

File #020

The Chameleon

Report By: Detective Charles Early

Location: Boston, Massachusetts

It was a cold frosty and snowy night in Boston as a major snowstorm was entering the city. Forecasters had predicted that the storm would be the worst the city had seen in decades and most people were out busy shopping and getting food and essential supplies to survive during the storm that nobody was paying any attention that danger lurked in the shadows of the city.

On this extremely cold evening two college students and best friends Janey Albertson and Kelsey Johnson went shopping at the local mall. They were roommates and had been studying all night long for their end of their term exams. Janey was going to school to become a pediatrician. Janey was a short petite young woman who had dark red hair and light blue eyes and a freckled face. She had always known she wanted to be a doctor since she was eight years old. Kelsey was going to college to become a pharmacist. She had known Janey since their elementary school days as both went to the same schools both of their lives. Kelsey was taller than Janey and had dark blonde hair and dark brown eyes and was not at all petite like Janey. They had been shopping for a few hours when they heard the announcement on the intercom announcing the mall was closing due to the storm.

“I guess that is the end of our shopping today Janey,” Kelsey complained.

“Yeah, I know what you mean but hey at least we have what we came for,” Janey said as she showed Kelsey the two bags of clothes the two had gotten.

“Hey bad do you think the storm will be? Do you think it will be as bad as the weathermen are saying?” Kelsey asked.

“I don’t know but,” Janey started to say but was cut off by a security guard who was walking the mall and locking up all the stores.

“Young ladies you two know it isn’t safe out here in the storm like this. You two better be getting back to your home,” the older security guard calmly said.

Kelsey and Janey nodded obediently. Kelsey and Janey went outside and started heading to their car which was parked close to end of the parking lot furthest away from the building when they heard glass shatter from one of the cars nearby. As the alarm of the car started going Kelsey saw a human figure standing beside the car but couldn’t see who it was.

“Hey did you see that?” Kelsey asked her friend.

“I didn’t see anything but let’s get inside of the car and we’ll call security,” Janey said as she started unlocking the car. She had barely unlocked the car when she and Kelsey heard more glass shatter and another car’s alarm going off.

“Janey I’m afraid,” Kelsey said as Janey began turning and looking to see where whoever was breaking into the cars was now at. Neither of the girls could see anything and it was only when Janey heard two gunshots did she realize how close the mysterious person was to them. Janey turned and saw her friend lying on the ground dying as she had been shot in the chest.

“NOOOOOOO! Kelsey,” Janey screamed as tears fell down her eyes as she watched her friend take her last breath.

“Janey,” Kelsey said as she died. She sat there screaming and crying before quickly silencing as she heard the gun cocking from behind her. She quickly turned and at that instant

she saw a hand try to grab her. She took her purse and swung at the mysterious figure and trying to get away from the killer but as she managed to escape the mysterious figure's grasp and started running to the mall's building she heard another gunshot.

Janey stopped where she was at not knowing whether she had been shot or if the killer was going to shot her and when she looked down at her body she saw she hadn't been shot but when she started running again the mysterious figure's hand grabbed her by the neck as he turned her around to face him he threw her onto the ground extremely hard. She looked up and saw the mysterious figure had pinned her onto the ground.

"Please let me go. Please don't do this to me," Janey screamed as the mysterious figure covered her eyes with duct tape. She started screaming even louder when she realized her clothes being ripped off by the mysterious figure. It was only a second later after the mysterious figure took out a pistol and pointed it to her head did she quit screaming. She said nothing else but hoped that her cries and screams had been heard and that whatever he was going to do to her would end quickly.

There are moments in each of our lives that we reflect on what we do and why we do it. I enjoy being a detective but the last several months have made me reflect on my life a little bit more than I had in the past. Now that I have a granddaughter named Darlene I think more about life than I used to. The last several months for me, Detective O'Malley and Detective Stevens have been the most hectic that any of us had ever been through in our lives. There were times that I honestly didn't believe any of us would survive but I was awfully glad that we did.

There have been times recently that I have wanted to retire but I hadn't said anything to either of my partners. The last several encounters with the Alphabet terrorist, the Dark Hood and Dr. Godson who began calling himself the Godfather of Time have made me think real hard about what I want to do with the rest of my life. The Alphabet terrorist terrifies me perhaps more so than any other criminal I had ever faced perhaps because of the amount of damage and the amount of people I know he has hurt and killed. I knew we hadn't seen the last of last time and perhaps what worries me even more is that we will also have to deal with Agent Heath a black ops agent who doesn't care about anybody or anything unless its him getting his glory.

I had just returned home from London and though I enjoyed being in London the trip was disappointing as I didn't find out anything about the Alphabet terrorist that we didn't already know. When I came back to the office and called a staff meeting, I was horrified to find out Detective Thomas had been shot and her family killed and it was still not certain whether she would survive. Detective Stevens and Detective O'Malley were the first to arrive for the meeting as they were usually the first ones to arrive at the office but they were soon followed by Detective Alexander who was late after getting caught in a traffic jam on the interstate.

"Does anyone have an update on how Detective Thomas is doing," I quietly asked. No one answered at first and after a few minutes of silence Detective Stevens finally answered.

"No sir. Samantha is still in Intensive Care and no one is sure when or if she will recover," Emma cried. Neither Detective O'Malley nor I said anything as Emma wiped her eyes as she sat down to listen.

"Sir, did you find out anything more about the Alphabet terrorist," Rick asked.

"No Rick. The trip to London was almost a complete waste of time. All I learned over there was what we already knew. Most of the people there still don't know the Alphabet terrorist

is one of their own named Dr. Ivan Jenkins,” I replied calmly.

“Have you also seen the news too sir? Agent Heath is now blaming us for the disaster and for allowing the Godfather of Time and the Dark Hood to escape. He still has the backing of the President and members of Congress,” Rick said as he took the remote off my desk and turned on the office television. I usually watched the news when I am in the office alone but when he turned on the television it was news I didn’t want to see. It was Agent Heath again speaking to reporters giving out their progress into the search for the Alphabet terrorist.

“Right now my agents and I are working on the whereabouts of the man calling himself the Alphabet terrorist and the reward for leading to his capture and arrest now stands at \$20 million dollars. I also like to report that due to the interference of Detective Emma Stevens and her partners the fiends Dr. Godson and the Dark Hood have escaped and are also on the run. The reward for information leading to their capture is \$10 million apiece. I’ve assured the President that we will catch these fiends and arrest those who harbor them or get in our way,” Agent Heath said to the reporter before leaving. Rick turned off the television before I said anything as we both became disgusted at what we just heard. Emma said nothing but sat there in her chair listening as I knew her mind was on her friend Samantha.

