

# *The Celibates*

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*Alan Evetts Cooper*

*Knoxville, Tennessee  
detective, Julie Boucher  
investigates a cluster of  
brutal murders.*

*Gynecologist, Lynn Greer,  
faces Evangelical  
opposition  
to Family Planning services  
at her clinic.*

*A female dominatrix,  
seduces a disaffected  
Christian celibate.*

*These interwoven lives are  
changed forever, after a  
scandal rattles the clinic.*

## **The Celibates: A Serial Killer Mystery** by Alan Evetts Cooper

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*Alan Evetts Cooper*

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## Chapter One

### **Knoxville, Tennessee**

When taking a stroll around Market Square in the center of downtown Knoxville, Tennessee, one might have difficulty believing that this beautiful, clean, rejuvenated Southern municipality has a higher crime rate than the national average.

On the surface, there is nothing that would cause Knoxville's residents or the casual visitor to feel anything other than a sense of peaceful security. Stifling crowds are rare, traffic flows smoothly, while the presence of the adjacent University of Knoxville imparts a sense of youthful vigor. Galleries promote up-and-coming artists; sidewalk bistros, taverns, bars, and restaurants are bustling hives of thriving activity, while muted darts of live music occasionally pierce the air.

The newly renovated Tennessee Theater is a showcase for noted stage performers, while the East Tennessee Historical Society provides programs and exhibits highlighting the unique history of the region. The fact is that most residents of Tennessee think of their state as a semi-autonomous tri-partite cultural entity: Knoxville (East), Nashville (Middle), and Memphis (West), with its unofficial unifying capital—Graceland.

However, lurking on the city's darker side, burglaries, theft, assaults, robbery, prostitution, and rape keep both city and county police forces busier than they would otherwise prefer. Fortunately, overall murder rates are low, and whereas most crimes tend to cluster in and around the low-income northeast district, they taper off dramatically in the penumbra of the more affluent surrounding suburbs. City and county police point out that while most of the criminal activity is gang and drug-related, they also take great pride in their statistically high arrest and crime clearance rates.

The Knox County Sheriff's Department, located in the south sector of the city on West Hill Street, is a modern, sleek, four-story rectangular building facing the Tennessee River. The multi-purpose facility also houses the Mayor's Office and the Knoxville County Human Resources Department. For those employees fortunate enough to have offices on the south side of the building, the river view provides the bonus of a peacefully serene work environment.

After fifteen years on the force, thirty-eight-year-old Knox County police detective, Julie Boucher, had achieved enough seniority to reward her with one of those offices. A five foot six-inch-tall attractive brunette with shoulder length hair, she had smooth, light olive skin, high cheekbones, and haunting hazel-green eyes. Her mother once told her she had Cherokee ancestry dating to the early 1700s: "Your ninth great granddaddy was a French fur trapper who got hisself mixed up with some Indian gal. Can't hardly blame him though. Didn't have nothin' much else to choose from in them days. But don't fret about it none sweetie pie, and don't lose no sleep mullin' over it neither. After two more generations, we all passed for white."

Not at all affected by the story, Julie instead was proud of her mixed-race heritage, as well as a latent genetic penetration that might explain her complexion.

At work, she intentionally understated her good looks by tying her hair in a tight bun and never using makeup. Despite this demure habit, she still took pride in keeping physically fit by maintaining a personally targeted weight of one hundred twenty-five pounds. Knowing that strength and high aerobic capacity are crucial for dealing with street crime or possibly saving her life, staying in shape was a self-made promise that would always afford an advantage in potentially dangerous situations. Having faced more than a few close calls, she also received several commendations for dedicated service to her job or bravery in the line of duty, and in a predominantly male

hierarchy, eventually worked her way up the ranks to become a senior detective, specializing in homicide, graft, and drugs.

At eight a.m. on a Monday morning, she arrived at work, first relaxing, sipping coffee and gazing at the river's boat traffic before settling into her daily routine. As she flipped through updated but repetitively monotonous crime bulletins, one startling item brought her speed-reading scan to an abrupt halt.

### ***26-Year-Old Homicide Solved***

*Detectives in rural McMinnville, Tennessee believe they have solved a gruesome double-homicide that occurred on a small, secluded farm over two decades ago. Fifty-five-year-old Eric "Bats" Brandt, a known member of the Santa Monica Hell's Angels motorcycle chapter, confessed to local authorities that he severely battered both 34-year-old Lorene Ann Johnson and 35-year-old Dennis Lee Waverly during a drug deal gone bad. Brandt, who was serving a 30-year prison sentence for stabbing and killing a rival gang member over a cocaine transaction, admitted to having an altercation with the couple when he was a local drug dealer for the notorious ETO (East Tennessee Outlaw) biker gang.*

*As a trademark of his fighting tactics, Brandt's sobriquet derived from a penchant to attack his enemies with lead-weighted baseball bats; as he said, "first, only to soften 'em up."*

*Terminally ill with lung cancer, Brandt stated he had nothing to lose, wanted to clear his conscience, and in a deposition, said he was motivated only to teach the couple a lesson. When questioned about the fact that the victims,*

*who had been severely beaten, were also stabbed, and shot, Brandt said he was under the influence of drugs at the time and that, "anything was possible, and it don't matter anyway. All I can say is, I done it."*

*Loreen Ann's 12-year-old daughter, Jennifer Louise Johnson, was later found in an out-building, where she hid for two days. In a state of confused shock, it was reported that the young pre-teen could only identify the perpetrator as "a bad man my mama and stepdaddy knew. He said he was gonna kill me, so I ran away." Dirty and hungry, but unharmed, she was eventually turned over to the foster care system.*

*Although motorcycle tracks were found in the mud outside the small farmhouse the couple rented, the investigation became stalled and was eventually relegated to a cold case file: unsolved by lack of further evidence.*

Julie thought it incredible that after two and a half decades, a crime still haunting so many lives was finally laid to rest. She called her contacts in McMinnville a few hours after the initial news frenzy settled down to ask for additional information.

At the time of the murders, she was twelve, lived on the outskirts of town, and didn't need news bulletins to prompt a vivid recollection of the incident. Although the Waverly's were reclusive pariahs, the killings shocked an otherwise peaceful community. Julie's father reacted by heightened protective vigilance, keeping a loaded shotgun under his bed and a .45 caliber snub nose revolver under the front seat of his car.

The murders were so violent that photographs of the crime scene were suppressed for months. Not only had Dennis Waverly's skull been shattered by a blunt object that splattered fragments of his brain across the room, but he was also shot

twice through the heart. The two .38-caliber shell casings from the spent bullets had been shoved into his nostrils and because of the brutal head trauma, were initially missed by the forensics team.

