*27 November 2015* **|** **Versus Reicer**

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| To: Icarus Caan  From: Jacen Caan  Subject: The Attacks in Xrite  Following my failures in preventing the attacks in Sherlo and Edge in Xrite and my failure to capture the fugitives on home soil here in Verne, I feel as though I have not done my duty to uphold the responsibilities and trust that this great nation has presented me with and am unworthy to continue to try.  The truth is that my obsession with this case, and this suspect, has become detrimental to my work. Since my attempts to distance myself from it have all failed, I can see no other option.  Therefore I hereby tender my resignation with immediate effI | | |

On any given day one could walk into my office and find me sitting at my desk beneath a sea of files and documents, all in a varying state of disrepair. Not due to my negligence mind you but due to me taking the appropriate cation to modify each one before passing it on to the next person. In my line of work it was important to make sure that no one, even within my own organization, knew everything. Appropriate information was seen by the appropriate people. Everyone else saw the remains, once my black marker had worked its magic. On this night, however, my desk was atypically empty. Only my laptop, a folder containing a profile and a mug of lukewarm coffee were present. As I stared at the screen, wondering whether or not to send an e-mail, I decided to pick up the file go through it just once more.

There remains one principle issue with telling any kind of narrative about people who live lives of extreme villainy. Be it in print, television or even on the internet, the problem lies in the fact that the reason these people do the dangerous, debauched, horrible and down-right crazy things that they do is right there on the surface: because it’s fun. That these are bad people who will get bad ends is something that the audience expects to be a given but, in truth, it does not work that way. In real life, the villains are usually the ones to get away scot-free.

**[Should probably open with talk of audience expectations first and then get into what they have to do]**

The degree to which the audience can enjoy, or even just appreciate, this type of narrative to the point of true understanding is heavily contingent on their ability to see the aforementioned debauched craziness taking place and still having the presence of mind to realize that despite the fact that such stories typically stand as documents of bad behavior, the people involved are so absorbed in their villainy that they most likely won’t or can’t stop themselves anymore. They won’t be redeemed and they won’t be forgiven.

Having stated this, the villain of this narrative - whose profile I happened to be holding – has lead an adult life that, if written down, would serve as a literal document of bad behavior. Is Scarlett Reicer a good person underneath it all? I have absolutely no idea! But I can tell you that she is perfectly cast in her role as the kind of woman who, through a combination of her beauty and intelligence, can get nearly any man to throw his life into potential ruin in exchange for one solitary moment of her attention.

Scarlett is, in a word: spellbinding. She is also vicious and has wreaked havoc on the lives of rather a few unsuspecting souls. They are fooled by the intense sapphire of her eyes, constantly threatening to drown them underneath a tempest of desire. She lures them with her golden hair that catches the light as she enters the room, serving as her crowning glory; a frame for her visage, bringing out her rosy lips and cheeks that seem untouched by time’s bending sickle even as his compass draws ever nearer.

To put it bluntly: women despise her, secretly wanting to be her, and men just want her. Her body, her sex, her leggy frame wrapping itself around them while she throws her head back, choking on the ecstasy of their closeness. That which they hope will temporarily serve to appease the desires of their bodies by using hers.

Before you get the wrong impression of me as some bastion of chastity, a virtuous defender of an ideal or an asexual hunter getting ready to poach the wild, untamable lioness. I want you to know that I include myself on that list of those who have fallen under her spell at one time or another.

The problem for her victims, and myself, is that Scarlett knows of the effect that she has on others and she uses it. Like the phoenix she has died before, only to rise out of the ashes with her shimmering blonde hair. Picking herself up and beginning again to eat men like air. Though that is not to say that she doesn’t deal well with female adversaries. Scarlett has met her fair share of women along her path of destruction and, like the men, they too have fallen. The danger of Scarlett Reicer is not that she has beauty, brains and the cunning to use them both efficiently. No. The danger is that she has no morality in her usage of them. She uses her beauty for fun and sells her brains to the highest bidder.

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| The Effulgence Hotel - Incident Report  *Date: 23 January 2011*  *Victim: Holden Equarr*  An anonymous guest called the hotel security after hearing elevated voices and seeing another guest apparently running away from their hotel room with their pants around their knees. The runner, Mr Hassan, had been seen with a tall blonde woman in a white dress at the bar that evening but when security searched the room they could not find any trace of her. The hotel has no record of a Juliet Stone ever checking in or out.  Notes:  Frankly this was a smart play. Married and prominent businessmen will always be afraid to come forward when something goes awry with one of their sexcapades. The odd thing was that nothing was reported stolen – though I don’t believe that Mr. Hassan has told the investigators entire story here. |

I like to imagine, possibly to appease my own vanity, that with every mark that she hit, she would spend time thinking about them. She would laugh to herself while sitting in the bath, a glass of wine on the tiles and a sponge in her hand. Scarlett would offer an elegant chortle –a small but brief glimpse into the humanity behind the monster- at the latest sucker that she and her team had managed to defeat.

In classic literature every hero has a hamartia. A fatal flaw which, while glaringly obvious to the reader, ultimately contributes the hero’s downfall. For Scarlett it was arrogance. For me it was her.

Yet as I said before, this is a tale of villainy not of justice. As I also before said she rose like the golden phoenix after our first encounter and her first real failure, managing escape back into the wind. It would be years before I would catch up to her and drag her back into the darkness of my world.

[It dawns on me that I haven’t yet told you what she did to earn the titles that I’ve given her. I suppose I should begin at the beginning. The first time her name came across my desk it was early in my career in connection with some or other armed robbery, it was an alias; Maddie Winters. The first time I met her in person, she slipped me another alias; Juliet Stone. Looking back on it now, it seems as though she was always there, hover over my career, tantalizingly out of reach. It would only be later into my career that I would realize just how tantalizing the prospect of chasing down Miss Reicer could really be.]

The first time I saw her in person, she clad in red. Now when Scarlett Reicer walks into the room, the world stops. Music fades into background. People get lost in the shuffle and entire crowds fall out of focus. She is only thing that is real.

[Jacen meets Scarlett]

I like the new opening paragraph – everything has to be measured against this guy getting ready to quit his job because he feels that his obsession with this woman has caused him to perform sub optimally – the one thing he can’t stand. He feels as though in not stopping her he has failed his country, his father and himself and as result he is contemplating resigning.

The running narrative will have to be inserted into the opening statements about villainy – perhaps a media narrative and what the readership expects to hear? **[Look up Bob’s Charlie Hebdo and Wolf of Wall Street videos again]**.

The light in which I would not intrinsically have cast her in was one of terrorism. Political idealist, former-solder, spy-for-hire but not terrorist. It takes spending some time with the woman in question to understand just how filled with hatred this goddess actually is.

**Written by Paul Cupido**