious shotgun. The driver held firm by his seatbelt panted wide-eyed, and many of the women in the back hit the seats in front of them, causing split lips and bloody noses.

Tully fumbled for her shotgun, while lifting one hand to the back of her head. It came away red with blood and pain flared where she touched. She ignored the pain and hefted the cold metal into the air staring at the prisoners. The women behind the gate just stared around. Some had hoped to take advantage of the chaos, only to be disappointed that Tully and her shotgun were still as certain as death and taxes.

The driver blew out a breath and undid his seatbelt. "I'm going to go see what's up with that semi." He stood up and for a moment, he wasn't sure his legs would hold him but they held his weight and he grabbed a flashlight. Tully nodded and stood, her gun pointed at the back and the grumbling prisoners shut up. The bus door opened and rain fell hard and heavy into the opening.

It was hard to walk, the mud and the wind, kept trying to take his balance away, and the rain made it hard to see, but eventually he made it to the wrecked semi. "Hey. You okay?" He shouted.

The door was crumpled open the glass smashed leaving only jagged teeth. "Hey!" He shouted

again. Nothing, just the roaring of the wind and rain. He climbed up into the cab and peered into the cab. The windshield was smashed, looking like something heavy had hit it. It was buckled inwards and there was a large hole on the driver's side. The flashlight highlighted the driver; he was slumped the wheel most of it embedded in his forehead.

"Jesus!" He shouted, jerking away from the sight, nearly losing his footing.

"Poor bastard" he whispered jumping back down in the mud. He let the flashlight shine weakly on the bridge the front was cracked and breaking apart.

"Son of a Bitch." They would have to go back and hope they could back track. If the other bridge had flooded out, and by the look of the rain coming down it was a decent possibility, they were screwed.

Tully watched Franklin scrape the mud off his boots before he started up the steps into the bus.

He shook his head. "It's no good. The semi wrecked the bridge."

She nodded her hazel eyes narrowing as she looked into the back of the bus, if all the crap they had heard was true; the humble looking Ms. Dawson could be a real pain in their asses.

"We're going to have to back track."

She nodded, already knowing that was their only course.

"And pray the other bridge isn't out." He mumbled.

Going through Banner Rock was a chance you took. It was a hell of a short cut, cutting hours off a trip, but if the weather turned bad then you were royally fucked, and it was looking like it was time to bend over grab their ankles and cough. Whoever designed the town with one way in and out was a moron, but no use moaning over it now.

Franklin sat down behind the wheel and shook his head, looking even more like a basset hound, his drooping jowls fluttered. He started up the bus and, after a lot of slipping and sliding made his way back onto the road. -----

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The truck stop was full of people trapped by the storm. The restaurant was smoky, full of hushed whispers and harsh laughter. People sat around their tables nursing steaming cups of coffee, while others sat sucking on longneck beers. Most were men with harsh edges and ragged faces and the few women had the same feel as the men. All the eyes were bloodshot; some held worry, while others just had the look of resigned annoyance. Their trucks were not going anywhere, their cargo was not going to be delivered, and they were not going to get paid.

The rain and howling wind gave the place a cold damp feel that seemed to penetrate the skin no matter how much coffee, or beer they ingested. The workers tried to maintain a happy friendly

faces because they knew the longer the storm continued the more tempers would wear thin. If they could keep a happy façade going maybe, just maybe there wouldn't be any fights while they waited for the storm to let up. In the back however, there was a pool going that the first punch would be thrown before 10 o'clock.

Murmurs floated over the restaurant, snatches of conversation that had no context individually; lovers, wives, children, heartbreak, and hope. Some tables were already getting rowdy, the alcohol, and the feeling of being trapped escalating emotions. Then, just as things were getting close to breaking, the double doors to the restaurant blew open and a thin man came in his raincoat proudly displaying the name of the prison a few hours away.

The bubble that had been close to breaking deflated at the newcomer's arrival. Tensions changed track buying a little more time.

Franklin grabbed a kitchen helper stopping his frantic run to the back with his bus tray. "I need to speak with your boss."

The boy nodded his shaved head bobbing as he tore loose from the grip and headed into the back.

He reached up wiping the excess water the storm had left on his face off, and started to move to the counter to wait. He winked at a passing waitress who gave him a big smile. "Hey Hon, how about a big old cup of coffee?"

"Sure thing," she said, flipping over a mug and pouring the hot brown liquid in before putting the pot back with a practiced ease.

"Things crazy yet?" he asked, not wanting to give up the attention of a pretty younger woman.

"Nah, not yet. Getting close, though. Folks are trapped and if they're here, they're not getting their shipments out. No delivery, no paycheck. It's tough."

"Must be good for you, though. Captive audience and all that."

She shrugged. "For now." She spun away and moved down the counter to fill up another person's mug and Franklin had to settle for watching her go. His own frustration was near a boiling point. The other bridge was flooded, water covering the road. The only thing that had been visible were the cement railing tops standing out of the water, two parallel lines from road to road an angry swollen river between the two points. His own perpetual good humor was beginning to vanish. A normal simple job wasn't so simple this time.

"Can I help you?"

Franklin looked up, and blinked the man addressing him was a big blue berry. The man was dressed in blue polyester pants and an equally blue polo that was straining against a massive gut. He only came up to Franklin's chin giving him a bird's eyes view of the man's comb-over. He

snickered but caught himself and changed it to a cough. "Um, yes, er... are you the owner?"

"Yes." The blueberry with legs barked out. A brown loafered foot began to tap in annoyance.

"Err, sorry to bother you. My name is Franklin Sands. I'm a driver for the maximum security prison not too far from here, um, Nowhere, I guess ya'll call it."

"Yes I've heard of it." The man barked out.

"Yes, well we have a slight problem both bridges are out and we're..."

"That's your problem, you know the risks in bad weather. I am tired of everyone and their dog wanting free handouts when the weather turns and they get stuck here. I own a business not a homeless shelter. Get your handouts some where else." With his piece said, he turned and stormed off, looking quite fierce for a walking blueberry.

"Well, shit." Franklin mumbled out to himself. He had not wanted a handout, just maybe somewhere secure and dry to hold the prisoners until the weather broke. "What a prick." He got an evil look on his face; he was going to make Mr. Blueberry regret not having heard him out. He took a swallow of the hot coffee and then set the cup down.

It was still raining outside, and he frowned in distaste. He hated being cold and damp. With quick strides, he hurried thru the muddy and flooded parking lot to the bus, wiping his face as he bounded up the steps. "The guy was a prick. Wouldn't even listen to me. So I figure we take them inside."

She raised an eyebrow in surprise.

"Ya, ya. I know but we're almost out of gas. We can't keep it running all night and if we let them freeze to death, we'll get railroaded for cruel and unusual punishment."

Tully nodded in agreement.

"So I figure we take them inside and see if Mr. Blueberry wants to listen to me this time."

She raised her eyebrow in a silent question.

He chuckled "You'll understand once you see him."

He reached over and turned the ignition keys turning off the bus. Tully stood up behind him and he walked to the metal gate. "Hello ladies. It looks like we're in a bit of a pickle so were going to go into the nice truck stop and stay warm. If any of you so much as sneezes in a tone of voice I don't like I will look the other way while Tully gives you an up close and personal introduction to her shotgun. Do you all get me?"