Lorene Ann's right carotid artery had been gouged and lacerated, leaving a horrific pool of blood trailing six feet from the spurts which first splattered the living room wall, then ended at the sofa where her body was found. In addition, her tongue was sliced down the middle. These markers might be expected in a cocaine or methamphetamine drug deal gone sour, the subliminal message being: *This is what happens if you snort or taste—but refuse to pay.*

Other forensic issues were compounded because the crime went undetected for two days and was only discovered when Jennifer failed to show up at a local house where she and the owner's daughter were being home-schooled. In the blistering summer heat, this time-lapse was more than enough for swarming flies to finish their dirty work.

One of the investigating detectives told Julie's father he violently gagged on the sight and smell of the putrefying stench hovering over the squirming maggot field and was unable to eat for the next two days.

It appeared that a sharp knife was used on Lorene, but both the knife and gun were never recovered.

This type of violence was uncommon in rural Tennessee. However, guns are no stranger to most residents of a state where buying and carrying weapons is considered normal behavior—and quite unwise to be without one. This philosophy seemed vindicated by the fact that gun-related crimes rates were statistically low, usually involving personal domestic disputes. National statistics also corroborated the fact that illegally owned handguns killed far more people than legal ones.

Tennessee residents passionately favored 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment rights, where the common unwritten mantra was: *Good guys*



*with guns kill bad guys with guns.* Although Julie liked to think of herself as being one of the good guys, in fifteen years on the force, she was required to draw her sidearm on unusually rare occasions but never forced to shoot. Nevertheless, each incident left her with a cold sweat after the adrenaline rush subsided.

When she had been a patrol officer doing motor vehicle stops, Julie could quickly identify legal pistol owners by license plates, which linked to their carry permits. These individuals were not to be feared because police-supervised gun safety courses were a requirement before obtaining those credentials. It was, rather, the unidentified persons carrying weapons without a license that put dread in the hearts of patrol officers. The police referred to them, and most other criminals, either as “wackos,” or more preferentially; “dirtbags.”

On one occasion, Julie stopped a man for speeding, tagging him as a pistol owner. As she cautiously worked her way to the car, hand on her sidearm, the driver turned off the engine, rolled down the window and dropped his keys on the ground. Then as he put his hands on the dashboard, he yelled out, “My gun is under the front seat, ma’am!” Because of this respectful behavior, she let him go with a warning.

In another traffic stop, she instructed the driver, a wizened, edentulous old man—without reaching for it—to tell her where his gun was and to promptly exit the vehicle. With a lisp, he told her he didn’t have it.

She rolled her eyes and asked him, “Then why do you have a carry permit?”

“Ma’am. Jus’ so’s I know I can hold onto my gun if’n when I wants to. But mos’ times I justh like keepin’ both hanths on the wheel.”

If she hadn’t been laughing so hard, she would have given him a summons for humorous naïve absurdity.

As she still reflected over the news item, her superior officer, Chief Sheriff’s Detective Fred Jennings, walked into her

office, interrupting her pensive rumination. Jennings was forty-eight years old, six feet tall, jocular, balding, broad-shouldered and quite muscular, yet also somewhat pudgy. As he preferred weight training to aerobic fitness, his excuse for being overweight was that he had a desk job, when the truth was, he hated any form of aerobic activity—especially loathing treadmill workouts. Typically wearing a dark gray suit and a white shirt without a necktie, he had the predictable habit of leaving room for his bull-neck by unfastening the top two shirt buttons, while his belt was always cinched on the first prong.

If the subject ever came up, and not at all embarrassed by it, he would humorously refer to his midriff bulge by saying, “Hey now. Can’t y’all see I’m only tryin’ to build me a monument over a dying soldier?”

Closer to the truth was that binge eating had been a lifetime nervous habit, made worse by a stressful career.

Jennings had disproportionally large, strong hands, and having once been a collegiate boxer, more than a few felons regretted the day when “The Chief” exhausted all patience and resorted to punching them in the face. But after flattening a few bad actors with a single blow, he respected the fact that his physical prowess alone could be lethal and eventually learned to let his fuse run long before exploding. Julie idolized his perspicacious and calm approach to police matters.

On this day, however, Jennings seemed unusually excited: “Hey, Julie. Did you see the news about McMinnville?”

“Hi, Chief. Yeah. Pretty amazing. Will probably make national headlines in about three minutes.”

“You knew those people, right?”

“No. Not very well. Their daughter was home-schooled, so we never interacted. The property also had a guard dog and a barbed wire fence, so none of us kids ever went up there either. They pretty much kept to themselves, didn’t hold jobs, and lived off welfare. Almost everyone seemed to know they used drugs, and some people thought they might be growing marijuana, making moonshine, or cooking meth—maybe all

three. Rumor also had it that the mother turned tricks to make ends meet. They rarely came into town, and even then, it was only for groceries and such. Never much talked to anyone, either.”

Jennings shook his head: “Screwed-up world and getting worse all the time. Anyway—are you making any headway on that Southside burglary?”

“No. So far, the usual break-and-entry. No video. Not much to go on. Same M.O. as two weeks ago. Guess we’ll have to wait it out and see if they try to unload the stuff on our CI fence.”

“Well, at least nobody’s dead, right?” She nodded, then he said, “Feel like getting a drink around six? My wife has to work late and told me I was on my own for dinner.”

“No. Gonna go straight home and get some shut-eye.”

“Hey. Not that it’s any of my business, detective, but in all the time you’ve been working here, it seems like you never had a steady. You know, boyfriend. Fiancée. That sort of thing. Am I right?”

On her way out to the breakroom, Julie turned and winked: “The only things you’re right about are that nobody’s dead, and none of the rest is any of your business. See you later.”

## **Loudon County, Tennessee**

James Ewell Brown, a thirty-three-year-old, high school dropout, and a reclusive, xenophobic loner who worked a forklift on the twelve-hour night shift at the E-Zee Automobile Muffler Plant, was known to his few church acquaintances or co-workers by his nickname, JEB. Primarily working nights in the warehouse was a personal preference, obviating the need to engage front-office employees—or anyone else—on a social level.

As he moved merchandise, JEB could attenuate warehouse noise and pass the time by listening to country and bluegrass music on his iTunes headset. In his mind, most people, especially those he knew at work, were irreverent idiots who blabbered incessantly about trivial pursuits. They seemed to

make mountains out of molehills, especially when it came to issues of houses, yards, spouses, sex, and children. *Boring*, he thought—*petty and whiny*. Although each of these people did have a life, JEB secretly thought to himself that most of them would be better off finding a new one.

Both of his parents were deceased; he had no siblings and lived alone on a wooded four-acre parcel in a small log cabin that his mother left him when she died. As he wanted for little, his lifestyle was ascetic and feeling that cleanliness was next to godliness, he diligently maintained the exterior home and yard, while the interior was also neat and tidy.