“And now with Agent Heath spreading the bad word about us it will be difficult to get any assignment,” Rick said as I nodded in agreement but before I could say anything the phone quickly began ringing loudly.

“Hello,” I said as I picked up the phone.

“Good evening Charles this is your friend Lt. Roberts from the Boston Police Department. We need you and your best detectives to come up here immediately,” the voice on the speaker said.

“Ah hey buddy and how is life treating you my friend if you don’t mind me asking,” I said trying to hide the excitement out of my voice. I hadn’t seen Lt. Roberts since our days in high school and it was good to hear from him again, but something told me this wasn’t a pleasure conversation and that this would be our next assignment.

“I’m personally doing fine but my chief told me to call you. We really need your help. I’m afraid I don’t have much time to talk right now but I’ll tell you when you all get up here. I’m afraid it’s an emergency and that we could use your expertise on this,” Lt. Roberts said quietly.

“Yes I understand and thank you. We will be up there immediately,” I said as I hung up the phone.

“What is it?” Rick asked.

“Rick, you and Emma go pack your things we’re going to Boston just the three of us,” I said as Emma and Rick nodded as I paged Detective Alexander to the office. He quickly came in the office having the excited look as though he was about to go on another field mission but he quickly became disappointed when I told him he would be staying back at the office. “Detective Alexander I need your talents here which is why while the three of us are gone you are in charge.”

“Yes sir,” Detective Alexander said. Whatever disappointment was in Detective Alexander’s face quickly disappeared after I placed him in charge while we were gone, and he wasted no time in leaving the office to begin his work. It didn’t take either Emma or Rick to prepare and within the hour after receiving the call the three of us were heading to Boston.

Flights. I started to hate them though they were necessary at times. It was a long flight to Boston though we finally managed to arrive in Boston after several delays. When we arrived we were greeted by my friend Lt. Roberts. He was much taller and less scrawny looking than I remembered but he still had the same blonde hair and light blue eyes he had when we were in school. He had been often picked on during the high school years for him being as small as he was but I could tell he was not one to mess with anymore as he had grown considerably.

“Greetings Charles long time,” Lt. Roberts said as he approached the three of us.

“Yes indeed Dan. How has life treated you?” I asked.

“Much better than it used to be Charles,” Lt. Roberts said.

“That is good to hear Dan. I am proud of you. Glad to see you have done something with yourself. Look, I know this isn’t some kind of pleasure trip. Now what is it you need some help with,” I asked

“Always straight to the point weren’t you detective. Alright Charles we need your help to catch a serial rapist and killer who is still on the streets perhaps now stalking his next victims,” Lt. Roberts asked.

“You don’t think it is-,” Rick began.

“No,” Lt. Roberts said. He, like everyone else, knew what Rick was about to say. “This perp is too sloppy to be the Lord of Crime. It still does not make this case any easier. We don’t have any surveillance on the mysterious man is because he is never on any cameras anywhere and the DNA he does leave behind isn’t in the systems. The storm is going to get worse so come with me and I’ll tell you more when we get back to the station,” Lt. Roberts said hoping that neither I nor my partners would say anything else until we got to the station.

I really didn’t believe Lt. Roberts how bad the storm was until we all got outside to get into the cars to go back to the station. It was the worst storm I had ever seen. There was so much snow falling and it fell so quickly that it was almost impossible to see beyond a few feet. Fortunately Lt. Roberts had several snowplows which removed most of the snow out of our way. After nearly an hour on the streets in the storm we finally arrived at the police station where we greeted by Deputy Chief Jennings and other officers.

“Greetings detectives I am Deputy Chief Jennings. You must be Detectives Early, Stevens and O’Malley. I have heard so much about. I do wish the conditions were better. Come on inside. Lt. Roberts have told me quite a lot about you,” the man said.

Deputy Chief Jennings was a short hefty man who appeared to be in his forties. He had neatly trimmed dark brown hair and dark brown eyes as well as a short dark brown mustache that was also neatly trimmed. We quietly followed Deputy Chief Jennings inside the station not saying anything as they led us to the conference room and when we arrived two other officers were already inside waiting for us.

“Ah I see Lt. Johnson and Lt. Miller are already waiting for us. Please go inside,” Deputy Chief Jennings said.

“Welcome to Boston. I am Lieutenant Johnson the head of the sex crimes unit and this is my friend and colleague Lt. Miller who is in charge of the homicide unit,” the older woman said quietly as she introduced the two of them to the three of us as we entered. Lt. Johnson was a short older woman who had dark red hair, a freckly face and light blue eyes that were covered by

razor thin silver looking glasses. Her friend Lt. Miller was a tall dark colored gentleman who was bald and had extremely dark brown eyes and a neatly trimmed mustache. He was the most decorated officer in the department as I could tell as his uniform was covered by many and awards he received over the years. Lt. Johnson was decorated as well but not as much as Lt. Miller and I could tell instantly that neither was one that anybody would want to cross.

“Greetings I’m Detective Charles Early and these are my partners Detective Emma Stevens and Detective Rick O’Malley,” I said as the three of us took our chairs and sat down.

“Detectives you three may be aware of the recent crime waves that have been plaguing the city. For the last several weeks a mysterious individual has been raping and killing many young people mostly college students. It started the week before Thanksgiving when we received a call to go to mall where the security guards found the bodies of two young college students lying in the parking nearly completely covered in ice. Both women were sexually assaulted before being bludgeoned to death by our mysterious killer. We checked the security cameras and on that night the women were killed a severe snowstorm occurred just like it did on our last victims. The security cameras picked up the figure who was covered by too much snow and fog to see who it may be and after the women got far away enough from the building the three seemingly disappeared and that’s when we think he raped and killed those women,” Lt. Johnson spoke quietly.

“What were the names of the first victims?” I asked Lt. Johnson.

“The first two women the killer raped and killed were Leah Tompkins and Ginger Willis both of whom were in their first year of college,” Lt. Johnson replied.

“Pardon me Lt. Johnson just how many women is this killer suspected of raping and killing,” Emma asked.

“So far we have linked a total of thirteen women he has killed including eight of whom he has also raped. The killer has got careless a little but not too much. We have found some of his DNA at some of the crime scenes and on the bodies of the women though his DNA is not in the system,” Lt. Johnson replied.

