

BIG CITY

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from “ANTICIPATION”

by Greg Twait

Synopsis: A blind woman is the only witness to the brutal murder of a night club singer. Is it simply a drug related slaying, or is there more to it? Stack and Needless work to discover the deeper truth.

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“Victim’s name is J’on A’gel. Elf. Works over at the Mhalasia Club, uptown. A crooner. Looks like someone didn’t like the tune he was singing.” Needless crouched down by the body and pointed to the gored throat, “No more Johnny Golden Tonsils.”

Stack saw Charlie. He was in the back bedroom with a young girl and an attending paramedic. “Who’s the girl?” he asked.

Needless stood up, “That’s the sister, Rose,” he said, “She apparently witnessed the attack and went out to get help. That’s when Charlie got involved.”

“She identify anyone?”

“She’s blind.”

“Right,” said Stack, “You think about it: If the killer *were* a friend or neighbor, they would have known that she couldn’t I.D. them by sight.”

Needless smiled grimly, “A terrified blind girl is the perfect witness. She won’t be able to tell us that she knows nothing for at least a day or so.”

The lab technicians stepped away for a moment, and Needless began a search of the area around the body as Stack waved for Charlie to come into the living room.

“She’s not cut or anything,” said Charlie, closing the door behind him, “I figure she was spared because she couldn’t see the killer.”

Stack produced a deck of cards from his inside pocket and began to shuffle, “You don’t think she just escaped?” he asked.

“Might have,” said Charlie, “It looks like a lot of intensity was devoted to butchering that guy. She might have slipped out. Though,” he continued, “She *did* have blood on her when she came out of the building, so she was there for the attack. She was saying that someone was *killing* her brother, not that he had *been* murdered.”

Stack glanced out into the hallway, “Who’s the pissed-off guy?” he nodded at Vis’el.

“Next door neighbor,” said Charlie, “He was coming over to complain about the noise when he ran into me.”

“Everyone seemed to react pretty quick to this,” said Needless, “Let’s get that guy’s statement again and you,” he said to Charlie, “Stay the hell away from reporters. The News would love to stir up a race riot.” He marched over to where Vis’el stood, yelling at the questioning officer.

Stack rolled his eyes and cut his deck of cards with a complicated four-step shuffle.

As Needless approached, Vis’el heightened his dramatics and loudly announced, “I have rights. I’ve told you everything...”

He was cut off by Needless’ forearm pushing him up to the wall, “G’luh-dammit, “ he hissed as he got into the goblin’s personal space, “It’s three in the morning. Your next-door neighbor just got murdered. I’ve got a headache. Shut the hell up.” Vis’el stopped, stunned. Needless lowered his arm and continued in a low voice.

“Anyone not like this guy? In this building?”

“I...I wouldn’t have thought anyone would have killed him,” stuttered Vis’el.

“So there were people who didn’t like him.”

“No one here likes the elves. Any of them.”

“Don’t leave town,” Needless said, pushing him aside, “Okay everyone,” he said to the room, “Let’s do it. I need the body at the morgue within the hour. Pickens,” he said looking at Charlie, “Goodnight. Everyone else, stay away from reporters. If the EVUN gets wind of this, we’ll give that Elfnigma bitch a reason to make life in Big City a veritable hell, like she did last Season. Nobody wants that, right?”