

Blood, Recycled

I stand in front of two brass colored, worn down doors. On them reads the sign REDFORD SANATORIUM, Institute of Mental Health. Ringing the bell, I note this to be the only technological piece of device on the whole premise. Even the grass looks old, full of weeds and parasites, all tussled and turned and mingled with and within each other. Dead leaves ornament the path from the metal gate, broken from oxidation, to the door in front of me.

-Yes?- a crisp voice says on the other side of the door.

-Miss Ziegenheim, here to see Lara Bankdorf.-

A brief pause, and then the door opens smoothly until becoming a cacophony of creaks. Not even a wince.

The woman leads me through several long hallways, her long, gray hair fixed in a tangled braid that rests on a broad back and broader bottom. Half way across one corridor, she raises her thick arm and with pudgy fingers points inside. I nod in sign of gratitude and step through the wooden doorframe.

I can instantly see the filth in this room: various dents and scratches on the wall rising up towards a musty ceiling that contains some sort of sticky residue here and there. A cot lies in the middle of the floor, messily made up; to its left is a beige and purple rug, stained with overuse; to its right, a lonely, ill-fated lamp on top of an old stool. Further to the left, huddled in a corner, head in arms, sits my client.

- Did you do it? - Her voice comes out raspy and uncomfortable, probably from lack of use.

- Yes. -

She moves an inch, a sigh of relief escaping her lips.

- How? -

- In his car, with a Glock.-

- Shit! -

Her eyes light up in sheer joy, a childish giggle emanating from them.

- Did anyone see you? -

- I excel in my job, can't afford to be careless. -

- Right. So you can guarantee that bastard will never practice law ever again, let alone breathe? Has Death eloped with him by her side, to have and to hold, till life does them part? -

I nod my head in affirmation.

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It was easy, men can be so predictable. I seek their weakness and kill them with it. His was - as is to most - lust. What straight man would resist a blonde, barely dressed twenty four year old hot pie? Ah, the sex-driven age, however the more effortless it has made my job!

Once in his car, beside him, in the posh leather passenger seat, I reached for him, placing my right hand sensually on his thigh, his face beaming with pleasure, and with a sweet smile I undug the pistol from my garter, placing it on his genitals. I looked into his eyes, waiting for his gaze to change from confused to horrified; that's when I shot.

Now, the eyes of a man being shot in his privates is one of the most shock and terror driven eyes of all. Gaping with pain, the man tries to comprehend the events; the torturing throbbing prevents him from doing so. Then he starts twitching, spasmodically, sheer agony riding his veins and burning his body. That's when I blew him a kiss, removed my hand from his open thigh, and fired to his skull, sending blood and brain splattering on his tinted windows.

I got out of the fastback sedan, rubbing my index fingers along the back of my heels, wiping away a little stain of mud. Walking out of the deserted parking lot in the outskirts of town, I lit a match and tossed it behind me. The overly convenient puddle of gasoline dripping from this new Mercedes, the latest of the late brother Bankdorf, caught fire right away. Let the bastard burn...

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- He wanted me to go to jail, you know, for what I did. I got this hole instead, temporary insanity. The judge said this place would help me redeem. But I'm glad I killed him, I'm glad he's

gone. -

- My money? -

- He deserved it - she says as if not hearing me. - All those nights... I still can't get him off me. I knew I'd never be free of him; he said we were his forever. His two daughters. Every time I close my eyes I see the basement, the chains, his pain snake. I can still feel the leather strap with the brass studs on my back...-

- My money? - I repeat, maybe too loud, but I won't have her rambling on and on forever.

- In the bag, it's all there. -

I recognize defeat in her voice. Her eyes are cloudy, far away.

- Nice doing business with you. - My tone is flat, bordering on cold. I've never been one for melodrama.

She grasps at my leg as I stand up to leave, her eyes pleading.

- He'll never leave, will he? Daddy. - This last word comes out swirling with infected maggots. -I just can't forget, you know? -

I look at her and turn away, walk out the door without looking back. Of course I know, I'm her sister.