Of average height, JEB was moderately obese, chubby-cheeked, and out of shape. Although he didn't exercise, he did avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs, thinking of them as the work of the Devil, yet retained a hypocritical habit of using chewing tobacco which stained his teeth to a light-yellow patina veneer. One day soon, he would have a dentist bleach or polish them and replace that missing canine, but for now, it hardly mattered. For whatever personal rationalization, he either didn't perceive this vice as being sinful or even worse, a health hazard.

He kept his auburn hair moderately long, occasionally not shaving his neck for a few days, but always trimmed his well-groomed, light beard. This look was an attempt to mime a favorite picture of Jesus Christ, his Lord and Savior—long locks with only a faint hint of facial hair.

James loved his nickname, except for the fact his surname was not Stuart, as James Ewell Brown "JEB" Stuart was his favorite Confederate general. Occasionally, he would fall asleep musing about how different the world might have been if Stuart's cavalry had arrived in time to save the day at Gettysburg. A Southern victory in the War of Northern Aggression might have set things straight for good. Or better yet, if Jefferson Davis had let Stuart and Stonewall Jackson go straight on to Washington at First Manassas, the Civil War would have lasted for only two days.

He thought, *Screw that fascist Lincoln. The hypocrite didn't even like black people. In one speech, he said they was inferior to whites and should all be sent back to Africa. Let him rot in hell for enslavin' Southern white folks while lettin' them blacks go free to run amok: gyратin' like dervishes...overbreedin' baby mamas... butcherin' the King's English with Ebonics and jive talk. Some country we become—white Southerners forced to sharecrop while black rappers get put up on pedestals. It just ain't right.*

Then again, although he hated General Phillip Sheridan for wreaking havoc on the South, he still admired the fact that when Sheridan was sent out west after the war, his repetitive assertion was: *"The only good Indians I ever saw were dead."*

James also had a love-hate relationship with General Ranald Mackenzie, hating that he fought for the North but loving that he later scalped, skinned, mutilated, and tortured the Western Plains Indians. He could never understand why Mackenzie ever bothered at all to take a Comanche prisoner. Better off dead than red, right?

However, this abstract but culturally ingrained racial bias never played a significant role in James's daily life. He rarely, if ever, saw any blacks or Amerindians, never had to give them much thought and had no idea what he would do if he ever had to interact with them. The prejudice instead, was generational and essentially handed down as folklore—along with the family Bible.

With rare exceptions, most Native Americans had been forcibly expelled from East Tennessee in the early 1800s; and lacking plantations, few indigenous blacks lived there in the first place. Then because it was not an area attracting black migration after the Civil War ended, local demographics dictated a predominantly insular white population, whose sympathies tended to favor the Southern cause.

During the war, the region was a border zone, and although the state itself had seceded, the Union took the eastern sector back soon after hostilities began. After that, it became a

territorial jurisdiction controlled under Federal martial law. Then, due to polarized civilian loyalties, with its attendant internecine violence, life was strictly and harshly regulated.

In efforts to suppress Southern sympathizers or stop bushwhackers who employed hit-and-run guerrilla tactics on Union troops, citizens were not allowed to travel without permits, while arbitrary search-and-seizure was the order of the day. The mere suspicion of aiding and abetting the Southern cause was reason enough to confiscate personal property. Worse were brutal rapes, arbitrary lynching, or sanctioned looting for so-called, often trumped up “crimes of treason.”

James had a close friend who told him a Union soldier raped his third great-grandmother, subsequently bearing a bastard child that she drowned in a river, rather than suffer the shame. This was an unpleasant story because James was a devoutly religious, pro-life advocate and could never believe that anyone would sacrifice a potential soldier of the Lord.

The same friend also told him his third great-uncle was hung for suspicion of smuggling sugar and flour behind the lines to Confederate soldiers. After the lynching, his small farmhouse was burned to the ground, his corn and grain stocks confiscated, and his livestock slaughtered to feed the invading troops.

These stories sometimes left a bitter taste in JEB’s mouth but were not on the agenda that kept him awake at night. Other priorities usually occupied the top tier of his worry list.

On Sundays, James always sat in the third row of the Trinity Baptist Church on the right-hand side which, in his mind, was the righteous location. Yes, one day, it would certainly be the right hand of God that would ultimately strike and smite this world in the next Armageddon.

He liked the number three because it reminded him of the hours his crucified Savior had spent on the cross before he died. Jesus also lived in a family of three, it was three days before he rose from the dead to salvage what was left of a sin-

stained world, and three women found the angel at the tomb after his resurrection.

Then again, there were the three manifestations of God: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. However, if someone referred to the Holy Spirit as a “ghost,” James flushed with anger. How could anyone believe that the very seed of God, sent to conceive Jesus in the womb of the Virgin Mary, could be likened to a fanciful Hollywood rendition of an inseminating carnal specter? Yes, it was a spirit all right, but more like the very breath of God itself, rather than a filthy ethereal emission from his groin that had given life to his Lord and Savior.

Every week, James silently prayed that the preacher would direct the congregation to sing his favorite hymn, *The Old Rugged Cross*, or second-favorite, *There is a Fountain Filled with Blood*. After all, Jesus bled for all of us, had he not?

At church services, the only distraction he vaguely permitted himself was to occasionally stare at a beautiful brunette, Mrs. Janis Johnston, who appeared to be in her early forties. Predictably, she always wore enticing makeup, high heeled shoes, and flashy fashionable hats that matched her Sunday finest clothes; although James sometimes felt a bit too provocative for customary church wear. However, her risqué haberdashery was offset by a gold pendant necklace, suspended by an antique family heirloom crucifix.

Mrs. Johnston always sat in the first left side row with her three young towheaded boys. Her oldest appeared to be about fourteen, and the youngest perhaps three or four. James’ gaze was never one of lust, but rather an admiration of what he perceived to be a perfect family unit and a model of Christian virtue. Occasionally he did think it odd that Mr. Johnston rarely attended Sunday services, but rumor had it he worked two jobs, seven days a week, to support his family—a factor perhaps explaining his absence.

When the service ended, JEB rolled up the Sunday bulletin and service guide, placed it in his inside suit jacket pocket,

thanked Pastor John C. Richards at the door, give a quick nod to Mrs. Johnston, got into his car, then drove home.

James admired the handsome, charismatic, chisel-faced Pastor Richards for the strength and personal courage he had shown after the recent death of his wife, who lost a five-year battle with breast cancer. The pastor had coped well enough, and while standing in the pulpit after the fact, only once shed a few tears when eulogizing his spouse. As a rule, he did his best to be a stoic example to the congregation that life goes on despite the personal crosses everyone had to bear; and although he bore a faint resemblance to Billy Graham, Richards' sermons tended to be calmer, with less firebrand demagoguery.

On occasional Monday mornings when his pastor called, James volunteered to help clean up the church or perform any other perfunctory janitorial duties which might be required. Because he was versatile as a handyman: facile with plumbing, electrical work, painting, and light carpentry, these attributes saved the church significant money.

