

## Hell Hath

“...and just like always, you shut this door and don’t open it unless it’s me. Alright?” I tell her in my best “it’s just a little thing; absolutely nothing to worry about,” tone. Although we’ve been married for three years she still doesn’t trust that I know what I’m doing.

So I messed up once. That was what, a year ago? Come on! Drop it already! We didn’t need him around anyway. Bastard was eating up our food, and shit. Besides, how long before he was gonna try and have sex with Rachel. Now, I’m a reasonable man. I’ll share food and shelter, but my wife is *my* wife. Ya know?

Yeah. I didn’t mean for Rich to get killed, but I ain’t cryin’ none about it either. Fuck him.

“Be careful baby,” she tells me.

Oh, the look in her eyes. So scared, and lonely. She didn’t used to look like that. When we were first married it was all daises. Beaming bride; handsome groom; happily ever after. Yada yada yada. Then that comet came past and ta-dah, dead fuckers are walking. “Near hit” my ass. Hell, I wish it *had* hit us. At least then *everybody* would be dead. Fuckin comet.

Ain’t that some shit? I mean, that’s one helluva cosmic “bad-fucking-day.” But *you* know all about *that* so, anyway.

I kissed her on the forehead, grabbed my backpack and my guns and checked the peephole.

Brilliant idea that was; the peephole. It wasn’t mine. I gotta give Rachel props on that one. She saw it at the hardware store a while back, you know...*before*. It’s got, like, a 180° viewing angle or some shit. You can damn near see around the corner! By the way, do you have *any* idea how damn hard it is drilling a hole by hand? Lemme tell ya brother, it’s a *bitch-and-ah-half!* I wish I’d put that damn thing in when the power was still on.

So anyway, I check the peephole and nobody’s around. I take the safety’s off my guns and give her another kiss, just in case it’s my last, tell her if it was someone she heard screaming I’ll bring them back, then I slipped out the door.

The creepiest part is getting off the porch. It’s elevated so there’s plenty of room to hide under there. I always had a thing about people under my bed when I was young. Grabbing my ankles and dragging me under. Shit like that. Well, the space under the porch does the same damn thing to me. So, I leap off and sprint my ass away from the house, just in case one is under there, and stop at the street. Of course, none are under the porch, I’m just being a pussy. But it sets my adrenaline flowing, which keeps me frosty so its all good.

It’s about late evening and it’ll be dark before too long so I really don’t wanna drag this shit out. I start creeping along the sidewalk, trying to keep some space between me and the buildings in case one of them assholes is hiding out.

It’s fall and the leaves are all over the ground. It’s really hard to listen for those assholes when there’s leaves scratching and rustling all around you. And I haven’t heard shit as far as someone shouting for help or screaming or anything.

I'm starting to get really put out by all this shit and start thinking about turning back. I mean, *I* don't wanna get my ass killed for something that might be nothing. But Rachel *swears* she heard someone screaming, so *my* happy ass gets to go look for "survivors." Yay me.

We used to do stuff like that together at first; going into town. Mostly cause I needed the extra hands and there wasn't anybody else but her. She hated it; even pissed herself once from all the stress, or fear, or whatever the hell else she wanted to blame for it. I still think she had to pee before we left, but didn't; then got too scared to do it while we were out and wound up pissing her pants.

Anyway. So I ain't hearin shit but a bunch ah damn leaves and the fuckin blood whooshing in my ears.

Then, I hear it.

Yeah, it's someone screamin alright. It's that "scared for your life" scream you hear in the movies all the time. Well, used to hear. So yeah, someone's screaming and it sounds like their in the town square, or close to it.

Well at this point I'm like, what, four or five blocks from the square? Something like that. So I make a Bee-line for it.

I hear the screaming again, but now its moved off to the north. Whoever's screaming is *truckin*. I mean, balls-out *running*. They were heading away from the square and best I could tell from the first scream to the second, they were doing about a block a minute.

At first I thought it might be a man screaming, but it had that high pitch that only women can hit. Either that or it's some homo out there squealing his ass off, in which case I'd be *pissed*. I don't need to bring somebody home who's gonna try and play "grab ass" with me or some shit.

So I cut down a side street, trying to head them off. I figured their going for 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church, mostly cause there's still a bunch of sign's up saying "Shelter This Way."

You see, early on, when all the dead were coming back, our Sheriff made 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist a rally point for everyone to take shelter. Well, that turned into a cluster fuck and needless to say, a lot of people ate it, literally.

So yeah, I made it to the block the church was on, knelt down in the intersection ... its Flamingo and Ivy, about 80 yards up from the church... *anyway*, I got down and waited. I'm just sitting there man, quiet, patient, just waiting. If anyone's still coming, they'll be coming that way and I'll see 'em as soon as they round the corner. I got my rifle up, ready to go.