“Have you found any of the weapons the killer has used?” Rick asked.

“Unfortunately, we haven’t found any of the weapons used on his victims though we are confident that the killer has used the same gun when shooting some of his victims,” Lt. Miller quietly said.

“Some of the victims,” Emma said trying to believe what she heard.

“Yes, Detective Stevens some of the victims were shot and some of them were killed by some other means. Seven of the women that he killed were killed by gunshots mostly to the head or chest. Two of the women he killed were by blunt force trauma and right now it has yet to be determined what objects he used to kill. Three of the women he killed he used a knife to stab them and the other woman he apparently choked to death while having gloves on as no finger prints were found on the victim,” Lt. Miller replied.

“And there are no witnesses who might be able to help identify this predator,” I asked calmly.

“No Detective Early. Even though the women were killed at the malls or at other public places the killer stalked these women and then raped and killed them when he knew the cameras wouldn’t be able to scan him or get a photo of him and whenever he strikes it is always seemingly storming and making identifying him even harder,” Lt. Johnson said quietly.

“Where were the last victims found?” Rick asked.

“The last two victims were found at the same mall parking lot the first victims were

found several weeks earlier. Their names are Janey Albertson and Kelsey Johnson. Both are college students and in fact from talking with people both were roommates and best friends. Both women were shot to death but only Janey was raped," Lt. Miller said.

"Why would the predator only rape one of the women and not both before killing them?" Emma asked.

"Judging from those these women the man has raped and those he hasn't it appears as though he only rapes young petite women. The eight women he raped were all petite and the other five he didn't were not," Lt. Johnson replied as she showed the three pictures of all the victims the mysterious man has killed. Lt. Miller also opened up the city map that they had on the board and started showing us where each of the women were when they found them.

"It appears that most of the women were found within ten miles of the shopping mall where Kelsey and Janey found. Most of the young women are college students so perhaps it might be someone at the college that the women all knew," Rick said to Emma before turning to Lt. Miller and asking another question. "Lieutenant what connection is there to these women besides that all of them were killed by the same man and is there any way we can determine if any of the women knew each other besides Kelsey and Janey?"

"Besides Janey and Kelsey it doesn't appear as though any of the women knew each other even though they all attended the same school," Lt. Miller quietly said.

"Well perhaps they didn't know each other but maybe they all knew the same man who has become their killer," Emma said to Rick as I continued to listen to Lt. Miller and Johnson give us the details.

"We called you three up because you three are the best at handling extremely difficult cases and we have tried everything we know to catch this maniac," Lt. Johnson said.

"Lt. Johnson do you have the records of the women like where they worked at or what they were studying at school," I asked.

"Yes we've already checked those places but if it helps you three Lt. Miller will gladly get them for you," Lt. Johnson nodded as Lt. Miller left the office for a few moments to get the files they had on the victims.

I didn't know what to expect to find in the files since the officers here didn't find anything, but I was sure that searching through the records and finding where they studied and worked would give us the best chance to catch this mysterious killer. Lt. Miller came back into the office and handed me the photos and information they had on the thirteen women that had been killed by the mysterious killer.

"Thank you Lt. Miller. Do you mind if we go back and check these places again?" I asked calmly. Neither Lt. Miller nor Lt. Johnson said anything quickly but after a minute Lt. Johnson finally spoke.

"Sure go ahead if you think it might help. For now if you three need anything I will be in the office making a few calls and Lt. Johnson will be going to talk with Dr. Miles about the forensic evidence found at the last crime scene. She received a call this morning from him," Lt. Miller replied.

"It could be that he found something new," Emma told me.

"That's true. Why don't the two of you go and check the places where the women worked and studied and I will go with Lt. Johnson and find out what Dr. Miles found," I told Emma and Rick. The two of them nodded as they grabbed the photos and files the police had on the women before departing.

"Let me ask you something Detective Early. Do you trust those two to go out there to do

something as important as doing background checks on the girls? It looks to me as they were more interested in each other. Like they are lovers,” Lt. Johnson asked pointedly.

Until now I had never even noticed that Lt. Johnson and Miller had both been watching Emma and Rick and I had never really thought about their relationship. It had not been a problem before so I didn’t think it would be here either as I answered.

“Yes, I trust them both with my life. I know they’ll do well,” I said as I gave Lt. Johnson a small frown.

“Alright I believe you. Are you ready to go detective?” Lt. Johnson asked and I quickly nodded as we departed to go to the lab where Dr. Miles worked.

Emma and Rick caught a taxi and started going to each of the businesses where the women had worked. Much to both of their surprise the streets were still extremely busy despite that snow had started falling heavily onto the ground. Most people still wanted to leave the city before the snow had really started coming down. They finally arrived at John’s Café an old restaurant where Leah Tompkins and Ginger Willis both had worked. The restaurant despite being one of the older restaurants in the city was one of the cleanest and most beautiful looking. The carpet inside the building was made of the finest silk and it extremely dark red and inside the building was dimmed but not completely dark. There were tables scattered throughout and on each table were two lit candles giving a little more light to the restaurant.

“Greetings how may I help you,” a small and short older white bald-headed man asked us when we entered the restaurant. The older man was very neatly groomed wearing dark pants and a dark red shirt that had a name tag on his right-side which Emma and Rick could barely read. He had small thin glasses that covered his dark brown eyes and a small neatly trimmed gray colored mustache.

“Ah yes. Can you get us the store manager?” Emma asked the older man.

“I am the greeter as well as the store manager. My name is John Appleton. How may I be of help to you,” the old man asked kindly as Emma took out the pictures of Leah and Ginger.

“Do you recognize either of these two young women sir?” Emma asked.

“Ah yes that is Leah Tompkins and Ginger Willis. Both of those young girls had worked here for over a year,” John replied.

“How was their work? Did they miss a lot of time away from work,” Rick asked John.

“Both Leah and Ginger were excellent workers. Neither missed work much. I’ll be honest I don’t recall a time that I remember when either of them called out. They were very dependable and in fact on more than one occasion I had asked both to become assistant managers,” John replied.

“And they didn’t take your offer,” Emma asked.

“Nah and after I found out what they were going for at school I was rather glad too. Both Leah and Ginger were extremely driven and worked hard and despite working here forty hours a week both also went to school full time and from what they both showed me they were doing well too,” John quietly said.

“Do you know what they were going to school for?” Rick asked.

