

CHAPTER 5  
THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

The ride up to Hellhole was uneventful—if riding with Delilah didn't count as an event. Her face alone assured excitement, and Lucky was having a hard time drinking it out of his mind's eye. Then there was her manner, which reminded him of a red-tailed hawk. She would circle high above a situation or conversation like she wasn't interested, and then dive in when she saw a chance to strike. More often than not, she came up a winner.

She'd been working on that 12 gauge pump she got for "two fifties" for the last thirty miles. First, she measured it and marked the barrel with duct tape. Then she used a hacksaw to make shallow cuts around the circumference of the business end. She had a steady hand, Delilah, and kept the gun still by holding it between her legs. Lucky couldn't deny being moved by the sight. Her legs were slender and smooth, and she had what might be described as "shapely knees". Like the perfect fender design, they were strong, pretty and useful. And once she had the barrel cut to Federal legal—eighteen inches to be exact—she filed down the end and rubbed it with something

called Cold Blue. When she was through, she held the cut piece of the barrel to her eye and looked straight at Lucky. It unsettled him a bit, and he made up his mind that as much as she had been helpful, she was also a provocative little cunt.

Having crossed the Pennsylvania border about fifty miles back and with fifty miles still to go, Delilah napping in the back seat cradling her custom piece of iron, and both boys eager to stretch their stiffening stems, Lucky suggested they pull into a miniature 1950's model village attraction he saw advertised on a billboard. The town was called Shartlesville, which to Jasper sounded like another word for shitting yourself. It didn't sound all that promising to Lucky, either, but it was the first interesting thing they had come across since the giant, fiberglass Humpty Dumpty back in Natural Bridge, Virginia.

Jasper pulled into a spot near an SUV besieged by redheaded brats and cut the engine. That's when Delilah sat up and said she had another surprise. She reached into her skirt pocket and brought out a small bag of white powder, holding it up and flicking it with her finger. Lucky had long-since refrained from considering himself an expert on matters nefarious, but even a dozy 1950's housewife could tell it was grade-A, bathtub-cooked, trucker-loving methamphetamine. Trying not to think about how Delilah was planning on getting it into her system, he watched her cut a few lines on the stock of her Class-D felony and offer it to Jasper. One look at the big cracker and you knew right away it was the last thing a man of his temperament needed. But Lucky figured if he got into trouble it was better to have him sharp on the stick, so maybe it wasn't that bad of an idea in a fucked-up kind of way.

Jasper rolled a bill into a make-do straw and shoved it halfway up his nose.

“Careful,” said Delilah.

“Why?” asked Jasper, sounding a little like a red-nosed reindeer.

“Cause it burns, stupid. We don’t need you popping your nasty dome through the roof like a jerk-off in the box.”

Lucky could tell Jasper wanted to squeeze her head like a zit, but he was reassured by the big man’s admirable demonstration of restraint. He must have realized going off would have proven her right. It was getting so they were like family.

Jasper sucked up the line and pinched his nose. His eyes got moist and he scrunched up his face, but all the while he stayed mum.

Lucky was next and a few grains fell into his mustache. Without asking, Delilah reached over the seat and brushed them out before taking her turn. Yep, like family.

“Shit, that sucks,” she said flatly. All Lucky could think about was how much it must have hurt. The way she didn’t squirt but one tear would have earned her at least a carton of smokes in the joint.

Tweaked to Jupiter, all three exited the car and did a quick scan for cops. Lucky was pleased to see Delilah had chosen to enter unarmed because he didn’t feel like a debate while the drug was bumping his mood. Better yet, Jasper looked surprisingly friendly with a gap-toothed smile in his head, giving Lucky even more cause for optimism.

They set off the dangling bells, cleared the small foyer, and gasped a little at the sight: six-thousand square foot of midget, middle-of-nowhere America stretched from wall to wall like a bad dream. What made it worse were the kids. Lucky hated kids. The only good thing about prison was the lack of fucking kids. Suddenly there were packs of them, carrying on, setting off buzzers, blowing

whistles and flicking lights, and he had to fight the urge to boot one of them in the air.

Around the top of the building was an observation deck of sorts where parents with their own buttons and switches toyed with their filthy offspring in a game of “who can make the most goddamn noise”. Lucky figured it was like hell, or like hell ought to be if it was going to work: kind of interesting at first, and then you wanted in the worst way to get the fuck out of Dodge.

Delilah seemed to take to the children better, which Lucky took as natural. Those kids must have thought she was part of the act as they held her hands and escorted her around the little fake neighborhood. Then Jasper got a look on his face like he thought of something he might want to try, and Lucky had a feeling it wasn't going to have anything to do with quietly observing the keen craftsmanship therein.

Then most unfortunately for folks of gentle constitution, the lights went out. As was expected, the kids got to screaming their sticky little faces off. Not expected was a projection machine's light coming on and landing squarely on Delilah, herself having been in the process of fixing her mask. Those who weren't aghast in frozen silence began to scream. On and behind her, slides showing typical life in the 50's — cars, poodle skirts, drive-in movie theaters — continued their parade without undo concern.

That's when Jasper pushed a few folks out of his way and jumped into the display. He kicked over houses, trees, government buildings and at least one hospital. Before long the entire place was screaming as if the ghost of Elvis himself had entered the building. Delilah let out a shriek of joy and followed suit, putting one of her pretty feet through the roof of a schoolhouse. Not wanting to be pegged as a spoilsport, Lucky hopped in and stepped on a few cars

just as Jasper lifted an entire train station over his head and threw it up to the observation deck.

A shot rang out: small caliber, from the sound of it. Lucky looked up to see a sunburnt-to-hell, dirt merchant holding his peashooter in the air. Apparently he thought he would save the day by putting a hole in the ceiling fan; such was the breadth of his wisdom. All he managed to do was get a gut full of shot and put a few pellets in the faces of those nearest to him. As it turned out, Delilah had brought the gun in after all. Lucky hadn't the foggiest where she'd hid it, and hoped he would never know.

Jasper grabbed one of the moms around the neck and pulled her to his chest. His eyes were a couple of pineapples in Carmen Miranda's fruit hat but in thinking back later Jasper probably knew what he was doing. Seconds after he made his move, the man who had shot first shot again and the bullet hit the woman in the purse.

Not one to let an opportunity for mischief pass quietly, Delilah pumped and fired once more, and once more hit her target and then some. The shooting man, another man and his fat wife came tumbling off the deck ass over teacups. Lucky reckoned he would never forget the sound the wife's head made when it split open on the four foot water tower—nor the sight, as it was pretty disgusting in a humorous sort of way. Delilah pumped the gun again and shot up a stretch of Main Street before backing over the prone bodies of some panty-wetting toddlers and bolting out the door. Pretty good going, all things considered.

The three of them burst from the building and kicked a path through the kiddies to the car. Before their doors were closed, Jasper floored the junker in reverse and accidentally creamed a half-dozen touring bikes. Lucky got to laughing so hard he started snorting like a pig. Jasper said he'd been skeptical about risking a stop but had to

confess to its worthiness as a spectacle. Delilah, as it turns out, had her own observations.

“Talk about a corporate bonding exercise,” she said.

Neither he nor Jasper knew the difference between a bonding exercise and a set of yard pull-ups but somehow they caught her meaning.

“Fun sure do bring folks together!” said Lucky, and he shook his hair into his face. Delilah laughed real loud, so he must have read her right.

They would probably need to keep going now, though.