Sure as shit, someone comes trucking around the corner. It's a chick, and she's about half a block away. I can't tell if she's hurt, bit, nothing. I can't even tell if she's pretty. She's in good shape that's for sure. She's got that runner's look, you know, all thin, kinda waify, but not stringy like a runner; she's still got her tits cause I can see em bouncing as she's running at me.

She sees me and she shrieks. One of those startled but happy at the same time kind of shrieks. It was a funny sound.

No one else but her comes around the corner. I was kinda hoping it would be a couple people at least. It would have been nice to have someone other than Rachel to talk to for a while. And if it's a group and they have a couple women then she could chit-chat

her little heart out. God bless her. I love her but damn man; that voice gets to be like an ice pick in your brain after a while.

Here's the kicker; I realize I *know* this girl. Seriously! She doesn't realize who I am yet, but that's to be expected, she's running for her life. She gets maybe...40 feet from me and that's when she finally recognizes me.

She stops dead in her tracks.

I stand up slow like and lower my rifle. She's standing there, panting up a storm. Just gasping for breath and looking at me, kinda like she can't believe it's me.

"Hey Jenny," I said, and I smiled at her.

We used to date, Jenny and me. It was about a year before I met Rachel. Man, we were something else too. At first it was just about the fuckin'. I'm talking gritty, dirty, bared-teeth monkey humpin'. Then that turned into love and man, whew. I thought it was gonna be me and her forever. She was really something. The best.

She looked good when we were together, but I guess living like she had been since the comet did her body *real good*. She had this long black hair that ran down to her ass. And oh man, what an ass! You could of bounced a roll of quarters off that ass and cracked some walnuts on it afterward for good measure. But living on the lam like everyone has to now, it just chewed up all those slightly fatty spots on her I didn't like so much and *really* made her a knock-out!

She smiled back at me and chuckled in between breaths, I guess over us running into each other after so long and everything that's happened in-between. Either that or she was starting to go nutty, I don't know.

"Who all else is with you? Is anybody else behind you?" I said.

She starts crying. She's starting to catch her breath so the crying comes pretty easy.

She said, "They surprised us. We tried to run, but they were all over us. They're behind me. I had to leave everyone behind. Oh God! Goddamn me; I *left* them." She mumbled some other crap about "they were hungry", "going for food." Something about getting some toys for a couple of kids. It was kind of hard to hear through all the sobbing..

And then she really got the waterworks going. My heart goes out to her. I feel so bad for her, that whoever she's been hanging with lately is probably a hundred pounds of kibble by now. I was pretty sure that she'd just lost everything that meant something to her.

"You're alright now," I tell her. "I'm here."

Jenny forces a smile at me and starts to calm down a little. And then I see it in her eyes. Relief. Gratitude. The tears are still coming but now their happy tears. It reminded me of what we were together. Of how much I loved her. Of how I would have done *anything* for her.

I'm so happy she's happy.

I pull the rifles trigger, putting a round in her belly.

The report is deafening. She flinched because of it, and then this little fountain of blood starts to trickle down her shirt. She swayed on her feet, her face going all pale as she gets this confused look on her face. Then she fell on her back, just sprawled out like a crucified Jesus.

I walked over to her, and stood over her while she groaned and held her stomach. She bled pretty good for a while before it kind of slowed a little.. I'm guessing she was bleeding internally but who cares, right?

I had always heard that gut shots were the worst way to die, so I thought "it's a start."

Apparently it also hurts like a mother to talk when you're gut shot. Either that or I got her in the diaphragm. Whichever it was, she wasn't screaming anymore.

It was just me, and her.

She balls up and starts groaning, "Why" at me. Like it's some big fucking surprise. Stupid bitch.

"Cause you're a heartless bitch. You broke my fucking heart. All that time together. Everything we meant to one another and you go and toss it away? That's fucking why!" I said. "I tried being friends with you and all you did was push me away, like we were never a couple. Just cause we broke up doesn't mean you can't tell me intimate stuff. I mean, how intimate had *we* been? Jesus, you could have talked to me about *anything* but *no*, you wanted to start keeping fucking secrets from me. Treat me like a goddamn stranger. Please! I had my cock in you six ways from Sunday and you wanna make *me* feel like I'm a *stranger* to you? Fuck that noise!"

"Please," she begged. And a couple other things she begged too, but I wasn't listening. Fuck her. Fucking cunt. Fuck her and that boyfriend she had after me. Whatever the hell his name was. Trevor, Travis, some fucking gay-ass name like that.

Jenny's crying, real quiet like, probably cause she can't breath all that well.