“I’m always supporting my employees here and offer incentives for them to go to school and make something of themselves. I suppose the two girls looked to me like a father figure as neither had a father growing up and they knew I was proud of them for what they were

accomplishing. Leah and Ginger were going to school for art and medicine. They were roommates at the college and best friends always hanging out with the other when they weren't working," John added as he tried to hold back tears that were coming down.

"I know this may be getting uncomfortable sir, but we do need to know something sir. How was their social life? Did they have other friends to hang out with like boyfriends," Rick asked.

"Leah and Ginger usually hung out with each other but occasionally a young ragged looking man who come in to the restaurant with them," John quickly added.

"What do you mean ragged looking? Was he a vagrant?" Emma asked.

"I wouldn't know but what I mean is that he isn't someone I would approve my daughter to hang out with," John quietly said.

"Why would you say that sir? Could you describe him," Rick asked as he continued to write in his notebook what John said.

"Yes his head was completely shaven. I didn't see the color of his eyes but most of his face and arms were completely covered with tattoos. I was disgusted by some of the tattoos. I admit that I'm not against tattoos as I had once been in the Navy and have a couple on me but some of the tattoos on him made me sick," John replied.

"How tall was this young man?" Emma asked.

"He is about your partner's size in height and perhaps a little bit bulkier. Now if you can excuse me I do have customers waiting on me," John kindly said as he walked past us and began helping the customers who were waiting in line to be checked out.

"We'll we didn't learn anything new here," Emma complained.

"Perhaps we did. We need to find out as much as we can about this young man. He might very be in a gang or trying to get initiated into one," Rick said as the two of them left the restaurant.

Lt. Johnson and I waited in the receptionist office at the laboratory for over an hour to see what it was Dr. Miles found that was so important that he called her before she even arrived at work. Dr. Miles had been doing forensic work for over thirty years and was one of more trusted forensic scientist in the state of Massachusetts. He had become famous for helping the police crack some of the most mysterious and cold cases in the state.

"Ah thank you Lt. Johnson for coming and who is this that you brought with you," Dr. Miles asked quietly. Dr. Miles was an older African American man who had a little gray hair on the top of his head and had thick brown glasses covering his dark brown eyes. He was a tall older man who looked as petite as most of the women the mysterious man killed though Dr. Miles had a voice of command in which I knew like Lt. Johnson and Miller meant he wasn't to be crossed either.

"This is Detective Charles Early. He and his partners are helping us with this case. What else did you find for us Dr. Miles," Lt. Johnson asked.

"Follow me and I'll show you," Dr. Miles said in his usual stern like voice. Neither Lt. Johnson nor I said anything as we followed Dr. Miles to his lab where he discovered evidence that had been overlooked previously by the other forensic scientists.

"What is it Dr. Miles?" Lt. Johnson asked.

"You know that originally when we checked the victim's clothes we did find some DNA

that apparently belongs to the perpetrator but when the other forensic scientist looked they didn't find any fingerprints on the clothes but when I used one of my scanners it picked up a small fingerprint that none of us had seen before. So I had it tested and it did not match the victim's print so it must be the killer's" Dr. Miles said.

"Yes, I have one question Dr. Miles. If the killer was wearing gloves as it had been indicated to me by nearly everyone how is it his prints are on the victim's clothing," I asked.

"Yes Detective Early it had been indicated to me the killer had been wearing gloves and that might be why the other scientists weren't looking for any but my best guess is that if he was wearing gloves one of the gloves must have been torn a little. It was a small print but enough of one to test," Dr. Miles said.

"Well that's good news now we can see if the print is in the system," Lt. Johnson said.

"Ah Lt. Johnson I've done that too. There are unfortunately no matches in the system anywhere," Dr. Miles replied quickly causing Lt. Johnson to be frustrated.

I could understand her frustration and her desire to catch this mysterious perpetrator who was raping and killing women at will with no fear of being caught. It burned me inside too as that we had much physical evidence, yet we were still no closer to catching the killer than we were when we started. I could only hope that Emma and Rick were having better luck than we were.

Emma and Rick went into the downtown section of Boston where a lot of financial businesses were located. A few of the young women had worked at a few of the institutions for only a few months before being murdered and like the manager at the restaurant reported most of the women received excellent reports from the managers. Emma and Rick were both starting to get discouraged until they walked in the building where one of the women had worked.

"Good evening. May I help you?" the desk attendant asked Emma and Rick.

"We need to speak to the manager," Emma said.

"Ah yes," the attendant said as she picked up the phone and called the manager to come to the front to talk with us. She was a short older woman who had gray bushy hair and thin glasses. She was mostly quiet but helped anybody who came up to the desk and within a minute after being called the manager arrived at the front to talk with Emma and Rick.

"You two needed me. I am Tony Jordan the manager. How may I be of assistance?" the manager asked calmly. Tony was a young man who appeared to be in his mid-twenties. He was extremely tall and had dark black hair which was neatly combed and trimmed and light blue eyes and a soft spoken voice.

"Ah yes sir did this woman by the name of Jenny Terry ever work here," Emma asked as she showed the manager the picture of Jenny.

"Yes she did. She was an excellent worker. Always here and never calling in but there was one thing I didn't like about her," Tony replied.

"What was it you didn't like about her sir?" Emma asked.

"Well normally before she came into work she would normally hang out with this guy who was kind of tall but chubby looking. I believe he is homeless and perhaps working on the streets maybe in a gang or sort. The man had tattoos all over his body some of which were awful and extremely offensive to me and a lot of other people in the building," Tony said.

"Did the man ever give you or anybody else any problems?" Rick asked.

"I once got into an argument with the man that she was with and afterwards he had

threatened to kill me because I had him barred from coming back here with Jenny,” Tony replied bluntly.

“Why was he barred from coming back here?” Emma asked.

“He had yelled out loud profanities and threatened other customers, so I had him immediately thrown out of the building and I warned Jenny not to bring him back here again and as far as I know she didn’t,” Tony quietly said.

“Did you tell the police?” Rick asked.

“Yes, but they did nothing about it. It hardly seems these days that you can go to the police and get results,” Tony said irritably.

“I am just curious sir. When did the man last appear in the store and do you have any tape showing with the man on it?” Emma asked.

“He was in here two weeks after I banned him,” Tony said.

“He was in here after you banned him,” Emma repeated. “But I thought you said you warned Jenny not to bring him.”

“She did not. He came in alone,” Tony said.

“May we get that tape of that day?” Rick asked.

“Sure. Let me go get that tape for you,” Tony said as he went back to the security office where the tapes were kept. He came back with the tape a few minutes later. “Here it is detectives. I hope you catch whoever is responsible for the killings.”