He looked at each prisoner waiting for the small shake of the head.

He smiled pleasantly, "Okay let's go have some down home cookin'." He unlocked the cage.

Soaked to the bone, five women marched into the diner single file, escorted by two guards. The diner was blanketed in an uneasy silence. The orange jumpsuits and shackles made it very clear who they were.

Franklin pointed to an empty corner booth. He grabbed a bus tub from a startled busboy and swept everything off the table into the tub, glasses, silverware, and salt and pepper shakers.

"Everyone sit." Silently the women all sat. It was awkward and even humorous to watch the women try to maneuver themselves into the large booth. Tully and Franklin grabbed chairs and flipped them around to the end of the booth. Tully's shotgun was a visible reminder to the women to behave. Most were so happy to be warm that any thoughts of escaping were far from their minds.

The quiet conversations that had been going on never started back up. People continued to stare in fascinated horror at the booth. Some people started to frown as they realized just what kind of people had come in to the truck stop.

The correctional officers and the prisoners sat in silence for several minutes. Tully fiddled with the shotgun before laying it in her lap, unsure where to put it. She looked around hoping for a waitress with a glass of water but none was in sight.

"Jesus. We got convicts, honest to God convicts in the diner." A waitress said in a panic. Her hair teased high and her face gaunt and pinched. "Can we have convicts in the diner? Isn't it a health code violation?"

There was some laughter from behind her and she turned in a huff. "No, seriously isn't it?"

"No it's probably a public safety issue." Terrie said sucking a bit of mustard off her index finger.

"What are you eating again? Are you pregnant? I didn't think your kind could get pregnant."

Terri's face grew dark and her eyes flashed. "My kind? My kind? What the hell does that mean?" She took a menacing step towards the waitress with the high hair.

"Well, the whole being a lesbian thing," the waitress squeaked, backing up into the swinging door. She nearly tumbled backwards as the door gave way, but caught herself.

Dark eyes calmed and Terri's head cocked as she thought. "Lesbian... oh that kind of my kind, that's still pretty thoughtless wording on your part, ah... Shelly."

"What the hell did you think I meant" she sniffed taking a step back into the kitchen.

"No, I'm not pregnant; the burgers here are just so damn good. Really have you ever stopped to savor the flavors as they exploded on your taste buds?" She eyed her fellow waitress. "No, I bet you don't. You just gulp you're food down, missing out on one of the greatest pleasure's of being human."

"Terri, stop being weird. You've been weird all day. So just stop, cause I don't think we're going home anytime soon."

Terri grabbed her notepad out of her apron pocket and marched out of the kitchen, storming past Shelly.

"Where are you going?"

"To take their order." She pointed to the table filled with women in orange.

"Oh God, don't do that. You'll just encourage them to stay." Shelly whined.

"Where they going to go, Shelly? Don't you think they're going to get pissed if we don't feed them?"

"Um, well, that shouldn't be our problem."

Terri rolled her eyes and moved out into the dining room letting the door swing back so it smacked Shelly's nose.

"Ow! Bitch" Shelly muttered to herself. "Someone should go get Mr. Hodges; let him know what's going on."

Terri smiled as she came up to the table. "You all want some coffee?" she asked cheerfully, ignoring the hungry stares she got from the women.

"Yep, me and my partner here will take some coffee. Nothing for the animals, though. Last thing I need is for them to get all hyper."

She nodded at the only man in the group. "That it?"

He frowned, his droopy face wrinkling in thought. "Hmmm, how about some sandwiches, only no plates just bring 'em out on napkins or something."

"Sure thing." She wrote the order out and turned to go. As she headed back to the kitchen to turn in her order the owner, Mr. Hodges, came storming out of the back. He huffed as his tiny legs worked.

"Terri, what the hell are you doing?" he sputtered.

She shrugged, "Taking a customer's order."

"We will not be serving these people." Several veins were pulsing in his forehead and his face was turning red. The diner had gone completely silent as everyone waited for the train wreck to unfold

"You're right Frank he does look like a blueberry." Came a smooth alto voice. Hodges' face turned even redder and he stormed over to the table. He stopped next to the woman who had spoken and opened his mouth to unleash his wrath only to come face to barrel with a shotgun. The redness faded, draining down, leaving only pale whiteness behind.

"Look sir, I don't want anything for free. We will pay for the food. What I want is a warm place in the storm. I've got 5 convicts here and I want them relatively secure. Now, we can't keep 'em on the bus, 'cause we're running out of gas and cold, hungry convicts are dangerous. So if you have someplace better I can take them, where they can't get away, let me know."

Hodges round face nodded and he cleared his throat. "I believe I have an old storage room that we can clear out. One second." He moved quickly away shouting at the busboys.

Franklin laughed. "Never change Tully. That was beautiful."

She shrugged and put the gun back down in her lap.

Dawson looked tiny, almost childlike as she sat between two taller women who, in her eyes, obviously worked out. She was damp from the rain and shivered in the booth, but she wasn't shivering from the cold, she shivered out of fear. Still her reality seemed surreal. It felt as if someone should come walking up and expose the cameras. She closed her eyes and tried to wish it so. Wish it just to be a big elaborate, horrifying joke. When she opened her eyes she was still sitting in chains and an orange jumpsuit, and nobody was walking up to them laughing and telling her she was on Candid Camera.

Slowly conversation started back up around the diner but now it was more subdued and filled with nervous silences and darting glances. The constant sound of rain was soothing, except when the thunder cracked, or the wind shifted direction rattling the windows, broke the calm causing people to jump. After one loud crack, a waitress dropped a tray causing folks to laugh and point nervously. Some of the tension broke as the waitress stomped off with the muttered epitaph of "Fuckers!" After a few minutes, the tension started building again.

Tully and Franklin were sipping their warm coffees under the jealous gazes of the prisoners when Hodges returned.

He was sweating and his face was red, he looked like a prime candidate for a stroke. "Ok, we got a storage room cleaned out for you, just follow Manuel." He pointed at the nervous looking busboy. "Just so you know, I'll be billing you for that room" he barked out to their backs as he eyed them warily.

The rain continued to pour down, dampening, not only the earth but also the spirits of the people inside the truck stop. Moods began to sour, and tempers turned even surlier. They had hoped for a break by now, that the storm would quit and things could start to dry out, but more rain fell making many wonder if they would even get back on the road tomorrow.

Feeling the despair as their minds envisioned shrinking paychecks and upset bosses, more alcohol was ordered to make worries disappear temporarily.

Terri grinned over at the massive truck driver as she set down three beers at the table; she followed his hand to where it attached itself to her ass. "No touching."

He just grinned but did not move his hand. "Hey its going to be a long lonely night, maybe I could make it just a little less lonely. What'd say?" He winked at his friends at the table.

"I'd say no." Terri answered cheerfully and then reached over grabbing his hand and rotated the wrist back sharply. "But if I ever decide to stop being a lesbian I'm sure you'd be just my type."

He howled in pain, as she held his hand at the breaking point.

"Now, are you going to be good, or will I have to keep this as a souvenir?"

"I'll be good." He croaked out as his table mates laughed.

"Okay, and to show I have no hard feelings this round is on me." She waved and walked back to the kitchen.