I'm just smiling at her, as happy as a clam. I'm so goddamn happy she's finally feeling what I felt, what I went through. What she *put* me though.

Then I was like, "Hurts don't it bitch? Does it feel like your guts are getting ripped out? Cause that's what it felt like every time you pushed me away. Even when I tried to hold you, and be your friend. But *NO*, just push push push."

I almost forgot where I was. I was having such a good time I almost forgot why she was running in the first place. I completely forgot she had assholes chasing her. It was a damn good thing I remembered too cause a group of them had come around the corner and was coming our way. One of them was ahead of the rest and getting really damn close. Too close for me by any means. He was a stinker too. *Whew!* Bastard had been dead a *long* time. Christ all-mighty he was fucking nasty.

Well, I pulled my pistol and shot his knees out. I didn't wanna kill him, at least not yet. He went down, but you know that don't mean shit to them. They'll keep coming at you no matter what. At least he was crawling now. It would take him a while to get to us, plenty of time to give her a piece of my mind.

"Now where was I?" I said. "Oh yeah. I didn't try to touch you like I was trying to feel you up or some kind of shit. I was just wanting to be affectionate, like two people who had fucked each others brains out would be. The kind of bond we shared could have made us grow *closer* as friends, not apart. But you wanted it that way, didn't you? Imagine how that kind of bullshit made me feel. Well, I'll bet you got a pretty good idea now, huh?"

So, right about then I figure I better do something about the others before they go and screw up my fun, so I start pickin em off. It's pretty damn easy to do when they ain't trying to avoid getting shot. And they all go down like a whore on pay day.

Stinky Pete, what I named that crawling fucker, he gets about two feet from Jenny and she starts *wailing*. Crying out for her momma and shit. And she's got these big frothy bubbles all over her mouth. Fucking disgusting. I just look at her.

Well, she rolls over and tries to crawl away so I kick her in the ass as hard as I can. I must have hit a nerve or something cause she sucked in a lung full and started writhing around, holding her ass. I could swear she shit herself, but it might have just been the dead guy. Who knows. Who cares. Me; I'm *all* smiles.

I'm standing there, standing over her, making sure she ain't goin nowhere. Now, she can hear that nasty bastard draggin himself closer, and closer, and closer.

Stinky Pete gets just a little too close to her for my comfort so I level my rifle at his left shoulder and blast it. Needless to say, it fuckin blows out. Matter splatter, man. All over the goddamn road. I blasted the right one and blew it out too. I can't have him go and fuck up my good time. I wanna drag this out for a little longer cause, I mean; we got some catching up to do. Right?

Well now he's a goddamn torso just laying there like a fuckin slug, but he's *still* trying to get to her. Aw man! Those fuckers have got some tenacity, let me tell ya.

She's all beside herself, crying, begging and shit; just really loosing it, and I can't be any fucking happier.

"God, please, oh my God, help me" blah blah blah. That's all I'm getting from her now so I'm pretty much done. I don't have to listen to this shit anymore. I mean really, who does she think she's talking to? Fuckin' cunt.

So then I say, "lemme tell you what's gonna happen next, Jenny. First, I'm gonna let dipshit here chew on ya for a bit. Then, I'm gonna leave you to die. Ahh, ain't life grand? Ya know, up 'til now I really hated all the shit that's happened since the comet went and fucked everything up. But now, it's not so bad. I got to do this. I got to spend some *quality* time with you. I tell ya Jenny, God loves me. He really fuckin *loves* me."

I grab Stinky Pete by the back of his nasty-ass shirt and drag him up to her. She's crying and carrying on, so I just lift him up a little and set him down so his head's on her side, right where a woman's hip does that funny "cave in" thing. You know, when their on their side and it goes from hip then drops down, like, into their guts and then back up to their ribs? That spot right there, along her pelvis, that bony ridge; that used to be *my* spot.

Back when we were together I would get her all primed and ready with a little foreplay, then I'd give her little love-bites on that spot. She *knew* it was about to get heavy when I did that. It was like my little signal. My way of saying, "get ready babe; I'm about ta tear that ass *up!*"

Stinky didn't give her a love bite, I'll tell you that much! He chomped *down* and chomped down *hard*. She's so fucking shocked and all, she can't even scream. All she does is arch her back, to try and get away. She's opening and closing her mouth like a fish. It was so damn *funny!*

Aw man; it was heaven.

I let him get a good couple bites in, you know, just to make sure she got what's coming to her. Then I threw that sack of shit off her and put one in his brain pan. Squish. Hasta bye-bye fuckwad.

She's laying there, all kinds of fucked up, and I rolled her over on her back with my foot and stood right over her. I got down on one knee, kinda straddling her and got

real close, right in her stupid face. Pretty much nose-to-nose. I wanted her to hear my every word.