“Don’t worry sir. We’ll catch whoever killed Jenny and these other women,” Rick said but before he could say anything else the three heard a loud gunshot coming from outside.

Tony immediately got on the phone and called the police as he ran outside to find out where the gunshot came from. Neither Emma nor Rick could see anything much as the snow had really started to fall down hard and after a few minutes of looking both ways and across the street Emma finally saw a figure lying on the ground.

“Over there,” Emma yelled as she and Rick quickly crossed the street to where the figure was lying on the ground and to their horror it was a woman who was lying on the street gasping for air.

Rick looked at the woman and while there was no doubt in his mind that she had been raped he noticed there were no marks of strangulation on her neck like there had been with some of the other women and that she had not been shot. There were no bullets anywhere that he saw but yet the woman was gasping for air and Emma was trying everything she could to help while the police and paramedics arrived at the scene but despite Emma’s efforts the young woman’s condition worsened. By the time the police and paramedics arrived five minutes later the young woman died much to Rick and Emma’s horror.

“I can’t believe it. There goes another one,” one of the paramedics complained.

“I want to be here the moment they finally catch that no good creep,” the second paramedic said bluntly as Emma and Rick watched as they put the young woman into the ambulance. Neither Emma nor Rick said anything as the other officers began looking around for any evidence. It was only after an officer spoke to them did either say anything.

“Hey detectives did either of you see anything?” the officer asked.

“No sir by the time we arrived the woman was lying on the ground gasping for air,” Rick said calmly. “I looked and checked and the woman had not been shot, stabbed or choked as far as I could see. Perhaps he had threatened to shoot her so that she would not resist as he raped her which might explain why we heard gunshots but the only thing I can say is that the creep literally scared the young woman to death by his actions.”

“You heard a gunshot,” the officer asked.

“Yes sir about right here where we found the woman,” Rick replied. The officers continued looking through the snow but still did not manage to find any bullet or trace that a gun had been shot near the area where they found the young woman.

“Rick, I have a bad feeling. What if the gunshot we heard was directed toward someone else who might have been close enough to see the man raping the young woman,” Emma asked Rick as he turned to the officers who were still looking for the bullets.

“Officers we’ll be right back in a few,” Rick said as the officers not even paying any attention to them nodded in agreement. Emma and Rick began walking several feet away from where the officers were still searching. The snow continued to fall faster and more furiously as Emma and Rick walked the streets and within a few minutes the police officers were no longer visible to either of them.

“Rick I’m scared,” Emma said as both Rick and her looked and barely saw any of the buildings and those that they could see were mostly covered with snow. The snow continuously came down at a furious pace as they continued to walk down the street and look at the buildings they still could see.

“It looks like most people were wise and stayed home. They knew the storms would be bad,” Rick barely could finish saying before he and Emma heard another gunshot. They both turned to look where the sound of the gunshot came from and as Emma tried to get closer to Rick she bent down and noticed some bullets had landed five inches away from her feet. She stood up as Rick gently grabbed her by the arm as they both heard another gun shot.

“Rick, I am getting even more scared,” Emma said.

“It’s okay. Stay with me,” Rick said. Both Rick and Emma slowly started backing away from where the gunshots were coming from and before either could run toward the other officers Emma tripped over the dead body of a man that was buried in the snow.

“AGHHHHHHHH,” Emma screamed for a minute before calming herself down. She didn’t know whether it was the surprise of finding a dead man so close to her or whether it was a mysterious killer was on their trail trying to kill them that frightened her more.

“Emma stay close to me. We will only survive this if we stay close together. Now slowly let’s walk toward the other officers and not draw attention to ourselves. I don’t know where the madman is at but maybe he can’t see us either,” Rick said as they heard another gunshot near them. Neither of them had been shot and Emma looked and saw that a bullet got lodged in a pole that was near them.

“He’s near us Rick,” Emma screamed as she turned and looked in all directions and saw nothing but the snow that continued to fall onto the ground. Rick looked and saw nothing either as his face which now had the look of being terrified in it was now as white as snow that kept falling. Rick took out his pistol as he let Emma stay behind him until they had reached the other officers. They finally reached where the officers were a few minutes later to find that the officers were finished and were about to leave them.

“We heard you scream detective and was about to see what happened. Did you find anything?” the officer asked.

“Are you kidding? All we found was another dead body. A man had been shot to death and left in the street and all you can ask is ‘Did you find anything?’,” Emma yelled sarcastically as her face became as pale as Rick’s was moments earlier.

“I’m sorry detective. I didn’t mean to upset you. You and your partner stay here inside the car with my friend and the two of us will go check out what you found,” the officer said

calmly. Emma and Rick sat in the car waiting for the two officers to come back after looking but it was only a minute after they disappeared into the storm did they heard several gunshots.

Emma and Rick got out of the car and drew out their pistols as they waited to see if the officers survived. A minute later they saw one of the officers walking and dragging his partner who had been shot by the mysterious killer.

“Get the paramedics back out here,” the officer yelled over his radio. “Get the medics out here I repeat. Officer is down.”

The paramedics wasted no time as they quickly arrived and helped put the second officer into the ambulance. Neither the first officer, Rick nor Emma could believe what had happened so quickly. The killer had shot two more people, first the man who the officers had tried to retrieve and failed and second the second officer who nobody was sure if he would survive.

“One thing does really bother Rick,” Emma said calmly.

“Many things bother me about this,” Rick said as Emma gave him a disapproving frown before Rick spoke again. “What is it that is really bothering you?”

“There is one thing I can’t understand. How’s the perp able see his targets in the storm and we can’t see him,” Emma asked.

“That does bother me too. Perhaps he is wearing gear that allows him to see us by the heat that we put off like the kind the military uses at nighttime when hunting down enemies and terrorist,” Rick replied calmly.

“But where would the perp get such equipment from? There aren’t too many places around here you would get such equipment from and I highly doubt this guy is in the military considering the descriptions we’ve been given of him,” Emma asked.

“You can have tattoos as long as they are not visible or obscene, but you’re right based on the descriptions we received he wouldn’t be in the military,” Rick said.

“That brings us back to my original question. Where did he get such equipment?” Emma asked again.

“I don’t know but we can find out when we get back to the station,” Rick said as they got back into the car with the first officer.