At his regular job, he punctually started every evening on time, ate a brown-bagged sandwich during his break, then diligently performed the task of moving inventory with a forklift. Eight hours later, he politely asked his supervisor if any other work was needed, and if not, he went home. On most shifts, having to work overtime was rare.

He shunned Wednesday evening Bible study, but when he did attend, kept his thoughts to himself. Reaffirming the words of God with a simple "Amen," this sufficed for him as being enough in the way of personal interaction. As such, James silently nodded his head, frequently murmuring the word when appropriately prompted. The congregation thought of him as a shy loner, yet still a reverent servant of God—an image he both cultivated and preferred.

Ordinary clothing suited his needs, except for one worn out Sunday suit that showed thread marks in the knees and elbows. Otherwise, depending on circumstances, he wore a plaid



checkered shirt, a light blue work shirt, or a sweat-stained t-shirt tucked under suspended blue denim trousers. When he did wear a cap, it was never turned backward like the profane, irreverent punk white kids or young blacks always seemed to do, and when he worked around his property, he wore gray denim coveralls that reminded him of his sharecropper grandfather.

Also being fastidiously clean in matters of personal hygiene, he often scrubbed his skin for half an hour or more as he hummed or sang in the shower.

*“There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from  
Emmanuel’s veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty  
stains.  
Lose all their guilty stains, lose all their guilty stains,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty  
stains.”*

Curiously, and now at the age of thirty-three, James had never dated—but for good reasons. It wasn’t so much that he didn’t want to date, but more likely due instead to a childhood tainted by the constant maternal brainwashing that no one would ever be good enough for him. Most of his thoughts about the opposite sex had been ingrained by an overbearing, widowed, harridan mother, who by perpetually castigating women, left her harping perseverating words to reverberate subliminally in his psyche.

“Always remember this, JEB. By their very nature, women are born into sin and can never erase or obliterate Eve’s original stains that make them whores and vassals. I don’t even know why I ever let your father touch me with his filthy farmer’s hands, or enter my body with his foul, degenerate ideas of decadent pleasure. It made me sick.

“Remember, too, that you will never find a woman worthy or worthwhile enough to steal away your decent, virginal

purity. These local trollops give it up in back seats, easy as pie, like two-dollar street hookers. Then they turn around to prey on decent, righteous men like you, trap them into marriage, and like some sly old fox findin' a bird's nest on the ground, they take those men for all they're worth. They dupe and deceive their naive husbands; drink whiskey, cheat, run around behind their backs, then sit around all day bitchin', moanin', and gossipin'.

"It was no better in the beginning when Eve cavorted with that connivin' honey-tongued snake, Satan; ate the apple, then dragged poor Adam down with her into a fiery pit of eternal sin. No—no different than it is now and will never be. Makes me sick to death—yes, sick to death—that I was born a woman."

What his mother did not tell him, however, was that her uncle raped her when she was twelve years old. He picked her up one day to take her out for what he promised to be "a pleasant joy ride and some ice cream," then lured her into the woods, where he forced himself on her.

This ritual—her getting ice cream, then him taking pleasant joy—repeated for seven months, until one day, for no apparent reason, he stopped. Being a mean-spirited soul to begin with, he bought her silence by threatening to kill her if she ever told anyone.

Frightened to death, she never did tell, knowing that no one in an otherwise tight-knit Christian family would have believed her anyway; so, she patiently waited—biding her time—until after he died. Then she regularly visited the Church cemetery where his bones were interred, hiked up her skirt, squatted down to urinate on the ground over his coffin, then spat on his headstone.

As such, JEB thought of most women as dirty, sinful, hypocritical sluts or whores. He even suspected some of the younger single ones' entire reason for being at church was to flirt furtively. Then although the young, naïve, giddy brides seemed innocent enough, only a select group of devoted

mothers like Mrs. Johnston, or some of the older saintly matrons, had that special gleaming light of God shining in their mesmerized eyes. If nothing else, at least these women were already spoken for and safely bonded to the good, decent, righteous Christian men of his congregation.

The blue-collar women at work reinforced his negative feelings as he perceived them to be shallow, superficial, and loose when it came to moral values. They dressed in tacky, suggestive skintight clothes, or worse, desecrated their bodies with lurid tattoos which could only be the work of the Devil. Most of them smoked, drank alcohol, took drugs, or incessantly clacked chewing gum, while never ceasing to demonstrate their stupidity every time they spoke.

Always seeming to fall for men who were useless misogynists, they were a cadre of young women who flitted around wagging their butts and chattering like magpies, as they traded vapid gossip or tedious personal issues. Ironically, they were never embarrassed or made any bones yakking about it, sometimes as if to brag about who could tell the worst story.

“Yeah, he drinks too much. He got three other kids, ’sides our two. Sometimes he cats around and don’t even come home at night. But he ain’t never hit me—not one time. Always brings home his paycheck and my smokes—but no STDs. And leastwise on top a’ that, he ain’t never done meth.”

“Then you got it some better than me, gal. Mine got fallin’ down shit-faced drunk last week, and when I called him a meth-freak wino, he flat-out nearly broke my nose. But far as I know, he ain’t never cheated on me. Anyway...only far as I know, and I ain’t lookin’ to find out neither. I only put up with it ’cause I can’t afford to be no single momma.”

These were men who used women for pleasure and vice versa. These were men and women who had children out of wedlock, men who haunted barrooms, and men who never owned up to the responsibilities of ordinary Christian family life. They were not at all like the righteous elders and deacons at his church, who were the dying breed of a past generation.

## *The Celibates*

Reality television shows or movies also confirmed JEB's feelings, as he occasionally monitored them when he scanned channels. Society, it seems, had been given unlimited license to have casual sex without love, as it also glorified drug or alcohol abuse, then lionized criminals and personal victimization as a gateway to financial prosperity. Or if not that, abetted too many wannabes with a few fleeting moments of YouTube celebrity.

He thought, *Honey Boo-Boo, my ass. Only a fat, ignorant, disgusting mother raising a fat, undisciplined, trash-mouthed brat in a home where men act like mice and get treated no better than the family dog.*

Then there was also the fact that women bled, but not by the whip and the crown of thorns the way Jesus had. Their bleeding instead was secretive, dirty, unholy, and impure.

He discovered this at the age of ten when he found one of his mother's Kotex pads wrapped in tissue paper in the bathroom trash can. When he brought it to her, innocently asking if she had hurt herself, she slapped his face, grabbed the bundle from his hands, then escaped to the bathroom, emphatically slamming the door.

Later she sniped, offering no tangible explanation, "You're far too young to know about these things. It's a secret. The price a woman must pay, and the cross *all* of us must bear for that dreadful sin committed by Eve. So, from now on, just mind your own damn business."

