

DEVIL'S LITTLE ANGEL

by

CJ Walley

INT. UTILITY ROOM - DAY

A spin-drier screeches and bangs under a single dim bulb. The windows badly masked out by tattered old cardboard.

The door opens, letting in much needed light, HAGAN fumbles in, an unkempt middle-aged man built with a dominating frame. He hums a merry tune as he pads across the dirty floor, a cigarette between his fingers.

He crosses to the drier, picks up a metal bar and--

BANG! BANG! BANG! He beats it until the squeaking stops.

He sighs satisfied and takes a draw on his cigarette. The faint sound of sobbing fills the room.

CATHERINE, a battered and bruised young woman, sits in the corner hugging herself. She pants as she rocks, staring into the middle distance distressed, her hair and clothes filthy and body malnourished.

HAGEN

I don't see why you're so upset.

He crosses toward her, takes a knee and inspects a young WAITRESS lying on the floor. He clutches the Waitress by the jaw, her body lifeless, a crowbar by her open hand.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

You won didn't you?

Catherine gasps, full of regret. The drier squeaks and bangs. Hagen crosses back to it sighing.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

And you know what that means.

BANG! He slams it with the bar and turns back grinning.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

Cheerios!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Milk sloshes over Cheerios. Hagen dumps the bowl in front of Catherine. She eats feverishly, slurping and munching, not caring for her hair dipping into the milk.

He crosses to the stove, the kitchen littered with food packaging and dirty plates stacked randomly by filthy pans.

He clatters out a greasy frying pan and ignites the stove.

HAGEN

Eat fast, we need to get moving.

He peels out rashers of bacon and lays them in the pan, licking his lips as he watches them sizzle.

HAGEN (CONT'D)
I heard the pleading.

She pauses haunted and stares into her bowl.

CATHERINE
She told me she had a baby.

HAGEN
You believe her?

She thinks for a moment and shakes her head sure.

CATHERINE
They say all kinda things when they don't want to go away.

HAGEN
What you tell her?

CATHERINE
That it was my job.

He smiles. She reflects regretfully.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
(softly)
And that she'd be okay.

He frowns and flips the bacon. Her nose twitches as she sniffs the air. He waves his spatular at her.

HAGEN
You know, it's very bad to tell people things that aren't true.
(beat)
How'd you make her go?

She reflects for a moment and motions strangling with her hands, her eyes wild as if back in the moment.

HAGEN (CONT'D)
Till she went away?

She stares back into her half eaten bowl of Cheerios and fights tears. He grins aroused, scrapes up the bacon and scoffs a rasher.

HAGEN (CONT'D)
That-a-girl.

She stares at a dying flower on the table by her. She pours some of the milk from her cereal into the pot, strokes a leaf with her finger, and goes to drink out the bowl. BANG! Hagen pounds the table.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

No! We don't behave like that!

She freezes. He stares at her angry. She holds the bowl conflicted for a moment and places it down. He finishes his bacon and licks his fingers satisfied.

RING! She flinches. He snaps round intrigued.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

Oh boy, I sure hope that's a
Jahovah's witness.

INT. CAR, JACK'S STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT - PREVIOUSLY

Hagen, walks toward a car in the darkness. He unlocks the driver's door, gets in, and slumps back in the seat.

He lets out a satisfied moan and pushes in the cigarette lighter button. As he fumbles out his cigarettes, he puts down the window and stares at the steakhouse, watching the waitresses serving customers inside.

HAGEN

You know what I hate? Going to a
steakhouse and getting served a bad
steak. I mean, I just don't get how
that situation can come about. If
cooking steak is your businesses,
every slab of meat you serve should
be a work of art, a real fucking,
work of art.

He sighs and sits back.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

You know what I mean?

He stares into his rearview mirror. In the back sits, Catherine. She stares back wide-eyed and silent.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

You hungry?

She nods.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

Real hungry?

She nods surely.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

Would you have liked me to bring
out a doggy bag? I mean, I left a
lot of fucking food on my plate.
You'd think they'd ask why, but...

(MORE)

HAGEN (CONT'D)

I dunno. That what you would have liked?

She sits staring for a few moments and nods. He clenches his jaw, turns back, and points at her judgmentally.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

And THAT is why you are weak.

He stares fuming. She shrinks back scared. The cigarette lighter clicks. She flinches a little. He turns back and goes about lighting his cigarette.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

You think that's what he wants? He wants his special little girl eating badly cooked food?

CATHERINE

(long beat)

No.

HAGEN

No. No he certainly does not.

CATHERINE

(long beat)

He wants... He wants us to get ice-cream.

Hagen sniggers to himself as he smokes.

HAGEN

No he does not, Catherine. No he does not. You know what he wants? He wants another. Yes he does.

She turns back and stares deadly serious.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

You gonna do that for him?

She stares back for a few moments and nods.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

Cos you're his strong girl, right?

