



When I wake up it's morning, though early judging by the shafts of soft light spilling into the room through the grimy window. I feel my jaw and find it healed to perfection. A hand gingerly feeling about my hip tells me it's still a work in progress. Sharon's still passed out on the floorboards nearby. I crawl over to her and take her pulse. It's strong and steady.

I stand up unevenly, broken and still healing, but able to walk. Barely. I'm not sure what to do about Sharon. Hurting her has only made her more of a monster, but I don't know if I know how to do anything but hurt.

All I can do is leave her alone.

I hobble down the stairs and into the street, grabbing my duffel bag on the way out, happy it's early enough that few people are out to see the horror show that I am, my clothes caked in blood, my walk a strange awkward shuffle.

I make my way to a part of town ironically not far from the home where I know nobody will be likely to notice my rough appearance and look for a place to hideout. When I find an abandoned building that looks sufficiently boarded up and deserted I scale a fire escape and pull a few of the boards off a second floor window before crawling inside. It is blissfully empty, of people at least, and I curl up in a corner and try to finish healing.

My mind swims with what a disaster I have made of things. On my own and away from the home for less than a day and already I'm a mess. Who was I kidding that I could just do this on my own, all alone. And Sharon. I can't even think about her without my heart seizing up in my chest. I've ruined her. I mean, she was on her way to ruin without my help, but her fall out of that window might as well have been me pushing her off a cliff toward never recovering.

I suddenly lose it. I burst into tears. A wail escapes from me that I wouldn't have thought possible. I have never felt so alone in my life. Even though I've always felt alone, now there is

just this magnifying glass on it, like it's echoing off everything in the entire universe. The sobs just pour out of me, unrelenting in their depth. It's the first time I've cried since I was six.

I'm a monster.

I feel with every fiber of my being that I should be doing something good with my life, that I should be helping people and 'saving the world', but all I have the ability to do is maim, kill, and destroy. It feels so wrong. I'm an abomination. Like I am made wrong – missing some crucial piece of a giant and unsolvable puzzle. I am the Green Lantern without my power ring. I am Captain Marvel without my magic word. There's nothing to guide me.

There is nothing.

Nothing.

I am lost and alone.

I sleep with the honest intention of never waking up.



I go after Felice first. There's something about Felice being a woman and one of my biggest betrayers that pisses me off a little bit extra. Not that I'm the most loyal of individuals myself, but I am feeling pretty justified and superior at this point. Adrian will of course be last, even though his betrayal hurts the most. I'm definitely going to have to work myself up to being able to kill Adrian. I do still love him. No matter what he's done...I can't seem to help it.

The other reason to go after Felice first is simply that I know where she'll be; the diner. I stop at my hotel room on the way to the diner in order to change clothes. Not knowing how

long I've been out of commission I assume Adrian has given up the location of my motel room so that they can ransack it for treasure, and they have, the vultures. Fortunately they've left the things they found to be worthless, like most of my clothes and personal items. I'm not surprised to find that my helmet is gone and a glance out the window tells me that the bike is gone as well. Felice has surely taken the bike as she's always had her eye on it.

Maybe I can come up with something extra horrible for her.

The room has been torn up, probably to make it look like a robbery (which it is) or a kidnapping (which it sort of is). I curse a couple times and pull on some underwear, jeans, a t-shirt and my beat up Converse. I put the rest of my stuff that isn't destroyed in the only remaining duffel bag and head out the front door. The duffel feels light without my beloved cat suit in it (though maybe it's all in my head). That should be my first question for Felice, although I suspect I'll forget about it by the time we're face to face.

I get back in the pervert's truck with my stuff and the pervert's old clothes and boots. It occurs to me as I get in that he's actually the first person I've killed – well, except Delia. It seems like that should feel weird or strange, killing someone, but instead it feels totally natural, like taking out the trash or something. Actually that's a totally bad analogy since I hate taking out the trash – but it feels almost, maybe routine? Like mundane and ordinary, and instead of wondering why I did it, I wonder why haven't I been doing it more?