At the age of thirteen, JEB discovered the pleasure of masturbation. It then became a habit that might have brought repeated gratification except for the day he thought his mother wasn't home and she caught him in the act after he forgot to close the bathroom door. Pants still dropped, she grabbed him with a hard fist latched to his left arm. Then, in a fingernail digging pinch twist, dragged him ankle snarled shuffling to his bedroom, where she tied his hands behind his back and beat his bared butt cheeks with a hickory switch until she drew blood.

Irate, and wild-eyed, she screeched, “What in blazes got into you, boy? You’re a filthy little demon. A son of Satan. You sodomize yourself, then pollute your spirit, your mind, and your putrid soul. Now tell me—what do you think we should do about this little problem?”

JEB whimpered, “I don’t know, mama—I’m sorry. Please don’t hit me no more—I couldn’t help it.”

Then to drive the point home, she periodically and unpredictably repeated the same ritual, justifying the practice by telling him, “This whippin’ is only because you might be thinkin’ about doin’ it now—in case you might be thinkin’ about doin’ it later—because you probably *will* do it later—and so down the line, you won’t *never* think about doin’ it no more at all.”

However, he did often think about it, frequently did it, and eventually found comfort in an interpretive method of dealing with it—pleasure combined with pain. He discovered, in a curious paradox, that the beatings began to stimulate exciting erections as he laid in bed at night.

This led to a compulsion for watching sadomasochistic bondage videos on the Internet. He soon became fixated on those involving women who, among other things, tied nude or semi-nude men to bedposts, made them walk on their knees leashed with dog collars, or dangled them by the wrists from ceiling hooks as they verbally and physically humiliated their victims. Tortures might include tassel whippings, blindfolds, spankings, forced cross-dressing, rope binding, mouth gags, skin clamping or being urinated on, yet never engaging in sexual intercourse. No—that would spoil everything.

He also paid for a monthly subscription to *Dominatrix* magazine, looking forward to poring over the latest still-frames of men or women in a plethora of rope tied bondage positions, as he somehow linked the visual suffering to that incurred by his Lord in the hours before his crucifixion.

Years later as an adult, he became obsessed with doubts that any of the women at work, those displayed in magazines

and seen on television, or even random pedestrian strangers were still virgins. Cultural norms led him to conclude that contemporary women never saved themselves for marriage.

Or worse—how then would he ever find an unadulterated woman who might be chaste enough to accept his unspoiled seed? A perfect woman like Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus. Yes—JEB was caught between a psycho-neurotic Scylla and Charybdis: the need to find a non-desecrated love that might never actually exist, and a masochistic fantasy world populated by personifications of his sadistically cruel mother.

Yet despite his mother's physical and verbal abuse, James knew he was not a sinner. He had nothing to feel guilty about, even if his Pastor might construe his erotic addiction as being sinful and dirty. As he washed his skin, he thought his outer body would perfectly match the pristine soul inside that he would proudly present to his Lord and Savior on his final judgment day.

On certain Fridays, the weekday Jesus died on the cross, and after a sandpapering shower scrub, James ritualistically reaffirmed his faith in God. While lying in bed watching visually stimulating bondage pornography, he masturbated, squirted onto his pelvis, punctured a fingertip with a sewing needle, then squeezed out a few drops of blood, which dripped into his seminal puddle.

While massaging the mixture into his skin like body lotion, he closed his eyes and prayed: "This is for you, Lord. I bleed for you. I give up my seed. I purge my body and cleanse my soul. This is my body, and this is my blood. Accept my offering. Accept me into your loving arms, for the sins I have already committed, and for those sins I may yet come to regret."

He thought of this activity as the means to conserve his seed, maintaining its purity, unsullied by women, and free of vulgar sin—his own Holy Spirit sustained by a sacred ritual that reaffirmed his unspoken vow of celibacy.

Despite Christian proscriptions against masturbation as being sinful, or that sexual drives should be oriented toward reproductive communion with a spouse, James justified his habit by another religious prohibition espoused by Saint Clement: *"...that because of its divine institution for the propagation of man, his seed is not to be vainly ejaculated, nor damaged, nor wasted. To have coitus other than to procreate children is to do injury to nature."*

No, his seed would never go to waste, nor would he ever spill it on the ground, as Onan had done in Genesis 38:9 to avoid impregnating his widowed sister-in-law. James could quote the verse verbatim: *"But Onan knew that the child would not be his; so whenever he slept with his brother's wife, he spilled his semen on the ground to keep from providing offspring for his brother."*

Having no desire ever to consummate sexual intercourse, he prayed he might only live long enough to witness the Second Coming—that glorious day when Jesus would finally judge, purge, and cleanse this degenerate planet of its two-thousand-year compilation of sins, that since his death had piled up like some filthy vermin-infested garbage dump. Yes, it was only a matter of time before the hammer of God would return with a vengeance.

### **West Knoxville, Tennessee**

Despite being thrilled about her new job, Doctor Lynn Tara Greer sat in her office still entertaining mixed emotions of anticipatory anxiety. The thirty-seven-year-old obstetrician-gynecologist had been recently appointed Clinical Director of a first-of-its-kind, uniquely comprehensive family-planning, elective abortion, and infertility clinic affiliated with the Knoxville University Medical Center.

Lynn was also excited that in addition to securing the job, the modern four-story medical facility was recently constructed and customized to cater solely to its intended use. Taking the smells of fresh paint and new carpets as a harbinger

of good luck, she got busy emptying moving bins, hung her diplomas and a few pieces of tasteful artwork on the walls, set up a desk computer, and began filing textbooks, charts, and medical documents.

At five feet, eight inches tall and weighing one hundred twenty-seven pounds, Lynn was a beautiful, slim and physically attractive, muscle-toned, blue-eyed blonde who instead of choosing a rigorous medical career, might have more easily opted for a less stressful vocation, such as modeling.

Even if it meant waking every day at five a.m., she faithfully adhered to a rigorous aerobic and weight-training regimen, with a good night's sleep guaranteed by obviating any requirement to be at the unpredictable disposal of the Labor and Delivery Suite.

Several months before, she settled into a contemporary three-bedroom brick home situated on a one-acre parcel in the town of Clinton, with a two-car garage and a partial river view from the backyard. The location afforded two perks: personal privacy and a convenient twenty-minute drive to her new job site.

In addition to family-planning services, the University also planned to establish a sperm bank but wanted to leave potential controversies at arm's length from the main campus. The institution recognized both a local need for these contemporary services, as well as a necessity to maintain a façade of dignified decorum in an over recidivist, conservative environment. As such, it was decided that the new, free-standing facility would be located five miles away from the University itself.

Besides an extremely vocal, pro-life, anti-abortion faction, there were militant groups of individuals who believed that non-natural conception such as in-vitro fertilization or morning-after pills were anathema to their conservative Christian religious beliefs. However, the university's Board of Governors decided by a majority vote to "abandon archaic



prohibitions, to heed modern medical trends, to provide necessary public services and allow people to decide such issues for themselves.” In fact, this would be the only such facility in the state of Tennessee.