CATHERINE

Real strong.

He smiles at her proudly. She just stares back spaced out.

He smirks to himself, sits back and stares at a waitress.

HAGEN

Who says you can't shoot the fucking messenger.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

DETECTIVE ROSE waits at the door, a confident woman who looks like her day's dragging. She glances up at the modest house looming over her and presses the doorbell impatiently.

The door sweeps open and Hagen frowns disappointed.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Doctor Hagen? Doctor William Hagen?

Hagen's stares back cagily.

DETECTIVE ROSE (CONT'D)
Detective Rose. Mind if I come in
and ask a few questions?

HAGEN
I gotta leave in like, a few
minutes.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Great, like a few minutes is
exactly how long this will take.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Hagen slumps onto an armchair as Rose perches on the sofa. Sunlight peeks through gaps in the pulled curtains.

Catherine enters eating and smiles at Rose. Rose studies her a little concerned. Catherine offers over her bowl.

CATHERINE
You want the rest?

DETECTIVE ROSE
Erm... no... Thank you.

Rose looks to Hagen confused.

HAGEN
A patient.

DETECTIVE ROSE
You're a shrink, right?

HAGEN
NLP practitioner.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Like a hypnotist?

He stares at her wide-eyed.

HAGEN
(joking)
Look into my eyes.

DETECTIVE ROSE
We tried your home on West Bank.

HAGEN
Well, as you can clearly see, I'm
house sitting here at the moment.

DETECTIVE ROSE
You took some finding. Where are
the Robinson's at the moment?

HAGEN
That how it works for you,
detective? Someone takes some
finding so that means they're
hiding? The Robinson's are taking
their yearly trip to Disney World.

Catherine gasps and smiles to herself dreamily.

CATHERINE
Disney World.

DETECTIVE ROSE
I understand you visited Jack's
Steakhouse on Monday? You notice
anything suspicious while you were
there?

HAGEN
Actually yeah, I'm pretty sure my
sirloin was overdone.

DETECTIVE ROSE
A waitress has gone missing.

HAGEN
Well ain't that a damn shame.

DETECTIVE ROSE
You mind if I take a look around?

HAGEN
Well, it's not my place to say, you
know that.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Am I going to need a warrant?

HAGEN
I guess my hands are tied.

Catherine mindlessly runs her wrists around each other as if being bound, Rose notices it. She looks back to Hagen, he shoots her a very forced smile.

The spin-drier starts banging against the wall. Rose startles a little and stares at the wall concerned, as if hearing someone banging for help.

Hagen casually lights up a cigarette, a little amused.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

What is it with you career women these days, so scared of the thought of being chained to the kitchen sink.

He stares right at her, she stares back disturbed.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The front door slams. Rose walks away a little shaken. She pauses and looks back at the house.

With a little fear to her steps, she makes her way down the side of the house, toward the banging noise inside. Her feet brush through uncut grass, the banging gets louder, her hand instinctively rests on her firearm.

COUGH! She snaps round to see Hagen stood where she's just walked from.

HAGEN

You know and I know, this is private property, detective.

DETECTIVE ROSE

That sounds to me like someone banging for help.

She motions to the backdoor to the utility room.

HAGEN

You know what separates a good gambler from a bad one? Mitigating risk. When you realize you're putting everything on the line to rescue a spin-dryer, you're sure going to appreciate that.

She looks him up and down, he's clearly unarmed. She plucks up the courage to open the door and enters the--

INT. UTILITY ROOM - DAY

Rose finds the spin-dryer squeaking and banging. The Waitress and crowbar gone. Hagen appears at the doorway.

HAGEN
That's breaking and entering,
detective.

Rose frowns regretful for a few moments. She hears a grunt from another room. Fuck it. She's inside now. May as well check it out. She heads for the--

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Rose finds Catherine, the crowbar in one hand, trying to drag away the body of the Waitress. Rose draws her weapon.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Freeze!

Catherine drops the crowbar and runs to the front door, Rose chases her, leaping over the Waitress' body.

HAGEN
CATHERINE!

Catherine freezes terrified. Rose aims for her and looks back to Hagen. He chuckles and raises his eyebrows.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Okay, you're under arrest!

He smirks un-phased.

HAGEN
Catherine, take the gun.

Catherine wrings her hands nervous.

DETECTIVE ROSE
If you try to take this weapon, I assure you, I will blow your fucking head off.

HAGEN
No she won't, Catherine. She's weak, weak like the others. She's not like you, she ain't special.

Catherine approaches Rose. Rose edges back shocked.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Don't. Don't you dare.

Catherine approaches scared. Rose glares at Hagen.

DETECTIVE ROSE (CONT'D)
Tell her to stop!

Rose stands frozen, stricken with panic and conflicted. Catherine moves up to her and grabs the gun.

DETECTIVE ROSE (CONT'D)

No!