"Oh my God Terri, where did you learn that? I need to learn some of that. Those guys are getting worse and some of the women are worse than the guys!." Shelly whined out with her nasally voice.

"Maybe you should give your female tables to Terri, they're more her type." Another waitress joked as she took a breather sipping on some water.

Terri rolled her eyes and walked over to the grill, her mouth watering. She took a deep sniff letting the smells curl around her nose. She was practically drooling. "What are you guys cooking?"

The cook looked over grinning. "It's just a steak with onions." He tapped the metal spatula on the grill before flipping it up on to a plate. Onions followed, smothering the meat. Terri's eyes never left the plate. He grinned and shoved the plate into her hands. "Go ahead. They're all so drunk they won't know that they had to wait longer than usual."

Terri gave a little squeal and moved over to an out of the way corner where she dug into the meat with gusto. She moaned making everyone else in the kitchen blush.

The other cook bumped shoulders with his cook mate. "What did you put in that? That's some motherfucking steak bro."

He blushed even harder, "It's just a steak. Nothing funny, we make 'em all the time."

Terri continued to have little mini orgasms over her food, while the wait staff just blushed and worked around her.

Tully leaned back in her folding chair looking down the hallway into the kitchen, her hazel eyes watched with delighted interest as one of the waitresses devoured a meal. The look on the woman's face was of pure carnal delight, every bite seemed to be one of ecstasy, as if she was now experiencing pleasure that mere humans could only dream about. Tully wasn't sure what she wanted more at the moment, the woman or what the woman was eating.

Dark eyes looked up from the plate and caught Tully staring, a blush worked its way up her face and she gave a small, embarrassed wave to the corrections officer.

Tully cracked a grin and motioned the waitress over, her attention totally diverted from her prisoners.

Terri hesitated for a second before putting her plate down and walking down the hallway past the walk in freezer to the storage rooms. She paused nervously in front the bulky woman sitting in a chair. Her eyes got large noticing the shotgun in the woman's lap.

They looked at each other for a second before Terri nervously cleared her throat and asked. "Is there something I can get for you all?"

Tully grinned, "Whatever you were eating looked mighty tasty; I'm not sure a girl could have anymore of a good time by herself."

Terri shivered a little at the voice; it was soft and husky, and it had been a long, long time. She was just about to rattle off a comeback when the storage room door opened and the other officer came out. "Well they're eating; hopefully they can't hurt each other with sandwiches... oh, hello." He gave the waitress a big grin.

Terri gave him an awkward smile. "Hi, did you two need anything else?"

"Just more coffee and for this weather to clear."

"Well, I can't do anything about the weather but how about I set you two up with a carafe of coffee?"

"Sounds like a plan. Thanks again."

Terri looked at Tully hopefully for a second but when the woman didn't saying anything she sighed and walked off.

Franklin grinned, plopping himself into the chair next to Tully's. "My, my, my Tully if I didn't know any better I would say you were getting ready to make a booty call."

She just rolled her eyes but refused to look at her partner.

"Jesus, give me that." He yanked the shotgun out of Tully's grasp. "Go tap that ass girl. It's not like we're going anywhere for the time being, and one of us should have a little fun. So go work that bull dyke charm of yours and..." He trailed off as Terri came down the hallway.

Terri set down the tray, with the carafe and two mugs, on the floor. "There you go. Um, my name is Terri. Just let me know if you two need anything else."

"They got you working pretty hard. You getting any breaks?" Franklin started up innocently.

"Oh, well, it's not like our replacements can get through with the storm and all. But I'm getting a break every now and then. My next one is in 15, but its not like we have a lot to do now, mainly folks are just drinking."

"Oh well that's good."

They stared at each other for a silent moment. "Um, well I should be getting back to my tables."

As she walked away, Tully's hazel eyes traveled over to her shotgun that now sat in Frank's lap and she scowled.

Franklin laughed, "Time to give up the security blanket." He leaned back in his chair so the front legs came off the ground, his back resting against the wall.

Inside the small cramped room, Mrs. Dawson watched the sandwiches disappear. When she tried to grab for one, she had been growled at and quickly snatched her hand back.

The room smelled of mildew and bleach, the walls were rough brick with some water piping in one corner. Some of the women bitched but she figured it was warmer than the bus.

Blue eyes squinted at the small woman, "Hey, you really kill your husband?"

Suddenly all eyes were looking at her and she shuffled backwards until her back hit the wall.

"I heard she ate him" a voice said.

"Shit we got a cannibal in our midst."

"I-I did no such thing." She stated weakly, but they were moving around her, large shapes looming over her, her eyes darting around looking for an exit.

"Full moon killer," blue eyes looked down amused. "Why don't you show us what you're made of?"

"She's so tiny, there's no way she killed anybody, look at those twigs she's got for arms."

Someone pinched her bicep and she jumped. "Don't touch me" she squeaked, only to be met with laughter.

"Look, the mouse can roar," someone chuckled.

"Hey don't sweat it, mouse, I killed my husband too. Lazy slob smoked all the pot and drank all the beer. Didn't leave any for me, one time too many. Just drove me crazy, selfish bastard. So, I stabbed him a few times. Men are pigs."

"I didn't kill anyone. I'm innocent." Her statement caused a roar of laughter.

The door slammed open. "Shut up!" Franklin yelled all good humor gone as he leveled the shotgun at them. "Only reason you all are in here and not freezing your tits off is 'cause I'm feeling generous."

Silence was his answer. "That's more like it."

He pulled his chair over and sat down training the gun at them. His trademark grin returned to his face as he watched them.

Slowly the women moved away and Dawson let herself slide down the wall into a crouch her head in her hands.

"Crazy or not mouse, you're with us now, best to play nice." A voice whispered to her.

She whimpered into her hands but didn't look up.

Tully had sheepishly gone looking for the waitress that she was fairly sure she had been having a moment with. She found her in the dining area in a shouting match with a large burly man who was dangerously waving around a beer bottle.

"Look sir, I don't care how much you're offering I'm not interested. Now why don't you go sit?"

"Hey, what's the big deal? I was just being friendly, bitch." The man snarled back. "I thought maybe we could go someplace and maybe get to know each other a little better, a little comfort in the storm."

Tully looked around, not really surprised to find people watching the scene in rapt fascination, but doing squat to help.

Terri snorted, "Well, men who call me a bitch certainly get me all hot and horny."

"Really?" The guy asked missing the sarcasm.

"No. Now, sit down before we cut off your tab."

The man turned and started to sulk back to his table when one of his tablemates shouted, "You're such a pussy, Herman. No wonder your wife left you."

The drunken man turned around nearly braining someone sitting at the nearest table with his beer bottle. "Hey, hey, hey."

Terri raised an eyebrow and then turned to get more beers for the back table.

"Hey!" He grabbed her arm and swung her around the move nearly upsetting his balance. "I think..."

Tully moved in grabbing the beer bottle out of his hand. "I think you need to sit down and sober up."

"Wha'?" His drunken mind tried to process what was going on.

In one quick move, she had his arms behind his back and was frog marching him back to his table. She slammed him back down in his chair and looked at the men at the table. "I'm only going to say this once. I'm armed and I have no problem shooting any of you. Any questions?"

They shook their heads and she turned walking back to the amused waitress.