Having done mainly obstetrics at her former group practice in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Lynn became disenchanted with the work. Because babies had a knack for choosing arbitrary times to present themselves to the world, Lynn’s hours were extremely erratic. This stress was compounded with endless, onerous critiques by non-physician middle managers, complex government rules or regulations, and mandatory conforming paperwork. Because the result was less reimbursement for more time spent doing data entry than spending time with patients, the problem became how to balance pressures to “churn business” with the tedious proscriptions of satisfying an indifferent, remote bureaucracy.

The responsibility for complicated or even safe deliveries also made the malpractice risk for even minor obstetrical complications create widespread paranoia in the entire field. Being the default mode to allow potential litigation for what lawyers referred to as “defective babies”—up to a seventeen-year statute of limitations after the fact—this fear bumped up ever-increasing cesarean section rates. For Lynn, at one time seeing the joy on a new mother’s face had been fun and personally rewarding—but now it wasn’t.

Like many of her colleagues trapped in nearly every other medical discipline, the system she too was mired in had become a stacked deck that only fostered physician burn-out and depression. Given the higher than average occupational suicide rate, it was a graveyard littered with pitiful examples of prior quixotic altruism that had slowly devolved to bitter disappointment.

Although it was still the case that some of the more distasteful issues related to obstetrics might always present problems, at least family-planning services and a guaranteed faculty salary would afford regular work hours, along with

considerably less stress. More than once, having to work or be on call for eighty to a hundred and twenty hours a week had significant negative impacts on personal relationships, with both friends and lovers.

Desiring to specialize in a less stressful discipline, Lynn took additional training in artificial insemination and in-vitro fertilization but shied away from pregnancy terminations for personal reasons. At her new job, however, she would still be required to cope with the enigmatic irony that some women who wanted to conceive could not, while others didn't want to be pregnant after the fact. Also, because her former partners wished to divest themselves of a complex business parameter, she was asked to transfer the sperm bank from her old practice to the new location. As a result, the partners sold the bank along with her as a package deal.

Trained objectively to help people; she didn't view abortions as being a personal conflict. Although terminating life came with the territory, she did not enjoy doing it and planned to delegate the responsibility for pregnancy terminations to other staffers, while she would concentrate on counseling, contraception, and infertility. She always felt more compassion for those women who could not conceive than for those who could, but then decided not to have the child.

Something in her inner psyche eschewed terminating an innocent life, yet during her career, she had progressively developed less sympathy and more disdain for unwanted, but easily preventable pregnancies. This attitude was like that felt by a pulmonary specialist whose patient continued to smoke, despite having had a lobectomy and chemotherapy for lung cancer. Or even worse, the patient who smoked through a tracheostomy after having a laryngectomy for throat cancer.

Lynn also came to intuitively understand that most women generally preferred female OB-GYN physicians because of the empathy and comfort a woman received from same-sex caregivers. Not at all naïve, she still harbored realistic trepidations about the immutable, underlying pro-life currents

in the South; and although not even remotely allied philosophies, it was not uncommon to see vanity plates on car fronts, either displaying the Confederate Army's Stars and Bars or the words '*Choose Life*.'

Anti-abortion sentiment in the Protestant South seemed more visually graphic than in the higher-density Catholic populations of the northern states, whose followers often held the same beliefs. Perhaps this was why the University opted for an off-site geographic affiliation with their new program, rather than to have it operate on campus.

Lynn was also well versed in Right to Life pickets which, although generally peaceful, were somewhat macabre in their use of visual graphics. Photos of bloody, mangled, late-term fetuses were not copacetic to a person who had never advised any prospective patient to let an unwanted pregnancy go beyond its earliest stages. Never having performed late-term or partial-birth abortions, and not believing in them, she still held lifelong beliefs supporting a woman's right to choose for herself whether she wanted to have a child. However, she was adamant that a woman should know early within the first trimester about her preferred choice. She also felt that any woman made pregnant by violent rape or involuntary passive sex, such as drug-related date rapes, should not be forced to deliver a child conceived this way.

The focus of Lynn's public relations campaigns would be to champion the causes of sex education for young women and to encourage birth-control as a primary preventive health goal. Understanding sexually transmitted diseases would be another critical component of the new clinic's outreach program.

Being an astute realist, she was also aware that several abortion clinic physicians had been physically assaulted or even shot and killed but suppressed the thought by rationalizing the small odds such an attack would ever actually happen. Nevertheless, having trained for a black belt in the martial arts; as an additional life insurance policy, she also

carried a small, double-shot .22-caliber derringer in her pocketbook.

Coming from an average middle-class background, Lynn had been raised as an only child in a small Arizona town. While her parents could not afford to subsidize higher education, they were an emotionally supportive religious couple who held and taught high moral standards and ethics. Tragically, however, they both died in a fatal car accident when the brakes failed; and although Lynn was devastated, their life insurance policy covered her college and medical school student loans.

Discovering at a young age that she preferred the company of women, Lynn suppressed those emotions, culminating in a brief, contentious marriage to Santiago Maria Alvarez, a physician she met during residency training.

While dating, Santiago seduced Lynn by masterfully hiding his dark side, as beneath a suave seductive surface lurked an abusive macho South American. Then although he did know better than to risk his life by physically battering his wife, caustic, demeaning verbal assault instead, soon became his forte by default.

Santiago, also an ardent leftist, idolized his fellow traveler, Dr. Che Guevara, touting the fact that both he and Che were born in Argentina, where Santiago maintained clandestine ties to the Communist Party. Wearing his hair long, with a course, patchy beard like that of his idol, he passionately proselytized for socialized medicine and a U.S. single-payer system, while Lynn instead advocated for privatized medicine. These disparate philosophies led to numerous heated discussions over the pros and cons of both.

Before they married, Lynn also told Santiago she didn't want to complicate her career by having children, which became an unacceptable issue insulting his masculinity. Being in denial, he convinced himself that after they wed, he could change her mind, but as Lynn never acquiesced, the conflict only added to lingering and smoldering mutual resentments.

However, because Santiago was born in Argentina, one benefit she did glean from the ill-fated affair was to become a dual U.S.-Argentinian citizen.

In the interim then, Lynn had the opportunity to spend two years at a women's clinic in Buenos Aires, where Santiago's uncle, a man who held close ties to conservative right-wing Peronists, was the Minister of Health. While Diego Mariana Alvarez and Lynn developed a very harmonious relationship, uncle Diego deplored his estranged nephew's political leanings.

The experience gave Lynn great respect for the poverty imposed by lack of birth-control education, or access to conventional methods of contraception and abortion clinics—all strictly reinforced by religious devotion to the Catholic Church. She eventually came to believe this was an indifferent religious cult, which for centuries ignored the fact that by actively promoting unmitigated procreation, it only made the peasants' lives increasingly burdened by the arrival of yet another hungry mouth to feed. At the same time, however, the Church did not at all mind having its coffers filled with these same peasants' meager offerings at Sunday Mass.

