

Harvest Moon

By Richard Tornello

Blood torn and muzzle fully feasted red, Her fangs reflect the distant moon, full, She glared up. WE both knew I was powerless. She in her blood lust is gorged full and dangerous.

I knew I'd see Her later, after She cleaned up, calm and sated.

I had to bury the victim. Being Her slave, the dirty work was my claim to life. Full moons were bad omens, and a harvest moon, tonight, the worst. She does not have to speak. Her mind is known to me. I am the only one allowed in.

During the day, She a normal being, except she sleeps. She is exhausted. But come the rotation of the planet far from the facing sun, She is renewed and She became an animal, a huntress.

Again the screams, Hers as She attacks, and the chosen one. Then comes the thud of a body being driven to the ground, flesh torn from bones alive. The last breath is taken but I know the brain continues to know its fate. The body drowning screams for its life giving oxygen, fuel from its own blood, now gone. I dare not witness.

Too soon it could be me.

Where to run?

She would sniff me out.

To the police? An accomplice? That would never do.

Turning to our new guest and thinking to myself, let me calm you down. Let me calm myself. "Did I mention, as you can see, our home is an old thick walled Victorian building? It is set well back from the road we live outside of the city limits. A tall iron gate surrounds the compound. The interior is magnificent. The tall walls are of plaster, not the pasty boards used in the homes erected today. We decorated the large walls with the finest tapestry from India, Persia and China. The art, which we both love, is placed just right. It leads you through time. Her favorites periods in order are, Modern-cubist, then some early Renaissance and finally the in the drawing room, you will discover a fine collection of impressionist paintings as well..."

Our conversation is interrupted by Her presence. She is beautiful and feline graceful. One rarely hears Her approach.

“Yes, your business has been attended to,” I give a slight bow and wait further direction, just watching her. Her eyes glow at the sight of our guest. I know She is recalling a past

event. It’s as if She was a cat, purring, content and waiting for the right time. Then She turns and glances again in our direction, pupils narrow vertical slits. I shiver.

We see Her leave. Our guest is mesmerized by Her. I can tell.

I cough, “I’m sorry; my train of thought was disrupted. Yes, back to our home; our art. The stairways holds Japanese prints juxtaposed to 16th and 17th century European etchings. She likes the obvious different approaches to an issue. Aesthetics are

De rigueur.” Together the sight is beautiful with a concomitant benefit, and I have to laugh to myself, extreme sound deadening. “The choices were Hers, of course.”

Please excuse me Miss, I must attend to something. Your room is this way.”

I look in as She sleeps in the darkened suite. Who would know from such beauty and grace, this evil? She lures her victims, smiling Her smile. She plays with them. A show, of art, small talk, wine and... Her deed completed, I would clean up.

Why the authorities had not found us is beyond me. We have come this far in time. Maybe Her choices are not those that have family? I do not know how She picks them. I am not privy to those decisions. No one appears to inquire as to missing individuals.

Tonight another full moon. Oh please, make it quick. Have mercy on this young one. No need to torture or play cat and mouse. Just go for the neck. You love the warm blood, the sweetness, the life it provides you. You said so yourself.

Dead weight is dead weight and another hole is to be dug and another tree planted in our little forest. “This must be completed before the rigor sets in. Be quick about it,” She always commands. I can hide no thought. I am transparent. I must be careful. Enough of that musing.

I have to laugh, we do have a beautiful garden, vegetables and a tree lined road the branches are a cradle to the front portal. Ages ago, what was once an open field are now hectares, thick and wooded. Funny though, every fall the leaves, the colors are of odd blacks, auburns, reds, browns, and even unnatural shades of yellow appear. We have one that occasionally has a streak of purple. I wonder who that was?

Oh well, my job, my task and my burden. The latest one was heavy. That was an effort. I will sleep well.

“By the way Miss, we dress for dinner. I will see you there. 7 PM. Do not be late! She does not like it.”

I wake to the crunch of bone. I can tell, tonight Her approach is different. This one is still very much alive. She like this one in a most special manner. She will be eaten and consumed slowly with marrow sucked from severed bone. The fresh fully mature red cells, the treat. Dining is an art.

Ah yes, my yellow earplugs.

The End