A couple miles from my hotel, in a McDonald's parking lot, I throw out the cowboy boots in an old dumpster and two miles from that I throw out the shirts in the trash behind a closed liquor store. Then I drive the car to a location about a half-mile from Felice's diner and park it at the empty end of a supermarket parking lot. I leave the doors unlocked and the keys in the ignition, hoping I'll get lucky and someone will take the opportunity to steal it, moving it even further away from me. But it doesn't really matter, I'm about to be a ghost in this town.

On the walk to the diner I pass an auto repair shop and just casually pick up a dirty tire iron lying around with some other tools and walk off with it. It feels nice in my hand. Heavy, but almost elegant. I don't think people give tire irons enough credit. On the surface it seems like the choice of a thug or Neanderthal, but really it has a nice feeling to it; it seems like it has more class than using an axe or something. I like it.

As I near the diner I see my motorcycle parked outside. Bitch. She has some giant brass balls. I almost want to admire her for it, but there should at least be honor among thieves...or something. I go around the back alley that leads to the dumpsters and is mostly hidden from the parking lot. Felice is nothing if not predictable and it won't be long until she comes out for her smoke break. I lean against a concrete wall and train my eyes on the back door of the diner, the tire iron in my right hand and casually resting behind my right leg.

She emerges, true to form, about eight minutes later, pack of cigarettes in her hand, one already in her mouth and the match struck as she comes out the back door.

"Hello, Felice."

To her credit she doesn't faint, but her normal unfazed expression is totally fazed. In fact, her mouth drops open so far that she loses her unlit cigarette, and the match flame continues to burn towards her hand.

"You're gonna burn yourself," I offer. She looks at the match a second too late and grimaces before dropping it.

"Lola...I..." she stammers. It's good she doesn't have words, I mean what kind of words do you offer to someone that you left for dead to be eaten by dogs, then hit with a tire iron and dumped in the desert naked and gutted, as they stand in front of you in an abandoned alley?

"The keys," I say simply, holding out my left hand. She reaches in the pocket of her jeans and takes out the motorcycle keys. She starts to take the keys off the ring that house the other

keys of her life. “Don’t bother with that. You won’t be needing the rest of those...like, *ever*.” She stops, her head still down, her hair falling in her eyes. Her hands shake visibly as she absorbs the impact of my words. She tosses the keys to me. I catch them in my left hand and pocket them.

“What’re you...” she starts. I smile at her coolly.

“Oh, let’s not ask silly questions now. I think I just told you what I’m going to do to you Felice. I’m going to kill you. And you know what? You totally deserve it. I’ll be honest, when I killed my mother, I felt this twinge...not a twinge of guilt or regret or anything you understand, but a twinge that I was *supposed* to be feeling something...but that it was missing in me. I suspect I’ll feel that twinge again when I kill Adrian later today, but right now? I gotta say, I’m not feeling any freaking twinge,” with that I let the tire iron slide out from behind my leg. “Recognize this?” Her eyes widen, the whites shining brightly from her face and she finally panics and tries to get back into the diner, but I’m on her before she can even turn the knob, pressing her against the door with my body weight and breathing in her ear, “Let’s not get anyone else involved okay?” With that I snap the handle off the back door.

“What *are* you?” she says more than asks.

“Mmmm. I don’t really know what I am Felice. It’s an interesting question, but one I’m afraid we don’t have time for today,” I say, totally overloading on over-the-top cartoon villain dialogue. A well-placed blow to the knee knocks her to the ground and she yelps quietly, but the next one might not be so quiet, so I have to work fast. I beat her until she looks like little bits of broken bones in a bag of flesh instead of a person. She was dead after the second hit, the rest of them were just for me. Afterward, I pick up her body and drop it in the dumpster where it belongs. There’s blood on the ground, but I don’t care, and I’ve actually remained surprisingly clean, which is nice.