“I’m so glad we had this chance to catch up, Jenny,” I said. “This has really helped me get a lot off my chest. I don’t know about you, but I feel a *whole* lot better.”

Yeah, I really said that! High five, man! Oh, it was priceless.

“I’ll be seeing ya around Jenny, but you won’t be seeing me.” Then I left her in the street. I got maybe a couple feet from her and she rolls over and starts crawling away again. Huh! Like it’s gonna help her ass *now*. She’s fucked, and she’s bound to know it.

There weren’t any assholes around when I left, but their like crows; they go towards the sound of gunshots. I can imagine she had that shit running through her head while she was crawling away. Like a snake. Like the low-life piece of crap she was.

She even did one of those angry-frustrated-defeated scream’s like in the movies. Bitch always had to have the last goddamn word. Anyway.

It took me a while to get back home. It was pretty dark when I finally got back. I was thinking I would be spending the night out there. That’s why I grabbed my backpack when I left the house.

See, I went out for food once and got stuck in a hardware store overnight cause *they* were all over the place. I’m never getting stuck like that again. Man, I was so damn hungry I was seriously thinking about eating some seed packets that were up by the cash register. You know, the planting seeds for flower beds? Man, *that’s* hungry.

Alright, back to the story. Sorry about that. Train of thought; DERAILED.

I really wanted to stay and watch Jenny try to get away from them. When they came that is; but all the revenge and shit just got me all horned up like you wouldn’t believe. I’m no sick-o, but damn, I was wanting to fuck like a mad dog, and I sure as hell wasn’t doing *her*.

I’m pickin my way back home, cutting down alleys, through yards and shit, nursing this hard-on. And all I’m thinking about it laying some pipe to the little woman.

I passed some dead fuckers along the way. Sure as shit, they were heading for Jenny’s part of town. He he, Ahh. Good times.

I finally got home and snuck up on the porch. I stood there for a second, checking the shadows for movement. It would just be my luck to get home and have some asshole waiting for me out front.

There wasn’t nobody out there but me and my blue-vein throbbber.

I tell ya, I coulda cracked rocks on my junk that night!

Well, I kick the side of the house...not some Bruce Lee crap, just with the side of my shoes, you know, to knock the dirt and mud out of the treads. Rachel gets *pissed* if you track mud on the carpet.

She hears me and opens the door. She was holding a candle, the light was making her face glow. I swear, she looked like an angel. Beautiful. Perfect.

She started to ask how it went and I grabbed her up and pinned her to the wall. Straight for the neck, man; screw the foreplay. I’m wanting to get right into it, get this excitement out. Bury my bone.

Rachel gives up trying to talk to me and just goes with it. Man, oh *man!* We went at it like animals! I would have to say that that was the best sex I have *ever* had. Bar none! I was drillin for oil!

I'll tell ya what, it took care of my hard-on. That bastard *finally* went away, after like, two rounds of boinkin!

Then its "talkie time" cause she wants to know what happened. So I told her I found out who was screaming but that I was too late. They were already dead when I got there; all that bullshit.

She buys it, totally. I mean, she's got no reason to *not* believe me, so why start now?

I tell ya; I slept like a baby that night. Dead to the world. You coulda hit me with a train and I wouldn't have noticed. Like...a...baby.

What's funny is I had a Talking Heads song stuck in my head all the way back home and for the rest of the night, up until I *finally* got to sleep. It's the one that goes:

Baby, baby, please let me hold him  
I wanna make him stay up all night  
Sister, sister, he's just a plaything  
We wanna make him stay up all night

Do you know it? Eh, nevermind. I don't know what it is about that song, but it reminds me of Jenny. And then I wanna giggle my ass off.

That's it.

Fucking Jenny. She's still around. I don't know where she hid after I left but they must have took a while to find her. She must have been well into changing when they finally did cause the next time I saw her, she wasn't eaten on much. It looked like they got a couple bites in, don't get me wrong. I guess they decided she wasn't fresh enough or something cause she was chewed on, but not like some of the assholes we see around here.

I still see her around from time to time.

Early on, it was like playing "hide and seek." She'd be out there, "hiding" and I'd go out looking for her.

I can't tell you how many times I've shot her. None of them headshots mind you. All body shots. Boobs and what-not. I mean, I don't want to kill her. I like having her around. I missed her.

AUTHOR BIO: Barrett stomps the ground in Memphis, TN with his wife and two young sons. He is currently writing his first novel ( about zombies... Wee!) and finalizing the thoughts and ideas that will certainly result in 5-6 more books of varying subjects. When he isn't writing, Barrett is at an *actual* paying job, wrangling his children away from speeding traffic, or trying not to melt in the sweltering southern heat.