

Chapter 10

It was almost midnight by the time I got to Los Angeles. Jamie's truck was totally covered in road grime, and looked to be a light brown color. Exactly the effect I had hoped for.

I pulled a map of Abbott's house out of my bag. I was not familiar with this part of Hollywood Hills. His house was very close to Griffith park, a fact I might need to take advantage of if everything went south.

I drove by his place just fast enough to not attract attention, but slow enough to get a look at the layout, and notice that the lights were on. I also saw the two guys in the unmarked car parked down the street, almost a block away.

I turned the scanner on, glad that I had bought the small portable unit that I could wear on a belt clip. The earphone would even fit under my ninja hood. Did these guys have Abbott's place wired, or were they just observing? It would sure be nice to know.

Luckily, the street that Abbott lived on was not a culdesac, so I didn't have to drive past the unmarked car again.

I parked the truck about a block away, and slipped between two houses with Jamie's sound amplifier, and my night vision binoculars.

The two men didn't seem to care too much about being inconspicuous. I could see them talking, and when I turned up the amplifier, I could hear their words, although I couldn't tell which one was doing the talking.

"Did you see the tits on that bitch Abbott brought home?" I heard one ask.

"Just a stupid coke whore, partner. Full of silicone. Me, I prefer the all natural look. What is that French saying? The perfect breast fits inside a champagne glass."

"I wish we had video in there. I'd love to see her in action."

"Hell, I'd settle for listening to her, we don't even have the resources for audio on this one, remember?"

"Yeah, I know. What a maggot anyway. I can't believe that the brass actually thinks that we need him. I say they should cut him loose, and let the Jackals know he's a snitch. I'll bet they would let him in on some pain."

"Hey, is that miss triple d leaving already?"

"Yep, that's her. I'd recognize that bounce anywhere."

I could hear both of them laughing as I turned the binoculars up the street to watch the woman leave.

She was yelling something back at the house, and I tried to adjust the sound amplifier to make out her words.

"You bastard! Fucking limp dicked faggot! Don't ever call me again! Ever!"

Obviously, Abbott had a way with women.

I made my way back to the truck. I'd heard all I needed to, and all of it sounded like it was in my favor.

Once I got to the truck, I traded the binoculars for the goggles, and put the scanner earpiece into my ear under the ninja hood. I put the bandolier over my vest, and grabbed the shotgun. I quietly loaded one shell into the chamber, and seven more into the magazine. I was cocked and locked, and ready to rock. I expected to feel some kind of emotion now that I was so close to vengeance, but I only felt the icy stillness of a lonely, empty, and heartless soul.

I removed the goggles and looked up at an uncharacteristically clear Los Angeles sky. Looking to the north, I found first the big dipper, then the little. Looking towards the end of the little dipper's handle, I could just make out the north star. Dawn's and my star. Our star. And just then, almost as if it came from the north star itself, a beautiful bright shooting star flashed across the night sky.

"Is that you Dawn?" I asked the heavens. "I'm not sure what you're trying to tell me, but it's too late for me to stop now. I know that this won't bring you back, but I can't let him get away with this. You understand don't you?"

The only reply came in the form of the haunting, melancholy sound of a lone coyote's howl in the park. Another lonely hunter in the dark.

I wiped the wetness from my eyes, and pulled the goggles back down. As I moved through the darkness, I became one with it.

I jumped over the wall into Abbott's back yard, and made my way around his pool. As I crept up to his French doors, I wondered if he had an alarm system, and if so, was it armed?

Someone had just been in the pool, their wet footprints were still on the concrete. Two sets actually. Looking closer, I could even make out a wet butt print out at the edge of the pool.

Probably the woman that just left, I thought to myself.

Trying the door, I was pleasantly surprised to find it unlocked. Good for me, bad for him.

I lifted the goggles from my eyes and stepped inside his dining room. I could hear water running upstairs, so I followed the sound to the source.

He was in the shower, and I could hear him talking. Mumbling actually.

"Stupid bitch. Dumb fucking whore. Who does she think she is anyway? I got her that part in the porn movie..."

He became quiet as I swung open the bathroom door.

"Ginger? Is that you? I knew you'd come back, you little cunt! Get your ass in here and blow me. Ginger?"

I just waited for him to open the shower door. Which he did, a couple of frantic seconds later.

"Ginger, I'm gonna kick your ass, now get in here! Hey! You're not Ginger, How'd you get in here? What do you want? Get out of my house!" He said as he tried to grab a towel.

I stepped closer and slammed the shower door open so hard it shattered. I thought that I would feel rage, anger, hatred. But again, I felt nothing.

He started to scream for help, and didn't get the chance as I butt stroked him with the shotgun as the first sounds came out of his mouth.