"Hi."

Terri grinned, "I didn't need the help."

Tully shrugged. "I'm sure you didn't, but the corrections officer in me couldn't help but correct." She leaned back and forth on her feet hoping the waitress would say something but the woman just looked at her and finally she said. "Don't you have a break or something?"

Terri's grin got even bigger. "I do. Why don't you join me?"

"Ok." Tully grinned, hoping she was interpreting the look she was getting correctly.

Tully was a big woman, always had been. She had been born a big baby and remained so throughout her childhood and into adulthood. When she went to bars cruising for women on her few off nights the women who picked her up wanted her size and strength. They were not looking for a gentle giant. She was use to being aggressive, topping and dominating whoever her partner was. She expected no less from this encounter. The waitress was a tad thin for her tastes, tall and skinny, but with huge tits for her size or maybe because of her size. She followed

happily, her right hand clasped in the left of the woman in front. They stopped from time to time and the waitress would open a door, peek in then shut it. Finally, they found a room that met with whatever standard the woman was looking for and Tully found herself hauled inside.

It was a modest office, just big enough to accommodate a desk, chair, and filing cabinet. The waitress grinned and reached behind Tully's bulk to lock the door. As her hand came back, it trailed against Tully's shoulder. Reaching up, she grabbed the hand before it could return to its owner and Terri raised an eyebrow in question.

In a quick move Tully pulled the waitress towards her and kissed her hard letting her hands wander trailing down and around until they were grabbing a taut ass. Tully moaned in appreciation and started to move the woman back towards the desk, they didn't have all the time in the world so best to put the time they had together to good use.

Terri was stronger than she looked and Tully found herself in the unusual situation of being dominated. Instead of pushing Terri to the table and divesting her of her clothes, the corrections officer instead found herself with her back flat on the wooden surface, her shoes slipped off, and her pants only weakly wrapped around her left ankle. Her skin was caressed and kissed as the waitress made little moans and groans of delight that only made her wetter. Terri was eating her with as much joy and relish as she had eaten that steak earlier. Tully almost felt like food that a starving man, or in this case woman, had found.

She groaned and thrashed but was unable to dislodge the woman between her legs and then that tongue did an odd twist thing deep inside her and her toes curled. "Oh God." Tully husked out.

There came a laugh and then a kiss to her inner thigh. "God isn't here, just little old me."

Two dark eyes appeared looking at her from the tight curly hairs at her crotch. "It's the quiet ones I swear they're always demons in the sack." She got another laugh for her comment and then Terri's body was sliding up against hers. The waitress's top was undone and those tits that turned Tully on so were exposed, and she tried to touch them only to find her hands restrained.

Terri held the other woman's hands down and leaned over kissing her softly enjoying the feel of the skin against her lips. "Ah, ah, it's been so long just let me have my fun. I promise you'll enjoy it." She spoke against the woman's thick neck, she got a nod, and she started kissing again letting her hands trail up the woman's arms noting their strength, feeling the heat of the skin, the smell of desire, and taste of sex on the skin. Their lips finally met and Tully felt as if she were being devoured, pillaged, and spread open to be enjoyed again and again.

She had no idea how much time had passed but she felt as if it might have been days, every part of her felt thoroughly fucked. She was not sure if she liked it, but now she had a better understanding of how she left the women she had been with. Her arms shook and her hips thrust into the body under hers. Terri's legs and arms were wrapped around her torso and sweat dripped pooling in the hollows of their bodies. Underneath her, the woman's movement became frantic and their bodies smacked wetly together sounding loud and obscene in the tiny room. There was a groan and then the body stilled. Happily, Tully let her arms collapse and she rolled on to her

side so not to crush the skinnier woman under her weight.

"That was good. I had forgotten how good the human touch was."

Tully cracked a grin and laughed. "It couldn't have been that long."

Terri smiled a mysterious smile, "Longer than you could conceive of. I'll never understand why humans vilify sex. It's the greatest thing since flush toilets."

Tully couldn't help it; she busted out laughing, "Equating sex with shit, damn, you know how to stroke a girl's ego."

"Seriously, animals only have sex when some primitive part of their brain releases a chemical. Other than that, they could care less, but humans can enjoy it whenever, wherever. And what do they do? They make themselves feel bad about it."

"You're odd, you know that?"

"Humans just have no idea what sort of paradise they have."

"This is the weirdest pillow talk I've ever had." Tully snorted again and leaned over kissing Terri, stopping anymore odd after sex pillow talk.

Franklin stared at his watch and frowned, and then handed the busboy a five. "Damn, kid. Quarter to eight you won the bet." His eyes dragged up from his watch to the open doors out of the kitchen. The first fight of the evening had broken out and turned into a multi-table brawl.

Hands were pushing him out of the way as the walking blueberry, although he was looking more like a strawberry with his face all red and sweaty, and a few of the meatier cooks rushed out to the floor to break up the fight.

"Stop this! Stop this at once! You're going to pay for any damages! You think I'm kidding? All your trucks have your business numbers on them. I'll be calling your companies!" The blueberry shouted as the cooks tried to wrestle the combatants apart.

Franklin just shook his head and looked at the busboy, "This happens a lot?"

"People trapped with the rains? Sure, cabin fever and all that, but the full moon really makes people loco."

The grin fell from Franklin's face, his cheeks deflated, drooping like a hound dogs. Eyes darted to the windows but all he could see was the dark grey of a storm and water streaks. He had lost track of time, the cloud fill sky had made the day seem as if it were at a standstill hiding the passage of time. There was no way to see the rise of the full moon, but it was there, hidden

somewhere hidden behind the dark, heavy rain clouds.

He turned on his heels bringing the shotgun up so it now rested in both hands, ready. He needed Tully; he needed her quiet strength backing him up.

In the storage room, Mrs. Dawson felt a little warm; sweat began to trickle down her back, making the ugly orange jumpsuit stick uncomfortably to her back. Her stomach flip-flopped, and for a moment she thought she might throw up, not too surprising since she hadn't gotten anything to eat. The other women had eaten all the sandwiches.

"You're not freaking out on us are you, killer?" A woman asked with a smirk, her cold face shoved into Dawson's line of sight.

She jumped back. "I'm fine," she whispered, hoping to be left alone.

"Aw, mousey, you not feeling well?"

"No, I'm fine. Just lightheaded, because I didn't get any food," she snapped.

"Survival of the fittest," a different woman said, giving her a hard shove so she fell back, hitting the brick wall heavily with her back.

"Don't touch me!" The words, barked out harshly, seemed to surprise everyone, even Mrs. Dawson.

"What did you say, bitch?"

Hands were grabbing her and slamming her back into the wall, fingers squeezed until the flesh bubbled up between the index and middle fingers.

Back in the diner, a drunken trucker with a split lip was grabbing the walking blueberry.

Tully and Terri were getting dressed in the part-time bookkeeper's office.

The moon, pregnant with mysteries, heaved herself into the sky behind a curtain of thick black clouds.

On the prison bus, the radio crackled and came alive. "Tully. Franklin. Where are you? It's almost show time and I want the nut job locked up."

Franklin was running down the hallway wondering if he could fire a shotgun if need be without getting knocked on his ass.

