

DEVIL'S LITTLE ANGEL

by

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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...
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