He hit the floor of the bathroom, now all wet with the water that was still running from the shower, spilling over the tile.

He didn't look very impressive when I'd seen him on the television, and he looked less so now. Skinny, pasty white, with wet hair all plastered down on his head, and his pencil dick, all shriveled up from the shower.

Blood was gushing from what was left of his upper lip.

I stood silently, waiting for him to get up.

“Who are you? What do you want? Please don’t hurt me anymore, I’ll give you anything you want! Please! I have some money in the safe in my bedroom. Here, let me go get it for you, but PLEASE don’t hurt me anymore!” He pleaded.

I could see the sparks flying from Dawn’s car as it was thrown across the road. I could see the blood on her beautiful face.

There was no mercy in me. No feeling whatsoever. I was numb. Cold as ice.

I stepped back, and followed him as he scrambled down the hall towards what I assumed to be his bedroom.

I made a mental note of the fact that the scanner had mentioned nothing about disturbances in this area. Again, good for me, bad for him.

“Here, I’ve got lots of money in the safe.”

He opened the safe and stepped back. “Right here. That’s what you want, right? I’ve got some coke too, good shit. You want that too? Look, it’s all I’ve got here man. I can get more though. It’s like two fifty man. That’s a quarter mil. That’s what you want, right?! PLEASE don’t hurt me! Take it all! But please don’t hurt me man!”

I spoke for the first time. My voice perfectly calm.

“Do you know who I am?” I asked.

“NO idea man. Honest. Did the Jackals send you or something? Fuck, I knew this was gonna turn bad on me. I didn’t give the cops anything man! I’m cool. Really!”

I took my hood off and let him see my face. I knew that he’d never seen me before.

“Do you remember a night a couple of weeks ago? A car you hit?”

“Oh fuck! Man I got friends in high places, ya know? I didn’t mean nothing. They were just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Happens all the time. Shit happens dude!”

“My thoughts exactly.” I said, just as the magic red dot from the laser sight of the shotgun found his right knee, as if drawn there by some hidden magnet.

“Shit happens dude.” I said, and squeezed the trigger.

I watched his leg explode in a crimson burst of gore, and his screams of agony ripped through the room. Funny, but I didn’t even hear the gun blast. Just the sweet melody of his screams of pain and anguish.

“Fuck you man! You just shot my leg off man! Fuck you!”

It took a second longer for the laser to find his other leg. He wouldn’t stop thrashing around on the floor. But when I saw the delightful red glow on his left leg, I again caressed the trigger on my own personal light saber, and watched his second leg disappear, or should I say, reappear, all over his bedroom furniture. Definitely modern art.

By now his screams had hit a crescendo that trailed off as he blacked out from blood loss.

I hadn’t counted on him trying to bribe me, so hadn’t thought about what to do with the money in his safe. Or the bag of white powder either.

My mind was racing and I realized that this would look almost like a gang thing, if I took the money. But I had no interest in the cocaine. Time was running out. Starskey and Hutch were bound to have heard the shotgun blasts and had probably already called for backup, although I hadn’t heard such a call on the scanner. But would I? My ears were ringing from the gunshots in these close quarters.

I reached down, grabbed the cash, and stuffed it in my vest. I took the coke and tore the bag in half, spilling the powdery contents over Abbott's bloody body. Just as I turned around to leave the room, I heard him move. I spun around and slapped the trigger as I saw the laser beam cross his mid section. The buckshot nearly ripped him in half, and the last thing I saw as I ran from the room, was the multi-colored, writhing mass of his intestines as they spilled across the floor.

Shit happens.

I took a shot at the transformer on the light pole outside Abbott's house right before I jumped the fence in his backyard. The lights all around went out, and I pulled the goggles back down over my eyes.

Now I could hear the scanner.

"Calling all units, we have reports of gunfire in the vicinity of the observatory. Use extreme caution."

I hit the remote alarm on the truck and listened to the chirp. I jumped in, ripped off my hood, and slowly drove away from Abbott's house and the sound of approaching sirens. I was several blocks away before I realized that the men in the car had either not heard the shots, or had waited for backup before responding to them.

Good for me, bad for him.

And while I had expected to feel vindication, relief, remorse, regret, *something*, I realized that I still felt nothing. The coldness that had consumed me, still held me tight in its icy grasp.

It was as if I had no heart or soul left. I had buried both in those three graves.

I had a long way to go before morning. What was that again? Miles to go before I sleep. But how many miles until I could feel peace? Did I even care anymore? I had avenged my wife and sons deaths, was my time on earth done? What did I have to live for?

Questions. But no answers. I sent my prayers to heaven, but the God that I had believed in, and trusted in my youth, didn't answer anymore.