Mrs. Dawson was being shaken by a larger woman with a tattoo of the devil on her neck. Her head flopped back and forth with each shake until after one particularly aggressive shake, her head hit the wall, and everything went black.

The prisoner stared at the limp form in her hands in surprise, until the limp woman's eyes shot open and a color like the endless blackness of the sea at night greeted her. The woman gave a shout of surprise and let go, pulling away in fear. Mrs. Dawson's body fell back bonelessly and hit the wall again before sliding down to the floor like a discarded toy.

Franklin heard the shout and ripped the door open; the thick door swung open slamming back into the wall. Shaking hands brought the shotgun up. "Back away!"

The shouted command was unnecessary as the prisoners were backing away quickly from the convulsing body half slumped on the wall and the floor.

"Shit, shit, shit, motherfucking, shit," Franklin muttered. "All of you on your knees, hands on your heads." He ordered.

For a minute the women in orange thought about refusing, all of them had their instincts screaming at them to get the fuck out of the room, but slowly, faced with a double-barreled shotgun, they got on their knees.

Franklin was seriously regretting telling his partner to go get her love groove on. "Tully!" He shouted hoping against hope she could hear him. He approached the convulsing woman, each footstep sounding loud on the concrete floor. He looked down and gasped. Her skin was writhing and bubbling in places like something was pushing out against the skin.

Ms. Dawson felt herself fading away, there were voices and shouting, but it made no sense. Something was whispering that it was okay, that she should give in to sleep, and she could not fight that voice even if she wanted to. The voice promised to take care of everything and she let herself go, trusting the voice would make everything okay.

Muscles spasmed in her arms and legs as veins popped out against the skin and slowly the shaking stopped.

Franklin watched Ms. Dawson slowly sit up. "Are you okay?" He asked stepping closer. Eyes opened staring at him, and he shuddered. They were black with no hint of pupil, just a solid uniform black.

"I'm better than okay, I'm glorious." The voice was deep and resonated within the small room, and unconsciously Franklin took a step back and the prisoners leaned away.

"Holy shit."

"What, no grin and wink for me, Franklin?" The changed Ms. Dawson spoke as she stood.

"Get on you knees!" Franklin shouted.

"I don't think I care for your tone."

"I don't give a fuck. Now get on your knees! I will shoot you." Hands brought the shotgun up to center on the woman's chest.

There was the sound of the metal shackles breaking and then a struggle. With a frightened cry, Franklin's body came sailing out of the room. When his back hit the rough stone wall, his finger twitched, firing the gun into the storage room. Blood splatter flew out of the room spraying the doorway and screams started.

The sound of a shotgun caused the fighting in the dinning room to come to a stop as everyone looked at each other in question.

Tully went stock still hearing the noise. "Oh shit!" she cursed. With frantic rushed movements, she finished getting dressed. She looked at the waitress. "Stay here. Lock the door behind me and stay here. You'll be safe." She rushed out the door not noticing the frustrated expression on the woman's face.

Terri looked at the small digital clock on the floor and frowned. "Well crap. They warn you about getting caught up in the pleasures of the flesh, but you never think it will happen to you." Hands ran over her waitress uniform and she re-buttoned the top. After a moment, the awful peach uniform looked once again presentable. She opened the door just as the lights flickered and went out.

"Oh that's real original" she muttered.

Tully raced through the kitchen, her bulk helping her shove past two large cooks who were running the other direction. She turned down the hallway to the storage closet and came to a stop, Franklin was crumpled on the floor his head crushed, blood making a bull's eye on the wall, showing her where it had been smashed - repeatedly.

She crouched down and grabbed up her shotgun. "I'm so sorry buddy. I should have been here, I shouldn't have been thinking with my little head." She popped the shotgun open and replaced the spent shell. With a metallic click, she was ready to go. She scanned the room finding two of the prisoners torn apart and a third with a huge hole in her chest where she had been shot. "God damn full moon killer."

"You called." A guttural voice said behind her.

Before she could even think of reacting, her body was already doing it for her. She caught a brief glimpse at the small woman, and Tully got the impression that something was wrong with the woman's body, but then she was firing.

Ms Dawson gave an unimpressed sniff as she easily darted out of the way and ran for the loading entrance. The blast created a crater in the wall raining down chunks of debris.

Tully got to her feet and raced after the crazed prisoner. She slammed through the loading entrance and out into the pouring rain. She caught a glimpse of a running figure and fired again. The shot missed, slamming into a small shack. Sparks and smoke shot from the top of the small shack and then the lights went out. In the darkness, Tully muttered. "Motherfucker!"

In the sudden darkness in the truck stop, people started screaming and panic began to run high. The double doors in and out of the kitchen burst open and several high-pitched screams sounded. Terri grinned, finding it funny that the big old bad truckers were screaming like little school girls, she easily saw their scared faces in the dark.

"Who the fuck are you?" A trucker shouted stepping forward.

Shelly squinted in the dim flickering emergency lighting, which consisted of a single bulb above the door. The rest of the emergency lighting had burned out years ago and had never been replaced. "It's just Terri, you dumbass."

"How the hell can I tell that?" the big man whined. "The whole world has gone to shit, and those prisoners escaped, killing the kitchen staff. I'm going to sue."

"You do that." Terri said with a smirk. A shotgun blast from outside drew her attention, and she started to walk through the huddled mass of people.

"Where the hell are you going?" the trucker asked grabbing her.

"Out there." She said simply.

"Are you nuts? The back is already a blood bath." Shelly broke in.

"If you go out there, all medical expenses are your own," broke in the heavily sweating blueberry with legs.

"Your concern is touching, but I have to do my assigned task."

A big hand with swollen knuckles grabbed her arm turning her around. "Your task? You serve greasy food, that's your task. I'm not letting you out those doors."

She quirked an eyebrow at the large man, "I've told you once to keep your hands to yourself. I guess I do get to keep it as a souvenir this time." She grabbed his hand bending it back at the wrist.

He cried out falling to his knees in pain. "Oh God. Stop, stop, please stop."

"Oh, but when you say stop, I really think you mean keep going. That you might even like my rather violent and unnecessary attention, and in the end that you really deserved it for dressing like that. I mean obviously you wearing those dirty, stinky clothes reeking of alcohol means you're a scumbag and anything I do to you is justified cause you were just begging for it." As she said 'it', the bones in his wrist made a horrible crunching noise that made the hair on the back of

everyone's neck stand up.

She let go of his hand and he fell to the floor sobbing and cradling his wrist.

"Jesus, Terri, don't you think that was just a tad over the top."

"No, not really." She grinned wider and started for the front door.

They parted, too scared to be anywhere near here, to let her through, and she opened the front doors the rain hitting her hair and skin. For a moment she lifted her head allowing the cool rain to hit her upturned face, she enjoyed the sensation of it running down her body making water trails on the flesh. She exhaled a breathy sigh of enjoyment.

A scream came from the parking lot where large trucks with their cargo sat, silent, unspeaking sentinels to the horror taking place around them. She stared at the trucks, remembering the beating she had taken at the hospital, and her lips pulled back into a feral grin. She took off in a sprint.

