



DON'T WATCH THIS

By

William R. Potter

Jedrec Stedman detested his first name, hated his job and well just about everything and everyone he had ever known. The only employment he'd managed to keep for any amount of time in his thirty plus years in the workforce was his newspaper route and it was in jeopardy now that the Paper was rumored to be closing its print operations.

"Fuckin' internet news," Stedman said, sneering as he shuffled along 12th Avenue. He had six papers left to deliver and then he'd grab a muffin and coffee before heading for to his one room shithole of an apartment.

Newspapers became missiles, especially the larger Weekend edition, when he rolled them tight and then held the roll in place with rubber bands. Stedman flipped off a delivery guy and swore at jogger and then he buzzed the manager of the Carlyle Suites where the last five papers in his bag would finish his route. He was always sure to launch the paper torpedoes heavily against his customer's doors. It was just after six AM and with a bit of luck he'd wake a few of the bastards.

Before exiting the complex he would check the garbage room for goodies. Monday he'd found a set of golf clubs in good enough shape to surely fetch 50 bucks on eBay.

"Rich pricks throwing out good shit," he shook his head.

Normally, as was the case on this day, all he secured were two and change worth of cans from the recycle bins and a nasty stench in his nostrils. A tattered box of junk produced a few old movies on VHS and some crap 80's tunes on cassette. A burned DVD disk caught his eye with *Do Not Watch* scribed in black marker across its face.

"Gotta be porn," he said as he slipped the disk in his shirt pocket.

Stedman tossed three bags of bottles and cans out the sliding door adding them to the ten or more piled on the 3X6 foot deck of

his apartment. Without even removing his shoes he inserted the DVD in to the drive of his outdated PC.

“Better not be some fuckin’ virus,” Stedman lit a cigarette and slumped at the kitchen table that doubled as his work station.

He scratched himself through his sweat pants and blew smoke rings above his head. He was proud of his system, scavenged and built from numerous parts found around his routes.

On the screen was an empty room without art or decoration. Then a girl with dirty-blond hair and spike heels walked to a tattered tar stained couch undressed and began to feel about her body. She was young enough to ensure that whomever made the film could go to jail for filming her.

“Shi-it! I knew it,” a crude smile grew on his face. “Very nice.”

The girl began to masturbate and as soon as she started her rhythmic motions Stedman turned up the volume and slipped off his pants. The more she moaned the more he smiled.

A man with greasy long hair and a salt and pepper beard much like Stedman’s entered the room. The man quickly began to engage in rough loud intercourse with the girl.

“What an asshole...” Then Stedman noticed something that could not be possible. The guy had an eagle tattoo on his right arm identical to the one inked on Stedman’s bicep. He’d been ignoring the guy, and unable to see his face. Now Stedman saw that the guy also had the same scar on his back where Stedman had been stabbed in prison nearly twenty years ago.

“What the...” He said as the onscreen Stedman increased the pace and force of his thrusting.

The girl turned to cameraman and whispered, “Enjoying yourself Silver?”

“...fuck!” No one had called him Silver since before the girl was born.

Stedman stared at the girl. Her eyes, mouth—everything looked familiar. But how? *Could I have done her and filmed it? So wasted I forgot her? But how did the disk get there?*

“Don’t you remember me Sil?” She smiled. “Hmm, Daddy-man?”

Stedman pushed away from the screen so abruptly he fell over and crashed to the floor. "Shit!"

"You okay, Mr. Big?" she giggled.

"This is a trick...some fuckin' scam!" his eyes shot around the room. His mind was a blur as he tried to understand who could know what this girl knew. Those nick-names, each one was the name different young women had once called him. Women-girls he had....

Someone from prison was messing with him—it had to be—a cellmate, a guard. He'd been careful while incarcerated not to flap his gums but now this.

"Sil. You want to see me again?" she sighed.

Stedman glanced around his home. Where was the camera? Who was mind-fucking him?

"I want to see you Sil—okay? You up for one more party, baby?"

Stedman's heart pounded, his face warmed and he could feel his anger rise.

"Baby?" she said in a soft seductive voice.

"Sure, lets meet," he looked to the screen as a wicked grin appeared on her face.

Three knocks on the door. A pause and then three more knocks.

It was the secret rap from a crack house some fifteen years ago.

He flung open the door and saw the girl from the DVD standing at his doorway. She was even younger than she looked in the film. Dressed in skintight jeans and spaghetti top she looked up at him with half smile on her full lips.

"Who are you?" he whispered.

No answer.

"WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU!"

The girl sashayed passed him in the ageless tradition of street hookers. He smelt her perfume, an exotic expensive fragrance. She wandered around his 500 square-feet of clutter and filth and then stood before him.

"What—what game are you playing?" a trickle of sweat rolled down his back.

"Game?"

His heart was pounding. For some reason this kid scared the shit out of him. “Yeah, who put you up to this?” He took a long drag on his smoke and flicked the butt into the sink.

“I’m not up to anything...but I can see you are,” she glanced at the bulge in his pants and giggled.

“This was Tommy Shaw’s idea, huh?” His breath was not keeping up to his bodies need for air as his heart continued to race. “You want cash, huh?”

“Don’t know him.” She said.

“Bullshit!”

“Hmm,” she took his cigarette as he lit another. She took a deep drag and didn’t exhale. “Ya know baby, these things will kill you.”

