

PROLOGUE

"MONSTERS AND BOOGEYMEN"

ONE

He is patience...

Because he must be, for at least a little while longer. His patience will pay off. He's sure of it. After all this time, he is confident there can be just one conclusion to this story. An ending for all endings. One he has so meticulously scripted and now stands ready to execute.

And just like every good story needs a good ending, it also needs a bad guy. Especially horror stories. And that's what this is, a horror story. One full of heartbreak, sadness, and terror. A story with boogeymen who prey on the innocent and weak. A story full of wicked people who steal, kill, take, and abuse without retribution or guilt of conscience. They do this until a hero comes along and puts a stop to their evil ways.

But this is a real-life horror story with real-life monsters, and there are no heroes. There is just him and he's nobody's hero. He doesn't consider himself to be one of the bad guys, but he's more than willing to play that role because that's how he'll be able to finish this. He needs to become the thing he hates. That's what he tells himself so he'll see this through to the end.

Tyrone Eddins Jr.

The bad things he's planning will be done to very bad people. They are the true bad guys in this story. They are the monsters hiding in the closet and under the bed. Sharp-fanged and razor-clawed, these predators lurk in the shadows waiting to inflict their horrible brand of pain on those who are incapable of fighting back.

In this story, the monsters have gone unchecked and unpunished. They have committed evil acts and have walked away free and clear. Until now. Now their days are numbered, and he'll be the instrument of their punishment. He'll take it upon himself to right the wrongs no one else has bothered with. He will hold those responsible accountable for their crimes.

He doesn't expect anyone to understand why he's doing this. Most people aren't able to understand how it feels to have their entire life ripped apart while the world stands by and watches. How could they possibly understand what that's like? They couldn't...not unless they've experienced what he's experienced, seen what he's seen, and felt what he's felt.

So, he'll be the bad guy, for now, the lesser of two evils. And he can live with that, so long as he

Done in the Dark

does what needs doing. He's waited for so long,
and now he can put closure to this part of his life.

TWO

The temperature outside has dropped steadily with the setting of the sun. In the fading light, he can see his breath forming small plumes of fog as he exhales it. His fingertips have begun to go numb inside the leather gloves he wears. The same can be said for his toes, the black leather work boots on his feet offering little in the way of warmth after standing outside for so long.

He's been waiting in this same spot for at least two hours, maybe more. But, in the end, it will be well worth the wait. He's been waiting almost a lifetime, so a few more hours won't hurt.

He places his hands inside the pockets of his gray bomber jacket, the fingers of his right hand finding and gripping the handle of the small pistol he carries. He doesn't expect to use the weapon tonight, but it reassures him to know that he has it with him. Just in case.

After another forty-five minutes, he sees what he's been waiting on. Across the street from where he's standing, two white men, both big and bulky, walk out of the front entrance of a building and get into a silver four-door sedan. A police-issued, unmarked cruiser. The alley where he's been

Done in the Dark

waiting offers him enough cover so he can see them while remaining hidden from their view. Not that they would be looking for him anyway. These two have grown careless and lazy.

As he watches the men, the fire begins to burn inside of him again. Sometimes it simmers, but at times like these, whenever he is so close to retribution that he can taste it, the fire burns brightest. He's studied these two men for years, learning their lives inside and out, and today's watch has helped him put the final pieces in place.

He has their routine down to a science. He knows where they live and work, where they eat and drink, and now where they do their dirt. He is ready. He watches as the sedan pulls away from the curb, heads down the empty street, turns a corner and then fades from view. He wanted nothing more than to walk up to the driver's side of the car and empty his gun's clip into both men, ending their lives right then and there. But he couldn't do that. Not yet, but soon. He just needs the right opening. Until that opening comes, he'll remain in the shadows, watching and planning, waiting to inflict the hurt he's been holding onto for so long...

He is patience... but he is also pain...