After divorcing Santiago, Lynn finally came to terms with her homosexuality and had a live-in relationship with an accountant. However, her lover left after a year, principally because the irregular hours and onerous commitments imposed by Lynn's career became chaotically disruptive. Too many dinners, social affairs, or the ordinary activities of daily life had been ruined or interrupted by an urgent call to deliver a baby. Following that, she had a few brief affairs but then chose to focus on her avocation as a primary passion—a tradeoff creating a deliberate and rather dismal social life. Perhaps one day another lover might come along, but for now, and because she had a lot of work to do, it didn't matter.

### **Madisonville, Tennessee**

As his mama often said, fifty-year-old, black haired, blue eyed and devilishly handsome Robert Lee Barber, known to his friends as Bobby Lee, was “fit to be tied.”

While watching the evening news in his cluttered, unkempt mobile home, he heard a brief story about the University of Knoxville intending to open a Family Planning Clinic. It was further stated that more details would follow in a few days. Having been raised as a staunch evangelical, pro-life, born-again Christian, he angrily threw a near-empty beer bottle against his favorite target, the much-battered living room wall. The projectile then plopped down, dripping its dregs into a clumped pile of dirty clothes.

Bobby Lee’s uncontrolled anger was not unusual behavior; as having been twice divorced because of his violent temper and domestic violence, he also lost custody of his two daughters. Then, after his second separation, he moved several hundred miles away from his last residence and rarely, if ever, saw his girls, who tended to prefer it that way.

At six feet tall and weighing two hundred twenty pounds, Bobby was also muscularly buffed from weightlifting, and not a person for anyone to trifle with, much less a cowering housewife. The paradox of his thinking was that although he considered it justifiable to rough up a wife now and then “if’n when she deserved it,” it was not at all acceptable to abort an unborn fetus, an act he considered to be the work of the Devil.

Rather than having a sincere belief in the philosophy itself, however, this bias was more likely due to the fact, that in 1971, when he was five, his mother died of sepsis caused by a botched, infected coat-hanger abortion. Unfortunately for her, at that time Tennessee laws prohibited legitimate termination of pregnancy, and it would be two more years before *Roe vs. Wade*, via the Supreme Court, legalized a woman’s right to choose for herself, at the national level

Bobby Lee not only missed his kind, gentle, loving mother but in also lamenting the fact that he didn’t have a baby brother

or sister to keep him company, he frequently told people he was “only half an orphan.”

Occasionally, his father, a career military colonel who became depressed after his wife died, began drinking, went on benders, then came home and beat little Bobby for no other reason than the fact he was drunk.

Then at age nineteen, Bobby blossomed, almost reaching his adult height and weight, and when confronted one night by the mean bastard, he nearly beat the man to death with a baseball bat. After that, he left home, shiftlessly drifted around the state doing odd jobs, eventually got a Commercial Driver’s License and became an independent truck driver.

Because of his childhood home life, he felt it anathema to hit a child, and so never physically disciplined either of his daughters. Carping verbal abuse, demeaning insults, and strict punishments, however, were not only acceptable but deemed necessary, so that neither of the girls would grow up to be “no-good tramps.”

This tactic was a trait he learned from his father, who raised Bobby Lee as though he was a perpetual boot-camp trainee, before the transition to becoming a mute, derelict, and physically abusive alcoholic.

Begging to differ, Bobby’s battered wives rightfully thought of him as a verbal parental sadist, and eventually packed up and left. It was also a curious contradiction that he was a deacon at his local church, where the congregation considered him to be a fine, righteous, hard-working, upright man. As such, he presented the public persona of a dignified gentleman, who possessed religious zeal combined with perfectly courteous manners. He dressed for church in a suit jacket and tie, shaved smooth his beardless face, bonded well with the male members of the congregation, and volunteered for various fund-raising charity events.

Because of its anti-abortion, choose-life philosophy, Bobby Lee joined this specific evangelical church after his last divorce, where his passionate love for the Lord was without equal. Once

a member, he spun a tale of victimized woe, telling congregation members that his wives left him only because of irreconcilable differences. Stating that neither of his wives was happy with the money he was making; he played the martyr with a woeful tale that he was unable to satisfy their seemingly endless materialistic needs.

In a self-righteous, indignant tone he pontificated, "All they ever cared about was wants and needs, but nothin' about the shinin' light of God's eternal love: a love no amount of money in this secular world could ever buy. When they pined about not havin' this thing or that, I would quote them scripture from Matthew: *'Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be.'*"

However, he did not tell them what one of his wives said about common wants and needs while he was pissing money away on horse racing bets, bar bills, and lottery tickets. When Betty Anne had her fill, she angrily let him know her secular interpretation of scripture with an angry imprecation, "Shit on that crap, Bobby. Matthew ain't payin' our rent or buyin' all the stuff your baby girl needs to go to school."

Although his good looks, masculinity, seductive smile and superficial sincerity had served him well as being a magnet for women, both of his wives regretted the day they had met him.

Thinking of him instead as a naturally charismatic leader, his pastor appointed him to a county-wide council promoting pro-life radio spots, along with other printed material that went out in mass blast mailings or Internet ads. What his pastor did not know, however, was that Bobby Lee liked to haunt his favorite pool parlor on Saturday nights, where he regularly drank himself silly. Unperturbed by this lifestyle disparity, Bobby tumbled out of bed on Sunday mornings, stumbled to the bathroom, took some Advil, quickly guzzled a



cup of instant coffee, showered and shaved, then hummed Little Jimmy Dickens' *Good Old Country Boy*, as he drove his red pickup truck down the short winding road to the small white church house where he worshipped Jesus.

Yes—Saturday night was reserved for spending time with his best friend, Jack Daniel, Sunday morning was set aside for God, and Monday was back to work as a long-haul truck driver.

Inspired by a line from the famous country song, he named his silver Peterbilt truck cab "The Old Gray Mule," and had it personalized. The custom-painted sides were embellished with red, white, and blue psychedelic flame icons dotted with silver stars, while the front license plate displayed the Confederate Army's Stars and Bars.

When anyone pointed out the discrepancy between simultaneously representing the U.S.A. and the C.S.A., he laughed and said, "Hey, brother, I ain't nothin' but just another damned old South American. Olé. Olé."

However, if his pastor had known about Bobby's lifestyle, he would have been more likely to quote 2 Samuel 18:9: "*Now Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. For Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. And his head caught fast in the oak, so he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him kept going.*"

As an independent long-haul truck driver, this occupation also allowed a forgiving legitimate excuse to miss occasional Sunday services, and while still lacking regular female companionship, Bobby had no qualms about a hypocritical use of truck stop whores. He also had one steady girlfriend, forty-two-year-old Thelma Jean Barnes, a kinky, sassy, good looking former stripper who was currently living in Dallas. She too was divorced, wanted "no part" of getting married again, but didn't mind the occasional company of this burly, rough-cut, redneck "good ol' boy" whose sexual stamina seemed incredible and often insatiable.