Emma, Rick, and the officer arrived at the station shortly after Lt. Johnson and I had got back from the laboratory. It had been a waste of time to go to find out they had found a print but that the prints weren’t in the system. I was hoping that Emma and Rick had better luck but what I saw when they arrived was not what I expected. Both appeared to be extremely exhausted, frightened, and frozen and neither wanted to say anything when they first arrived back at the station. I waited for a hour until both warmed up and drank coffee before Lt. Johnson and I asked them any questions but before I could Rick had already began asking a question.

“Hey, Charles is there any way that you can find out who might be selling military equipment around here?” Rick asked.

“Yes I’m sure. Why do you ask that?” I asked curiously.

“Our mysterious fiend must be using some kind of military equipment that picks up body heat which is how he is able to see us in the snowstorm and we can’t see him,” Rick replied.

“What happened? Did you run into him?” I asked as I became frightened and angered at once. The idea of the mysterious man shooting and killing my partners angered me but the fact that neither Emma nor Rick could see the foe and have a chance against him frightened me.

“Well it started when Emma and I were investigating, and we heard a girl scream. So, we ran outside and found the girl who had been raped and was gasping for air. The killer really terrified the girl because about five to ten minutes after we found her and called the paramedics the young girl died because she was literally scared to death. Next thing I know is that the perp started shooting at Emma and I and there was no way we could see him either,” Rick replied.

“The guy is a chameleon. He can disappear into the storm and kill his prey without being shot himself,” the officer said bluntly.

“You don’t suppose this guy might have been in the military before being discharged,” I asked bluntly.

“Most of the people we talked to said that the women were seen with the same man. Everybody we’ve talked to says he is tall and chubby looking with tattoos all over his body but most notably his arms and face,” Rick replied.

“Oh we did get a tape that shows us the man,” Emma said as she handed Lt. Johnson said.

“Nice work,” Lt. Johnson said.

“Hey Emma and Rick with tape and description we have maybe we can get a sketch out and see if anybody knows something about him,” I said.

“I will start working on a sketch,” Lt. Johnson added.

“You did well,” Lt. Miller added. “You stay warm. Get some coffee and get a little more color into you. You all look as pale as a ghost.”

We all laughed. We needed a good laugh. It was storming and yet worse we had a rapist and killer still out there and likely to strike again if we did not do something. We knew time was the essence in order to catch this criminal.

The three of us played Yahtzee while we were waiting for Lt. Johnson and Miller to come back with their sketch work. Emma, to my surprise was actually very good at the game winning two of the three games played. I won the other game while Rick was just happy to be playing.

“Great game Emma,” I said.

“See, I was never any good,” Rick admitted.

“You still did well,” Emma said.

“Thanks. Next time Emma we will play a game I can win,” Rick teased. I laughed too.

“I bet we will,” Emma said.

A moment later Lt. Johnson and Miller came back in.

“Detective Early, I want you three to take a look at this,” Lt. Johnson said.

“Looks good to me,” I said.

“You did really well ma’am. That looks like the man in the video almost to the letter,” Emma said.

“Well, thank you,” Lt. Johnson said. “Now let’s see if this sketch can help lead us to a suspect.”

As soon as the storm subsided the sketch was posted in every neighborhood to see if

anyone had information on the perp who was suspected in the recent killing spree. I didn't know how long it would take before we would get anything, but it was barely an hour after we posted the sketch when the phones started ringing. Most of the calls as expected gave us no more information than we already knew but the last call which came from a military recruiting office intrigued me.

"Hey Charles, the recruiter says he has information but he wants to meet us in person," Emma said. As soon as the phone began ringing again as Lt. Johnson answered it. I did not know what the call was about but knew it was not good as Lt. Johnson's expression immediately changed. The phone call did not last but a few minutes as she finally hung up.

"Well, thank you sir," Lt. Johnson said as she hung up.

"What is it?" I asked as I saw how disturbed Lieutenant Johnson was.

"Well Detective. Now our perp has raped and murdered another young woman. That makes sixteen murders we're sure he has committed. I just talked with the store owner on the phone. She's really frightened," Lt. Johnson said.

"Did she see anything?" Emma asked.

"No. She didn't see anything. She happened to have found the corpse of the young woman in her garbage disposal. She was taking trash out and when she opened up the disposal that's when she saw the young woman there," Lt. Johnson said as she trying to hold up the tears. The three of us said nothing as Lt. Johnson kept speaking. "I want to know what kind of person kills another human being and then throws them away like garbage."

"A monster," I said pointedly.

"Detective Early, you and your partners will go to the recruiter and talk to him and find out anything and everything he knows about this monster. Lt. Miller and I will take a couple of our officers to the store to calm down the owner and try to find out what happened there," Lt. Johnson ordered.

I didn't say anything and neither did Rick nor Emma but I would have rather had Lt. Johnson and Miller go to the recruiter and for us to talk with the store owner. I could tell the case was starting to wear on Lt. Johnson as it was on me and my partners and I now more than ever before wanted to catch this perp even if it was the last thing I would do.

The three of us obeyed Lt. Johnson's orders and went to the recruiting office to meet with the recruiter who called and said he had information on the perp. I didn't know what to say or whether I believed he had information that could help us or not. I could only pray that it wasn't a waste of time as each minute that went by it seemed as though another person was being killed by him. We finally arrived at the recruiting office where we were greeted by Navy recruiter Petty Officer First Class John Percy.

"Hello Detectives. I'm Petty Officer Percy. Pleased to meet you though I wish it was under different circumstances," the petty officer said. Petty Officer Percy was a tall medium build blonde hair man who had dark brown eyes and appeared to be in his late thirties or early forties.

"Yes Petty Officer you said you had information on the guy we're looking for," I said.

"Yes Detective. The guy you all posted is no other than a man named Eric Lynnwood," Petty Officer Percy said.

"Pardon me Petty Officer but how are you sure the man is Lynnwood," Emma asked.

“Detective Eric Lynnwood is a master deceiver. He came here and enlisted into the Navy two years ago. He appeared to be normal like everyone else. He seemingly had no problems and he told me he had never used drugs or been in trouble with the law before. Like we do with everyone else who enlists we did a background check and nothing came back so he went to basic training and apparently when he was in the Navy that’s when the trouble began,” Petty Officer Percy said.

“What do you mean by trouble Petty Officer?” Rick asked.

“Well in basic training he and his buddy were both caught smuggling alcohol into the barracks and of course both were sent to Captain’s Mast. The captain took half month’s pay and gave them extra duty for thirty days to be done after basic,” Petty Officer Percy replied.

“What happened next?” I asked.