When I'm finished I head to the Spanish restaurant, where they'll probably be hanging out, like morons, easy pickings, all of them. I get back on my bike, tie up my duffel bag, and head over. I keep the tire iron, if only for sentimental reasons.

I'm glad to find that Adrian isn't there when I peek through the skylight. I hope he's not coming at all. Without drama I drop through the skylight and land in the middle of the room, much like last time.

I look around, happy at the nice shocked faces, though Melvin looks more pissed than surprised.

"Déjà vu, huh?" I say to the room arms outstretched.

"What the hell?!" Enrico says.

"This is impossible!" Albert chimes in.

"Hmm," I say. "Lets make it extra déjà vu-y..." I point to the safe in the back of the room. "I'll be taking that."

They all look at the safe, Jorge as white as a sheet and ready to not only give up any treasure, but maybe willing to either proclaim me Jesus resurrected or the devil incarnate, I'm not sure which. And does it really matter? Albert and Enrico are similarly ready to give me anything in order for me to leave, but Melvin, as always, needs more convincing. I look at him hard. "Please say 'over my dead body' – I'm just dying for someone to say that," I smile. Melvin smiles thinly back at me and pulls out a gun. I admit, I'm a little afraid of the gun. Having never been shot I'm not sure what will happen, and if I'm knocked out again, Christ knows what they'll do to me and who knows if I can recover from their shenanigans a third time. Can I re-grow a head? Melvin shoots at me and I move fast enough that the bullet barely grazes my arm, like a tickle. He continues shooting, and I continue moving, and as a result he shoots Jorge in the head. At this Albert and Enrico panic and the noise gets ratcheted up a couple notches. I grab Albert and

use him as a human shield to approach Melvin, who mercilessly shoots Albert twice in the process. When I'm close enough that I'm confident I can beat the bullet, I move faster than ever before and snatch the gun from Melvin's hand, taking his trigger finger with me in the process. He howls like mad and crumbles to his knees. Albert is crying beneath me, with two critical wounds in his chest and I shoot him in the head just to shut him up. Melvin looks surprised. I don't know why. Enrico has his hands up in the corner of the room.

"Lola, please, please don't. This was not my idea...this was never my -"

I level the gun at him and shoot him without even looking at him, my eyes on Melvin the whole time. Enrico hits the corner, and crumples against it, falling to the ground insignificantly. I return my focus to Melvin, who finally looks something remotely resembling frightened. He's lying down now on his back, holding his wrist like a baby. He's right next to the safe. I walk over to him and stand above him. "Tsk, tsk," I say. He looks up at me, still not with respect, but with something closer than we've ever gotten to before. I straddle him, one foot on either side of his arms, blood from his hand where his finger has been torn off is soaking his night button down shirt and puddling slightly underneath us. I squat down so that the weight of me bounces just above his chest, almost playfully, and I poke him in the head with his own severed finger.

"The combination please," I say. He looks at me with hate and impotent rage and I throw the finger over my shoulder and press the gun into his mouth, his teeth clack against the barrel loudly. "The combination," I repeat, harder. He shakes his head and I roll my eyes. He's so difficult. If he wasn't such a jerk maybe I'd respect his stubbornness. "No?" I say. "Oh, you know what? I don't even need it...watch this." I break the handle off the safe with my hand. Unfortunately the door does not fall open as I had hoped, and Melvin actually has the balls to smile a bit with the gun still in his mouth. What does it take to impress this man? I rear my fist back and plunge it through the wall of the safe, which works beautifully, even though my hand is

a bloody mess when I draw it back. His face finally registers some understanding and he looks genuinely scared. I pull back some of the sharp metal until I'm in the safe, staring at all Melvin's fortune, and the bulk of mine, which he has obviously appropriated for himself. After I'm sure Melvin has registered my awesomeness on the level he should have all along I pull the trigger.

He still seems surprised, and pissed, even in death.

I grab a big black canvas bag from one of the desk drawers and fill it with everything from the safe. I am a rich rich girl, and rightly so. As I finish up Adrian walks in the door.

Of course.