

Coffee, Crime, and Crazy

By Jaron Camp

Brandon leaned back in the seat of his charcoal gray Impala. Clouds of smoke seeped through the partially opened window. He parked his car in the driveway a few minutes before; prepping himself for another drama-filled day. “Why did I get cursed with a sister?” Brandon asked. He inhaled and released a few more puffs into the air as he stepped towards the house.

Pillows, clothing, food, and broken glass blanketed the area of what usually looked like a living room. “Hey, I’m here,” Brandon yelled. He made his way across the room and noticed fiery red hair and a slight body spin out of the bathroom and down the hallway.

Brandon followed the figure, a woman, into the kitchen as she bounced her shoulders and swayed her head. He tapped her from behind.

She whipped around and shrieked. “You scared the life out of me, Brandon,” Selena said.

“I announced myself,” Brandon said.

“Oh, sorry,” Selena said. “Sometimes, the music in my head keeps me distracted.”

“What music?” Brandon asked. “Never mind. Where’s Donny?”

“He’s around.”

Brandon gritted his teeth. “I’ll take care of him. Nobody touches my sister.” Brandon roared; Donny’s named echoed throughout the house. The sound of trudging work boots made its way down the stairs. “Donny, get your ass...”

Selena maneuvered herself between Brandon and the entrance to the living room. “Relax, B. Donny and I talked it out, and everything is fine.”

“But your text said different,” Brandon said. “You should pack a bag for the night.”

Donny’s footsteps stopped as Brandon glanced into the living room long enough to see Donny plop down onto the couch.

“I don’t think I need to pack anything, but thanks for your concern, big brother.”

Brandon noticed a couple of red dots on Selena’s neck. “Your safety is my responsibility,” Brandon said. “I’m going to talk to Donny.” He brushed past Selena with clenched fists.

“If you insist,” Selena said. “I’ll have coffee waiting when you return.”

Brandon moved past the stairs; sidestepping by red droplets. He eyed Donny, whose rigid frame remained seated on the couch in front of the television.

Selena grooved throughout the kitchen, bopping her head as she poured sweet cream into a mug. “Brandon is everything alright?” Selena asked.

Blood dripped from the craft scissors sticking out of Donny’s stomach and joined the red puddle by his feet. The trembling in Brandon’s hands seemed to shoot up to his lips as they quivered while forcing out coherent words. “No. No. No,” Brandon yelled.

“It’s okay, Brandon. You need a caffeine fix,” Selena yelled. “I would ask Donny to join us, but the dead don’t need coffee.” Her cheerful mood halted when panic set in after scavenging through the cupboards and pantry. “Donny, you drank the last of the coffee? I should’ve killed you twice.”

Brandon’s hands continued to shake as he dialed 911.

“Yes, it’s an emergency. My sister needs help.”