“He did his extra duty at school. While at school he got interested in joining the Navy Seals, but he never did join but while at school he got even into more trouble. The first incident occurred when he got into a fight at a bar and nearly beat a man to death. He was sent to Mast on that too and of course he lost pay and was restricted to base and given extra duty. Of course that was the first of a few incidents that he committed while at school but shortly before he was supposed to graduate his commanding officer ordered him to see a psychiatrist and after thorough research and listening to him the shrink diagnosed him with antisocial personality disorder,” Petty Officer Percy said.

“And he was discharged immediately I take it,” I said.

“Yes detective. He was given a general discharge due to the medical condition personality disorder,” Petty Officer Percy said.

“Question Petty Officer I might be confused but how would you know all this. Isn’t this information supposed to be kept secret,” Rick asked.

“Yes, but I kept a close eye on him detective. Even though the background check came up with nothing on him I still didn’t trust him and neither did his commanding officer,” Petty Officer Percy replied.

“The commanding officer knew about the incident at the bar. Did the CO suspect that Lynnwood might also be violent to women too?” Emma asked.

“He had his reservations, but he didn’t tell me what they were when I called him for an update on Lynnwood,” Petty Officer Percy said quietly.

“What was his job going to be while in the Navy?” I asked.

“He was going to be a Gunner’s Mate,” Petty Officer Percy said.

“That would explain why he is so familiar with weapons and other equipment but that wouldn’t explain how he got the equipment,” I told Rick and Emma.

“There is something else too. Shortly before he was discharged there was a robbery at a weapons, armor and gear store. The commanding officer suspected Lynnwood and ordered an inquiry but nothing ever turned up and Lynnwood was discharged shortly after,” Petty Officer Percy said.

“He might have got the equipment there and got familiar with the tools he had which made committing the crimes easier,” I told Emma and Rick.

“I tell you something else too detectives. Lynnwood is very intelligent and capable of disguising himself. If you didn’t know him he would appear to you as being very kind and thoughtful but let me make this clear to you. He had no friends while in the Navy and according to the doctor who I talked to Lynnwood enjoyed bullying and imposing his will on other people even if that meant forcing girls into sex,” Petty Officer Percy said.

“Why? Was there any incidents too in the Navy?” I asked.

“Nothing official but scuttlebutt has a way of making around even back to the recruiting officer. The executive officer called me one day, and while we spoke he mentioned to me that he believed that Lynnwood was forcing himself on a couple of women there. One girl came forth and accused Lynnwood of raping her, but a couple of days later she recanted her story and no charges were filed. Everyone that talked to me was scared to death of him even the commanding officer was scared and of course sadists has that tendency in them. Scaring people into submission is one of the many weapons sadists use to get what they want,” Petty Officer Percy said bluntly.

“Petty Officer Percy, thank you for taking your time and talking with us. We’ll be in touch. If you can think of anything else let us know,” I said as I looked at my cell phone and saw a message from Lt. Johnson that said ‘YOU WOULDN’T BELIEVE IT BUT ANOTHER GIRL HAS BEEN FOUND RAPED AND MURDERED. THIS ONE WAS FOUND NEXT TO THE POLICE STATION.’ I was shocked but not surprised and I wasn’t going to say anything to either Rick or Emma until we got back to the police station.

I didn’t have to say anything to Emma or Rick about the incident as when we arrived back the police station the two immediately knew something was wrong. The police station was so quiet that you could hear a drop of water hitting the ground and when we saw Lt. Miller and Johnson neither wasted any time in explaining the situation.

“WHAT,” Emma screamed loudly as she couldn’t believe what Lt. Johnson said. “Where was the young woman found?”

“The young woman was found hanging in her bedroom closet with a rope around her neck and almost completely naked except for the bra she was wearing which was where we found a note,” Lt. Johnson said.

“A suicide note,” Emma said in disbelief.

“No detective. It was not a suicide note. It was a note from the perp,” Lt. Johnson said.

“What did the note say,” I asked.

“The note challenges us to stop him or he’ll continue to rape and kill people to make an example of how pathetic our police department is, and it was signed by the Chameleon,” Lt. Johnson said as she handed me the note to see. I looked at the note and quickly became angry when I read what it said.

You fools have tried to stop me before but now are reduced to asking for help to catch me. Let it be known to everyone that you are fools and will never be able to see or catch me. I am the Chameleon and you are a disgrace. Try as you might but I will continue to rape and kill people at will to show the world how pathetic the police department really is. THE CHAMELEON

“Well Lt. Johnson at least we do have a name on our suspect now,” I said while trying to hide my anger from seeing the note.

“Who is it?” Lt. Johnson asked.

“His name is Eric Lynnwood,” Emma said, and it wasn’t a second after she said his name did the desk sergeant laugh sarcastically.

“What’s so funny Sergeant?” Lt. Johnson asked angrily.

“Nothing ma’am except that I know Eric Lynnwood and I have no doubt he would pull these stunts either,” the desk sergeant said.

“Why do you say that sergeant?” Lt. Johnson asked.

“As you know ma’am I am a Chief Gunner’s Mate in the Navy Reserves and happen to be at the school when Eric went. He is kind of a loner and didn’t trust anyone and would always get into trouble but there is one thing I need to warn you too. Eric is an expert at weapons much like I am, and I have no doubt he is using military weapons and gear to commit these crimes. He is also an expert at hiding and disguising himself as that was how he pulled that robbery at the military gear store,” the sergeant said.

“You know about that too sergeant,” Emma asked.

“Yes detective. I have no doubt it was Eric, but we never had any evidence linking him to it,” the sergeant said.

“But that doesn’t make any sense. If Eric was so careful about not leaving any evidence when he was in the Navy why is he being so reckless now,” Rick asked.

“The one thing you need to understand detective is Eric is a sadist. He doesn’t care about anything or anyone. I don’t even think he cares about himself. He has no regard for other human life and sadists usually enjoy what they do. I have no doubt that Eric wants you to know that it is him committing the crimes, but he is not going to make it easy for you to catch him,” the sergeant said.

“Thanks sergeant,” Lt. Johnson said calmly but before she could turn and say anything else there was a call over her radio.

“Attention all officers a young woman has just been kidnapped. I repeat a young woman has been kidnapped by a man wearing camouflage looking gear. He was seen taking the woman to an abandoned warehouse about a mile from the police station,” the announcement over the radio said.

“Let’s go. If we hurry we might be able to save her,” Lt. Johnson said as we quickly left the station for the abandoned warehouse.