Catherine wrestles the gun from her hand.

HAGEN

It's time to make her go away,
Catherine. It's what he wants.

Catherine aims the gun at Rose. Rose glares at Hagen.

DETECTIVE ROSE

You won't get away with this!

HAGEN

Get away with what exactly? I
haven't laid a finger on anybody.

Hagen confidently approaches Rose.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

The perfect crime. The one you
don't have to commit yourself. I'm
afraid that makes me pretty much
untouchable, sugar-tits.

DETECTIVE ROSE

Catherine, come into the station
with me. You can tell them who's
making you do this.

HAGEN

Who's making you do it, Catherine?

CATHERINE

The Devil needs me to.

DETECTIVE ROSE

He doesn't Catherine. That
bullshit, okay? It's all lies!

Catherine winces conflicted and glances around confused.
Hagen closes in concerned. Rose stares sincere.

DETECTIVE ROSE (CONT'D)

Look, I can get you help, I can
make it stop. But I'm not going to
tell you what to do. What you do
has to be up to you.

Hagen steps over the Waitress, pointing furious.

HAGEN

Don't you listen to her! If you
don't pull that trigger, you have
to face him! You want that?

DETECTIVE ROSE

Catherine, the only person you ever
have to answer to, is yourself. I
think you know that.

Catherine clenches her eyes shut and strains, her head
trembling, her teeth gritted, her finger twitching against
the trigger. Tears squeeze from her eyes.

HAGEN

You know crying makes him angry
Catherine! And you know what he
makes me do when he's angry!

CATHERINE

I'm not crying! I'm trying to make
them all come back!

HAGEN

Well that ain't gonna happen is it?

Hagen stares at Catherine seething. She concentrates hard.

HAGEN (CONT'D)

You made them all go away like he
wanted you to, didn't you? And all
he's asking for is one more soul.

CATHERINE

I didn't.

HAGEN

You didn't what?

CATHERINE

I didn't do everything you told me
to.

Catherine puts the gun to her own head.

DETECTIVE ROSE

CATHERINE, NO!

Rose runs to Catherine. Catherine clenches her eyes shut and
squeezes the trigger. BANG! They both hit the floor hard.

The gun slides across the floor to Hagen's feet. Rose checks
Catherine, she's okay, she got there just in time. They both
look back up at Hagen towering over them.

HAGEN

That was impressive. You know what?
I think I've found my new protégée.

Rose shields Catherine as they both scabble back. Hagen
casually reaches down and picks up the gun. He smiles down at
them trembling before him, but then--

Rose's eyes bulge. Catherine opens her eyes wide, smiles delighted, and starts to laugh.

HAGEN (CONT'D)
What's so fucking funny?

The Waitress stands up behind Hagen, filled with vengeance. She raises the crowbar like a bat, swings hard and--

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

The sturdy metal door bangs. The Waitress, still in her dirty uniform, jolts to her senses.

Rose takes a seat opposite the Waitress and stares at her, a look of sympathy in her eyes. The Waitress averts her gaze and looks to the floor.

DETECTIVE ROSE
You saved my life.

The Waitress clenches her eyes shut and fights back tears, instinctively hugging herself.

DETECTIVE ROSE (CONT'D)
I just want to say, with absolute sincerity, thank you. I've got your back, okay? You did what you had to do, and I know... We all know... what you've been through.

The Waitress looks back at her unconvinced.

DETECTIVE ROSE (CONT'D)
But we have to talk about what happened, okay? What happened at the house, what happened at work, what happened in that room-

WAITRESS
-Is my Mom here yet?

DETECTIVE ROSE
We called your Mom. She'll be here soon.

WAITRESS
Is she mad?

Rose stares shocked.

DETECTIVE ROSE
Why would she be mad?

The Waitress can no longer hold back her tears.

WAITRESS

Cause I promised her I'd always
stay safe.

She sniffs back tears. Rose fumbles for some tissues out her
pocket and hands them over.

DETECTIVE ROSE

Listen, the worst thing you can do
right now is feel guilt. I need you
to focus, okay? Now I'm sorry about
that, but that's my job.

WAITRESS

Why? You got that sick fuck, didn't
you?

DETECTIVE ROSE

Yeah, we did. He's going to be
locked up for a real long time, you
know? Don't worry about him. But we
need to talk about what Catherine
did to you... in the utility room.

The Waitress wells up with tears again and chokes.

WAITRESS

She was doing whatever he told her
to. She was doing it all for him.

DETECTIVE ROSE

For Dr Hagen?

WAITRESS

No... She said she was doing it
for... She said she was doing it
for the Devil.

DETECTIVE ROSE

You sure about that?

The Waitress nods very sure.

DETECTIVE ROSE (CONT'D)

How can you be so sure?

WAITRESS

Because when she told me, she
seemed so proud of herself.

THE END