Stedman stared at her. Her body was unbelievable, firm and exciting. He knew her but he didn’t. He looked at the couch and wondered how much coaxing it might take to get her naked or at least those jeans down and her on the old hide-away-bed.

Without warning he felt intense pain in his testicles. There was no way this 95 pound waif could hurt him so intensely. He dropped to his knees.

“Who is Lynne Dawson?” she said in a stern voice.

“I-I don’t know.” Of course he did.

“Who is Rachael Wayborne?” her voice grew louder, more intense.

“No one I...” Oh shit!” He grimaced against the pain, his eyes clamped. “Oh fuck!”

“Who is Mary Lewinski?”

“Ahh...” the voice was near the roof of the suite. “What the?” He opened his eyes and saw a monster that only slightly resembled the girl. She—it was so tall that it had to bend forward its spine touching the ceiling.

Jedrec Stedman pissed himself. The thing still held his penis in its enormous left hand. Its right hand index finger was at least 18 inched of deadly spear. The thing thrust the spike straight into Stedman’s heart.

“Who-is-Debby Greene?”

Stedman slowly shook his head as blood bubbled in his throat. The thing glared at him and drove the pick further and then

yanked it free to release a geyser of warm blood. Stedman sighed and then was silent.

The apartment filled with icy water and Stedman was splashing around near his ceiling clinging to whatever he could find. His coughed and chocked as his lungs filled with water and he knew he was drowning.

“Who is Teresa Reynolds?”

He shook his head as he swallowed a long breath of water as the level rose over his head.

Stedman stood and glanced at the thing. He swung his body and began to run for the door to the hallway. The room burst into flames and his flesh began to boil.

“Frances Hoyt?”

“No...one.” Stedman continued for the door as the fire consumed him until he was a pile of smoldering bones on the carpet.

He stood before the thing again. It put him to the table, but the PC was gone, in its place a yellow legal pad and single pen. Stedman could hear the thing’s voice in his head. *You will write on this paper, the names of all of them. When and why and how and where they are.*

“No...They were junkies and whores. No-nobody cares.”

“They were people. Now WRITE IT! It shrieked louder than he had ever heard a sound. He clasped his hands around his ears but the sound exploded in his brain. “Write it now!”

The creature pulled him from his chair. “Write it.”

“Uh-uh.”

Its right arm was a long sharp blade. It cut off his arms and then his legs. “You will write.”

“No.”

A swarm of ants streamed out of every pore on the creature. The army of insects began to eat him. He could feel their biting and chewing. Every inch of his body was covered in the swarm except his eyes. He limbless self was unable to do anything but watch them nibble him down to his bones.

“You will write it now!”

“Nah...”

“You think this is a dream don’t you?” The thing hissed. It was the girl again. “This is real.”

Stedman managed a weak shake of his head.

“I’ve killed and cured you four times now. I can keep it up all night and on and on forever. Can you?”

Stedman was in a grassy field. There was no wind or smell or even the buzzing of flies. The thing had tripled in size to the point where it could squish him like a bug underfoot. It ground him into the course soil until he felt his bones crack and his skull rupture. When she lifted her enormous foot he got to his feet and ran. The girl monster was never far behind him. It pulled off his arms as though he was a beetle and then threw him into the air and let him crash to the ground. She bit off his head and digested it, and defecated what was left out on the dirt and screamed at him all the while to write.

“No, I don’t know those bitches.” He would wake up eventually. This was no big deal.

Suddenly Stedman felt intense fear. The beast was in his head. He felt Karry White’s horror when she first realized that Silver was choking her to death. Wendy Wong’s terror was in his mind as she felt her Candy-man stab her to death with a Phillips screwdriver. He felt all their pain and fear at the moment they died at his hands. The emotions from each and every one of them overwhelmed him. Tears streamed his face and he began to run but his legs would not carry him. His heart pounded harder and faster than it ever had before. He could feel the beats slamming in his chest, and in his throat. Then the pace began to stumble and shake as though his heart was an engine running out of fuel.

And then Jedrec Stedman’s vision went red, then bright white, and then nothing.

He was at his table again. A cigarette in his mouth he began to write what the creature wanted. Then he stopped.

“Write!”

Stedman reached for the phone and dialed three numbers.
"9-1-1 what is your emergency," the operator said in a calm tone.

"I'm Jedrec Ronald Stedman. Is this being recorded?"

"Yes, Mr. Stedman. Do you have an emergency?"

"I killed—eleven girls aged 11-15."

"Um-okay."

Stedman heard movement and soft voices in the background at the 9-1-1 call center.

"You certain this is being recorded?"

"Yes. You were saying."

He inhaled his smoke. "The first was Lynne Dawson in 1998...she was twelve I think..."

When he completed his tale, Stedman was quiet. He grunted and then got up from the table and poured into a mug rum over ice. He shook his head and then sipped the dark liquid.

The entire deal had to be a dream or a weird drug relapse from the DVD to the girl-beast to his confession to the cops. He was positive it was all a bullshit dream. He stared at his drink, swirled it around in the cup.

"Maybe I should ease up on this shit." Then he smelled a familiar scent. Sirens wailed in the distance and gradually came closer. "Coincidence."

Stedman recognized the girl's perfume on his shirt. He heard knocking and loud authoritative voices and stood. Four police officers burst into his room after kicking in his door.

Jedrec Stedman screamed.

2200 words
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June 19,