The old abandoned warehouse had once been used by customs to store personal goods that was waiting to be shipped out of the country but for the last decade had not been used. I had no doubt that Eric Lynnwood had been using the warehouse as his hideout while he committed most of his crimes in the city. It would have been the very last place anybody would have looked since the warehouse had been long considered abandoned. The old warehouse was not very tall but it did have a few windows but none of which we could look through and see where Eric and

the woman were located. When we arrived Lt. Johnson got onto the radio and called for backup as the three of us began approaching the old warehouse.

“Are we going to wait for them chief?” Rick asked me as I called Lt. Johnson over the radio.

“Go in slowly and try not to make any sound. Go in and see if the woman is still alive and if she is and Eric is not around you are allowed to rescue her but I repeat do not engage Eric into a shootout,” I told Emma and Rick as Lt. Johnson instructed me to stay behind and wait for the other officers to come.

We all wanted to rescue the woman if possible but neither Lt. Johnson nor I wanted a shootout that could result in the woman or any of the detectives being killed. Sending Emma and Rick alone quietly gave us the best chance to rescue the woman before the other officers arrived and a shootout occurred.

Emma and Rick quietly entered the old warehouse and noticed that there were two floors inside. Emma went up the stairs to check the second floor while Rick checked the first floor. Emma looked all around on the second floor and quickly noticed several large crates of merchandise all over the room despite it being an abandoned warehouse. She opened one of the larger crates which was on the ground and noticed in the crate there were several dynamites and other explosives.

Fear crept into her mind. She slowly opened up another box which was right beside it and noticed in it there were several M-16's, Ak-47's and other semi and automatic guns. She quickly opened up a third box and noticed even more guns but even more disturbing to her was the hand grenades and rocket launchers but below the weapons Emma noticed several camouflage looking outfits and gear. She started to open a fourth box when she heard a gunshot. She had barley turned around as she quickly ducked and avoided being shot to death by a mere inch. It had happened so fast that she didn't see where Eric disappeared to but Rick hearing the gunshot quickly ran up to the second floor to help her.

“Are you alright?” Rick asked as Emma nodded. It was only after she nodded did Rick turn and noticed the crates and boxes of weapons and military gear.

“Here is the gear that Eric must have stolen while he was in the Navy,” Rick said in disbelief as he began looking through the boxes.

“Did you find anything downstairs?” Emma asked.

“No. It was completely empty unlike here on the second floor. I should tell you if Eric is here, he must be here on this floor. Besides the way we came in there are no other exits,” Rick replied but before he could say another word both heard someone rocking a chair and struggling as though to free themselves.

Emma and Rick both turned and saw it was the young woman on the far end of the room. She was tied down into a wooden chair and it was only when they got close enough did they notice the young woman also had a bomb taped to her chest. Rick quickly noticed the bomb had already been activated and the time had been set for three minutes and was counting down. He quickly got the bomb off the young woman as Emma helped untie her.

“Get out here. I’ll deal with the bomb,” Rick shouted.

“But,” Emma started to say.

“JUST DO IT NOW,” Rick yelled with such tone that Emma knew there was no moment to argue. Emma and the young woman had escaped to the first floor before they heard gun shots again coming from the second floor. Rick turned and noticed that the electrical outlet had been shot and that the wires were dangling on the floor and shooting out small sparks. As he turned again and began trying to diffuse the bomb Rick heard gasoline being poured onto the ground.

“Charles,” Emma shouted as she and the young woman raced out of the warehouse.

“Where are you Eric? I know you are here,” Rick shouted as he continued to look around. He left the bomb for a moment and looked around all the large crates around the room. He returned to the bomb a moment later after not seeing where Eric went and by the time he managed to diffuse the bomb he heard another gun shot.

“You will die,” a voice shouted as Rick turned and avoided being shot in his head by mere inches.

“ERIC,” Rick shouted. He continued to look around the building and as he did he saw a large flame that was getting larger. “Oh, boy this is not good.”

“What’s going on there Rick?” I asked as I heard the gunshots over the radio. Emma had returned safely with the young woman. I was becoming concerned for Rick as he was not answering my calls on the radio .

“What’s happening? Tell me he did not engage Eric,” Lt. Johnson demanded.

“He might not have had a choice. I think Eric engaged him,” I replied. “Rick, can you hear me.”

“Yes sir. I am in here. Eric was shooting at me. I don’t think he intended to shoot me per se but there is now a large flame blocking my exit. Someone he must have shot something and caused a fire to appear and it is only getting bigger,” Rick replied.

“GET OUT OF THERE NOW,” I shouted.

“I’m coming out through the window. There’s no other way to get out,” Rick said as he realized that he wouldn’t be able to escape the same way he entered as the flame was getting bigger and the smoke getting thicker looked and saw the only place he could escape.

“Men, get ready. Let’s help Detective O’Malley,” Lt. Johnson said.

“Alright Lt. Johnson and her men are here with a platform for you to land on safely,” I said as Rick quickly jumped out of the window. At the very second he jumped out through the window the room exploded into flames destroying all the weapons and gear that was on the floor.

“Whoa,” Rick said as he landed on the platform awkwardly and spraining his ankle. “Ouch.”

“Are you alright?” Emma asked.

“Yeah, besides a sprained ankle,” Rick replied as he turned to Lt. Johnson. “And how is the young woman doing?”

“She has been traumatized but she will live,” Lt. Johnson said. “And perhaps she will get help to where she can not only overcome this but thrive as well.”

“Good,” Rick said as he turned around to the burning building. “Well there goes all the evidence.”

“And there goes the suspect too,” Lt. Johnson said as the three of us looked at her when we realized what she said. Lt. Johnson was right there was no way Eric could have escaped the building as Rick had reported earlier there were no back door exits and even if he had managed to get the entrance he wouldn’t have gotten far as we were guarding the entrance.

“Yes ma’am. He may have been a chameleon while committing his crimes, but he was no chameleon for that blazing fire,” Emma said quietly.

“I would have rather had taken him in alive but at least now you have a major rapist and killer off the street lieutenant,” I said quietly. Lt. Johnson nodded in agreement as we watched the building burn. The young woman had gotten out of the car to speak to us as the paramedics and firefighters arrived.

“I just want to thank you for saving me,” the woman said calmly.

“You are quite welcome now go with them and let them help you too,” I said as the young woman went with the paramedics. The firefighters arrived a few minutes later and were able to quickly put out the large blaze which nearly burnt down the building completely. I truly love helping people and solving cases and it is cases like this that make me want to continue to be a detective for hopefully many more years to come still.