Tully raced into the graveyard of silent trucks, she strained to hear but the sound of rain hitting metal overwhelmed her senses. Crouching down, she looked under the trucks, looking for feet, a sign, anything at all, so she knew where that psycho bitch was. Looking to the left, she was surprised to find the missing prisoner, the orange jumpsuit garishly bright in the gloomy night. They stared at each other for a second; the prisoner's pale face looking back scared. Tully motioned for her to stay put and got up to run to the next truck.

The prisoner let out the breath she was holding, only to stiffen as another pair of feet came into view. These were bare, the flesh slapping wetly through puddles on the broken cement of the parking lot. She held her breath as the feet stopped. There was something wrong with the feet; the nails were long and curved, they clicked as they struck the ground. Her heartbeat speed up pounding loudly in her ears, but then the feet were moving on. She let out the breath she was holding in relief.

Suddenly a hand reached under the truck, the veins popped out against the skin, the muscle writhing under the flesh as if it were barely being contained. The fingernails were so long that when the hand wrapped around the ankle they sank into the flesh. The prisoner screamed in fear and pain and kicked out; trying to scramble away, but it was no good. She was dragged through the spent oil and water until she was staring up into the twisted features of her fellow prisoner.

"You hurt me, and pay backs are a bitch." The guttural voice spoke to her.

Nails and teeth were ripping into flesh and bone, and the screaming started.

Tully splashed through a puddle as she reversed direction. As she came around the back of a truck her gun held at the ready. "Holy mother of God," she whispered at the sight.

Mrs. Dawson looked up from the shoulder she was gnawing on. "God's not here: a pity for you,

you could use the back up." The body dropped from her grip hitting the shallow pool of standing water, sending water up in a fan-like spray.

Tully ignored the twitching and writhing woman on the ground; her shotgun never wavered. "Get on your knees, with your hands on your head. But I'd really like it if you'd do something stupid so I can shoot you."

The woman covered in blood laughed.

"Good enough." She pulled the trigger.

The thing that was Mrs. Dawson laughed and leapt out of the way wicked nails sinking into the metal flesh of the truck trailer.

Tully watched in horror as a person ran out from behind one of the trucks into the truck created alley where they were standing - right into the path of the shot. The force of the blast knocked the person off their feet and they flew back several feet before hitting the ground.

Ms. Dawson continued to laugh as she crawled along the metal side of the trailer until she drew even with the body and then she jumped down and began to laugh even harder. "Oh, Tully you're going to hell now. You just murdered an innocent woman."

Tully's face drained of color and she blinked, hoping with each blink the body would change and not be the familiar peach colored uniform. Blood poured out of the ripped open abdomen diluting in the heavy rain and the puddle under the body.

Terri's mouth opened and shut a hissing whisper escaping.

Mrs. Dawson leaned over listening. "What is that dear? Speak up, we can't quite make out what you're saying."

The body gave one last bloody foaming cough and went still.

"I'm not sure, but I think she said 'fuck you'." The woman laughed standing up.

"Don't move fucker" Tully said ramming the barrel of the gun into the back of Ms. Dawson's head. She felt horrible; almost earth shattering horrible, but first things first. Take care of the whack job and then say her apologies to the person she had accidentally shot, the person she had been having sex with only minutes before.

"Or what?" The prisoner mumbled to herself.

She was on the verge of just shooting the woman, less paperwork, and the public would not have to foot the bill for the insane bitch. "I'll kill you."

Ms. Dawson shrugged, "Okay."

Tully felt the prisoner move and she started to squeeze the trigger. The gun was wrenched up and the shot flew into the sky. They wrestled for control of the gun. Tully refused to let go; her hands locked, white knuckled, around it. She felt her feet leave the ground and she wondered where the hell the tiny Mrs. Dawson was getting the strength.

With a tooth-rattling slam, the corrections officer was sent back first into the side of a semi. The metal barrel pressed into her neck, and with all her strength she fought to push it back. Her eyes popped open and she stared into the twisted face in front of her.

"What the fuck are you?" She wheezed out as the gun pressed into her flesh, starting to restrict the air from flowing into her lungs.

"A refugee from hell, and neither you or anybody else is going to send me back. I'm invulnerable while I'm in this form. Humans are after all made in his image." Her eyes gestured upwards, "So now I am the perfect combination of heaven and hell."

"Fucking whack job." She wheezed out as spots began to dance in her vision.

The demon shrugged.

Behind them, nearly bled out, the waitress's mouth opened and a hand appeared. The neck bulged and then there was another arm and a head.

Gigamore sat next to the body, staring at the woman whose dark eyes looked into the divine nothing. She stood and straightened her black leather coat. She put a hand to her head and frowned at the lack of a hat. Then she remembered that she had left it on the car.

She sighed and stared down at the crumpled form on the ground. "It was fun; we'll have to do it again sometime." She did not move, she just continued to stare at the waitress feeling something, she was not sure what it was, but it was a horrible feeling and she wanted it to go away.

Tully's eyes grew wide in fear as something dark crawled out of the waitress. "Holy shit," she wheezed out.

The demon known as Andras, the sower of discord and quarrels, recent escapee from Hell, laughed, enjoying the fear and pain

Behind the struggling couple, Gigamore turned and reached again for her missing hat. With a sigh, she let her hand drop. She blamed her game being off on her missing hat; she was never going to live down stepping into that shotgun blast. The rain seemed to be slowing, she noted idly.

"Andras, sower of discord, betrayer of Lucifer's throne, and of treason to the Infernal Kingdom" she spoke in a booming voice.

Mrs. Dawson's head fell forward. "Damn it." She let go of the corrections officer and turned facing the Retriever.

Tully fell down the side of the truck gasping for breath.

"Gigamore, didn't you learn anything back at the hospital? You can't touch me when I'm in this form. I am the profane and the sacred, stronger than either Heaven or Hell. He made them in His image and, as I long theorized, if one seeks to make a true melding, not just a simple possession, one can find that spark of the divine He left in them. I am untouchable!" The demon roared.

Gigamore did not say anything in response; they were way past talking in her opinion. In a blur, she was moving forward, her fist smashing forward. It caught the demonic Mrs. Dawson in the chin turning her head.

"Is that the best you have? You pathetic cursed soul, not even a real demon, just some poor lost soul damned to hell." Two arms shot forward shoving Gigamore hard and fast into the semi trailer behind her.

She sailed back hitting the metal hard, denting it. She stood shaking her head and rushed forward again. This time she was lifted and thrown over the truck to land on the cement. With a groan, she stood wiping the water out of her face and popped her shoulder back in.

They were running, weaving and dodging in between the trucks. Gigamore stopped, listening, breathing hard. Then from overhead, she heard the rushing of air. Looking up she caught a bare foot with her face, wicked long nails scratching her face and neck.

"Come on Gigamore, keep up." The demon laughed running back towards the truck stop.

She pushed herself up out of the puddle she had landed in and spit out a glob of black blood. Unable to think of a better plan, she took off after Andras.

They ran through the dark. Andras reaching the truck stop first. Screams and shouts rang out from the inside, as people were startled by their sudden appearance.

"It's one of those prisoners! Get her!" Someone called out as they recognized the orange jumpsuit.

Gigamore reached the door and ripped it open. It popped on its hinges and slammed back into the wall, the glass in the door cracked and spider webbed. She ducked the body that came sailing towards her as she entered the truck stop. She was almost impressed by the body count already started. She hadn't been that far behind.

"Don't move, lapdog of Satan." Andras stood there cocooned in his mortal flesh, holding a busboy up by his neck.

She sighed, "That's a different department. That would be Beelzebub, I'm retrieval."

"Whatever. You know the whole underworld has gone to shit now that they've started sub-contracting you cursed souls. It used to be, if you needed something done right, you sent a demon."

Gigamore shrugged, "What can I say; the world's an evil place. Besides you weren't considered that big a threat."

"Not that big a... I'll have you know I had plans. I was going to knock Lucifer right off of his throne, then..."

"You'd take over Hell; blah, blah. I've heard it over and over. Don't fool yourself; you weren't any sort of threat to the big guy. He was on to you the moment the idea to take over hell sprang into your tiny mind." Gigamore took a step forward.

"Ah, ah, don't move or I squish his neck like Playdough."

Gigamore rolled her eyes. "That's effective. I'm not a good guy, I don't give a flying fuck what happens to these flesh bags."

"Oh right." Just to make himself feel better, he broke the boy's neck before dropping the body. Gigamore lunged over the back of the table only to have Andras dance out of the way.

"It was a great plan."

"It sucked." Gigamore confirmed.

"It's just not fair you know. I use to be an angel too, but Lucifer gets to be Prince of Hell. Lucifer this, Lucifer that..."

Gigamore tackled the demon, "Shut up. You are such a whiner."

The people still alive in the diner screamed and ran out of the way of the wrestling creatures. Gigamore batted away clawed hands and landed two solid punches into the twisted face.

"Can't feel a thing. I told you I'm invulnerable in this form."

Gigamore snorted and got up, grabbing a fistful of orange cloth and tossed the small body at the large plate glass window. The glass cracked but did not break.

"Guess I need to put my back into it." She walked over the broken furniture and picked Andras up again, heaving her shoulders, and tossed him through the glass. The sound of breaking glass was loud and many people whimpered and cried out in the dark.

Ducking through the jagged glass teeth, Gigamore walked outside and crouched over the body. "You sure about that invulnerability thing? You're bleeding an awful lot."

A foot kicked out and Gigamore went flying into the building. "I'll be fine. Just takes a moment to heal." Mrs. Dawson's body stood and a horrible teeth-grinding noise of bones resetting themselves could be heard.

Gigamore hit the ground on her back and skidded a bit on her black coat; she rolled over her right shoulder and came back up on her feet, only to catch another kick to the chest. Her body slid back across the wet black top. Before she could try to get back up, the demon grabbed her chin, wrenching her face up. Again and again, a fist slammed into the pale white flesh.

Andras paused looking at the swollen knuckles on his fist. "Pathetic. I really don't want to be you when you have to go back to your boss and explain how I got away again."

The click of a shotgun shell being chambered made two sets of eyes go large.

Without a word, Tully pulled the trigger.

Andras and Gigamore flew apart.

Tully glowered through a swollen eye. "Crazy ass, bitch." She marched over ejecting the spent shell and prepared to fire again. Coming to a stop, she leveled the gun at the prone, bleeding body. "At this point you just have the right to remain silent and die." She muttered before firing point blank into the body.

She waited for a moment ignoring the blood dripping from her clothes; until she was satisfied Mrs. Dawson was dead. Turning, she looked at the other figure that was staggering to its feet. "And who the hell are you?"

Gigamore staggered to her feet staring at the bleeding hole in the side of her abdomen. "You shot me?"

Tully shrugged. "I saw you crawl out of somebody's body. I figured you'd live."

"Yeah, well what if you'd been wrong?"

"I don't really care at this point. All I want is for that bitch to be dead."

"And I told you I can't die."

Tully turned, bringing the gun up.

Andras smacked the barrel away, and grabbed the thick woman by her neck and launched her through the windshield of the nearest semi.

As she went to take a step, Gigamore shouted. "No! You and I are going to finish this."

Andras turned smirking. "We've done the whole fight scene, give it up."

The black leather coat fluttered and came up behind her, black wings spread wide open, twin horns sprouted and curled back towards her ears. "I guess we're just going to do the whole fight scene over."

"Whatever, that's hardly impressive. I use to show myself in the form of a man with a raven's head, riding a great black wolf."

Gigamore yawned, "Whenever you're done reliving the glory days."

Andras shrieked in rage and ran forward.

She ducked the first two swings then wrapped her wings around them binding them tight and then even tighter.

"What are you doing?" His guttural voice yelled. "This body is already possessed; it can't be possessed by another."

"I don't want to possess it, I'm forcing you out."

"You can't do that." he shrieked out, his voice becoming frantic. "I'm a fallen Angel, I've witnessed the delights of heaven, and you can't best me."

"And I'm a retriever," she whispered her wings squeezing them even tighter until there was a loud crack and a brilliant flash of light that was gone in an instant.

Three bodies lay on the ground unmoving. Mrs. Dawson's body was twisted, her jaw broken and her ribcage blown away. Gigamore groaned and rolled over; ignoring the pounding in her head. After two pathetic attempts, she finally made it to her feet. For a couple of seconds, she staggered around in a circle until she found what she was looking for. He was tiny, barely three feet tall, with the body of a man and the head of a raven; his skin was fish-belly white.

With a grunt, she lifted her hands, palms out, and reddish orange flames poured out, bringing with it the stench of brimstone. They snaked around the prone body, twisting around it, until the writhing twin flames were secured like chains. Never once did Andras stir.

For a moment, she passively stared at the dead body, torn apart by Andras possession, before finishing her work. She bit her thumb. Black blood oozed out of the cut and she began to make markings around the body. After drawing her last mark on the ground, they began to glow red, and she knew minions would be here soon.

The air suddenly became tense. It was palpable pressing against the skin, and then small cracks began to appear in the ground. They grew wider and wider; at first small imps appeared, and then as the cracks became more accommodating, larger demons with horns and eyes all over their bodies crawled out.

"Took you long enough." One griped.

"It's not like I get paid by the hour." She shot back.

"You left a whole truck stop of witnesses."

She shrugged, "I'm just a retriever, I don't do wholesale slaughter."

"Fair enough." A demon muttered before motioning the imps to the diner.

They made an odd chattering noise sounding like shouts of joy, as they scrambled over the wet cement.

"So."

"So."

Gigamore and one of the multi-eyed demons looked at each other awkwardly for a moment.

"I'll just move over here out of the way."

"Thanks."

The screaming started and she moved over closer to the trucks, she noticed one with its windshield bashed in and remembered Tully. She opened the door to the cab and peeked in. Pain filled hazel eyes looked back.

"Oh shit, Tully." There was blood everywhere. It pooled in the seat and dripped down on to the floor.

"Help me," she wheezed out.

Gigamore closed her eyes, feeling those odd feelings again, this one she was pretty sure was regret, or sorrow; the price for possession. Yes, she could feel the pleasures of food, sex, and other things but it was two-fold and with the good came the bad; sometimes there was residual feelings and emotions you carried for awhile. This was one of those two-fold things.

"I can't..." She started.

"Never mind I should know better than to ask help from a demon."

Gigamore sighed, "It's not that. I actually wish I could help you, but I'm a demon not a doctor. Everyone in the truck stop is dead. The roads in and out are closed, and I'm afraid you've lost too much blood even if I was to call in a life flight. They're too far away."

Tully started to laugh and then stopped, groaning in pain. "I never... I never thought I would die

alone and cold in the cab of a truck."

Gigamore slid out of her leather coat and stepped carefully up on to the runner, laying it over the dying woman. "You're not alone, I'm here, and I guess I owe you that much."

"I didn't think demons were supposed to be nice."

"I'm not really a demon, or I guess a pure demon, and how do you know I'm a demon?"

"You crawled out of Terri's body, and you still have horns on your head."

"Oh." She reached up and sure enough, the two small horns were still there curling up and back towards her ears.

"So earlier, when Terri and I were knocking boots?" Tully asked, knowing she was going to regret the answer.

"That would have been me possessing Terri, although she was into the idea as well."

"I suppose that makes me feel a little better, although I'm probably going to hell for having sex with a demon." She began to cough, tears of pain leaking out of her eyes and blood spotted on her lips.

"I'm not a demon, not really. I'm a cursed soul."

Tully just looked at her.

Gigamore sighed. "I was alive once, human, but I guess I did something bad and when I died I went to hell."

"You guess?"

"It was a long time ago, and so much time passed in my purgatory that I don't remember anything about when I was alive, or what I did that was so bad."

"So you could be a serial killer."

"More than likely."

"Not helping me here."

"Sorry," she grumped.

"Jeez, you sure are grumpy for a demon."

"Cursed soul, not demon."

Tully wasn't sure if the difference mattered.

"Well, as a cursed soul your whole purpose for being in hell is to be punished, so cursed souls can not experience any earthly delights. Food tastes like ash, touch doesn't register, and emotions; we don't really have any. Except we all want those things, so sometimes here on earth, we possess people so we can taste food, enjoy touch, but unfortunately emotions are part of that package. Right now, I'm having residual emotions of caring because of my earlier possession of the waitress."

"Oh." She breathed out. "That sounds horrible. Oh God, I don't want to be a cursed soul." She coughed again, deeper. More blood appeared on her lips. When her coughing fit was over, she felt weaker. Everything was slipping away, "So cold."

"It will be okay, Tully." She whispered. She looked over her shoulder as she heard footsteps. It was an escort, a demon whose only purpose was to escort damned souls to hell.

Without thinking, she bit her thumb again and leaned into the cab. She drew a symbol on Tully's forehead.

"Wha... what are you doing?"

"Shhh, no time." She tossed the coat aside and started to unlace the boots. She had removed one and started on the other when a high-pitched voice asked. "What are you doing, Gigamore? This is my task. You can't interfere."

She raced to get the other shoe off. It fell to the floor of the cab and she ripped the sock off. On the bottom of each foot, she drew another symbol.

"Blood in, blood out." She murmured.

"Gigamore, stop this at once."

A hand tugged at her pant leg, but she refused to move, and stood blocking the driver's side door. She did not have a cup; somehow, she knew that the cup was important to the ritual.

"Gigamore? That's an odd name."

Black eyes looked up at the nearly dead corrections officer. "It's a good name. It's my name."

"I'm not going to heaven, am I?"

"Shhh, it will be okay."

"Gigamore!" The voice from outside shrieked. "Get out of the way."

She grimaced in pain as claws stabbed into her calf.

A cup, she needed a cup. Looking around the broken cab she found a crumpled foam coffee cup, reaching over she brushed the broken glass off of it and picked it up, dumping out the coffee.

"Blood in, blood out" she repeated. "I accept your transgressions, as if they were my own. I accept your sins, and acknowledge to pay for them. In death shall you find peace and the divine of the Everafter."

Her left hand was now black and covered with sharp scales. With a knife-like claw, she cut the bottom of each foot catching the blood in the cup. As she raised the cup to her lips two voices shouted at her, one demonic, the other whispering its last breath. "Gigamore, no!"

It was quiet now; the screams from the truck stop had ended. The imps, Enforcer Demons, and the Escort had all left, leaving her alone. The Escort demon had made its displeasure quite clear and she winced, pushing at her ribs on the right side where it had gotten some really good shots. Worn out, she sat on the ground, her back leaning against the front tire of the truck. Inside the smashed cab was the correction officer's dead body.

The rain had stopped completely and the clouds were starting to part, leaving the sky gray and dull, hours yet until the sun would rise. She knew she should get up and move, but she just did not have the energy for it yet, and she was loath to disturb the surrounding quiet.

The air grew tense, the wind held its breath, and even the earth seemed to be afraid. She groaned letting her head drop so her chin rested on her chest. There was only one thing that could make the very elements seem as strung out as a junkie cleaning up from 20 years of heroin addiction.

Then there was the sound of boots. They clacked, like the striking keys of a typewriter, over the cement. In the space under the trucks, Gigamore spied two legs with thigh high black boots.

The legs ambled through the maze of trucks before stopping in front of Gigamore's still figure. A black hat fluttered down, and Gigamore looked up, as it landed in her lap.

"You just look odd without the hat, Gigamore Baal."

Gigamore gave a humorless smile and placed the hat on her now hornless head. "Hi, Mel. Still dressed like a hooker, I see. Aren't angels supposed to look, well, I don't know, like they're getting ready to sing in a choir?" The figure before her was dressed in a sheer black top with spaghetti straps, a black mini-skirt, with black thigh-high fuck-me boots. The only thing wrong with the picture was the glorious white feathered wings, raising and lowering, as if timed with some heartbeat that sprouted from her back.

"Its modern times; a girl can dress however a girl feels like. Besides, I wasn't expecting to do a pick-up. She was slated for damnation you know?"

"Her sins weren't that major," Gigamore replied, wishing she would heal just a little faster. How

she hated angels, and it wasn't because of the whole us versus them thing. Angels just had that self-righteous holier than thou thing, and it drove her up the fucking wall.

"Still, it's important to repent. This way she just gets a free ride and doesn't learn anything."

"It's not like she was a baby rapist."

The angel crouched down, bringing their faces inches apart, "Why did you do it?"

Gigamore's face contorted, as if she would cry, if she were capable, but she wasn't. "It was my fault. She stepped in, buying me some time with Andras. I'm not sure I could have retrieved him without her help. He was a major demon and I'm not sure why I was sent to get him, but he might have killed me on this plane and sent me back." She shivered thinking of spending time in purgatory - again. "She stepped in and bought me some time, I owed her."

"You know you're not really capable of emotions. You possessed a human." The tone was accusatory.

"Yes. When do all of these emotions stop, Mel? It hurts so much; I just want it to stop."

"Oh, Gigamore." The angel's tone was soft, almost sad. "It doesn't have to be like this, you only need to repent."

Gigamore's black eyes opened and she glared. "Repent what? I can't remember what I did that was such a horror in his eyes. So I can't very well repent it, now can I?"

She stood up ignoring her screaming ribs. "Get her soul and go. We're finished here." She adjusted her hat so it angled down low obscuring her face in shadow, and started to walk away. Already the turbulent emotions twisting and churning inside her were starting to fade; soon she would be back to the vast null inside. She looked up into the gray sky, tempted to give a one-finger salute, but kept walking instead.

"Repent my ass." She snarled as she vanished in a flash of fire and brimstone.

End.

Send feedback to zeeamy@gmail.com