## *The Celibates*

Living up to the tattoo on her right buttock that read: *Punish Me*, she liked to be pushed face down into the mattress first, then fucked hard from behind, sometimes with her hands tied behind her back, and having her ass slapped crimson while Bobby pulled her hair to yank her head. This light-sided sadism suited Bobby Lee to a tee, thinking to himself, *Great deal. Finally found me a woman I can rope up, slap silly like some coy unbroken horse, then fuck at the same time. It's like bein' in hog heaven or watchin' a good old-fashioned rodeo.*

Thelma, on the other hand, titillated her small group of horny divorced girlfriends about their exploits, telling them he was the only man who had ever been able to give her a vaginal orgasm. Then she cautioned them never to think she would ever share him or let them steal him away. Thelma would walk away, giggling to herself, as they begged for his name and phone number. Then turning halfway around, she'd wag her finger with an explicit warning, "Sorry gals...and bless your poor little hearts. But that big ol' stallion ain't neither for rent, sale, or stud service."

To relieve the monotony of long-haul driving, Bobby incessantly played Commander Cody CDs, or other trucking songs, and could often be heard singing along as Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen belted out one of his favorite Jerry Chesnut tunes.

*Now, I'm looking at the world through a windshield,  
Watching it fly by me on the right.*

*Well, there's a cute little honey I'm dying to see down in  
Nashville,*

*But I'm down around Dallas, and I'm rollin' down south  
tonight.*

Bobby Lee Barber was indeed a living paradox: a true son of the South, a good ol' boy, and a hypocrite leading a double life. Now, however, he was furious man who, as his momma

also used to say, "...got them hackles on his back raised straight up like some randy old bull, droolin' spittle and snot at the whiff of some horny young heifer in heat."

As he sat watching the news bulletin unfold, he decided he would have a long chat with his pastor and the pro-life council members. This problem could not be left to stand as it was, and something must be done about it. Yes. Something *must* be done about this death factory and the bitch doctor who was running it.

## Chapter Two

### Northeast Knoxville

Tiffany 'Crystal' Peters, a streetwalker, plied her trade in the well-known seedy sex district defined by the intersection of Central Street and Magnolia Avenue in northeast Knoxville. Poorly lit at night, with few active businesses and little ordinary pedestrian traffic, this back side of the city provided a perfect venue for prostitutes and a few homeless street bums. The hookers hung out in alcoves smoking cigarettes or slouched up against dingy walls in pairs or threes, resembling small clusters of vultures waiting for the whiff of a corpse. Then like any piqued feathered raptor, they might abruptly squawk and shoo the riffraff bums out of their territory.

This illegal activity was well-known to the police, who occasionally clamped down on the women, yet permanently enforcing the law and stopping prostitution altogether was a losing battle. Like migrating birds, the girls always returned and always found devious or clever ways to skirt arrests.

Now at the age of twenty-five, but street seasoned and jaded by the lifestyle, Tiffany had done her first trick, selling herself to a truck driver at a Pilot diesel rest area on Interstate 75 when she was a naïve, gangly, stringy-haired fourteen-year-old. However, her previously cherubic smile soon became indifferently hardened as now her lips were usually pursed tightly in a thin straight line or turned down at the edges where faint creases were beginning to show. Lost innocence was also reflected by a nose stud, pierced nipples, pink dyed hair, and a few crudely inked tattoos. Drugs, alcohol, and lack of exercise were slowly taking a subtle toll on her body as well as tainting her prior good looks with weight gain and premature aging.

The diesel rest area, a bustling mall-sized truck stop, was also a known haven for prostitutes who easily blended in with

truckers or family travelers gassing up, and buying convenience store snacks, before going on down the road to unknown personal destinations. Weary truckers knew it as a refuge where they could refuel at reasonably low prices, take a nap, hole up for a few hours of needed sleep, or stop in for a cheap thrill, facetiously referring to the denizen prostitutes as "Lot Lizards."

Eleven years prior, Tiffany and a few other girlfriends gravitated there to escape the boredom of living in poverty-stricken shanties and overcrowded mobile homes or having to endure nagging parents harp about schoolwork and chores. For a few of them, the principal motive was to avoid random beatings or unwanted sexual advances by drunk stepfathers, or any other shiftless males who drifted in and out of the household.

Most of the girls lived with parents, single parents or stepparents who either held blue-collar jobs, were on welfare, or defrauded the welfare system for monthly checks. At least if you only had a stepmother, the odds favored that you would only get slapped instead of groped.

Tiffany's mother was inordinately obsequious, and both women suffered verbal as well as physical abuse by Tiffany's stepfather. Her cowering mother, being devoutly religious, tried to offer the hope that God would make things better, a mantra Tiffany thought of as being pure bullshit. She believed that if God had made both heaven and hell, then her home life came as close to a living hell on earth as she could ever get.

For the most part, these young women seemed to be the innocent victims of a decades-long culture undermined by recycling white Southern poverty and characterized by limited education, failure to even graduate high school, low-paying jobs, frequent layoffs, and no pot of gold at the end of the proverbial rainbow. It also seemed as though none of their mothers ever heard about, cared about, or could even afford the cost of birth-control methods, as they repeatedly had

children that were yet again more unaffordable than any potential fix itself.

Getting a ride to the rest stop was never an issue, as some of Tiffany's older friends already had driving permits. Then one day when they sat around whiling away the time, an eighteen-year-old companion told Tiffany about the easy money truckers laid out for oral sex, and that for only a few minutes of minimal physical effort, they could all buy burgers, beer, and cigarettes with the profits. She also told Tiffany that some long-haul drivers might even pay with a joint, a snort of cocaine, or amphetamine, which was their trade secret to staying awake on the road. For these men, being awake meant making mileage—and making mileage while making time, translated into making money. Deliver the goods and deliver them on time, especially if you happened to be a self-employed independent contractor.

After her friend proffered a few tips on technique, Tiffany started turning tricks, soon going further to the next stage of having intercourse, which paid a higher premium. In short order, she got hooked on the easy money, the alcohol, and the pills which then became a positive-reinforcement loop—get paid for indifferent casual sex, followed by getting high on alcohol and drugs, then avoid going home. Instead, she loitered outside the facility, gossiping with her friends, or listening to their favorite music on iPods. Country music took center stage, while white or black rap was anathema, rejected by the girls as “lousy punk rock and ghetto shit.”

One of her girlfriends also had room at her apartment where Tiffany would occasionally stay overnight. This sporadic absentee habit led to verbal tongue lashings from her mother, but little else. It didn't matter anyway, because Tiffany couldn't have cared less, and whenever she had enough of the nagging, she stomped out, with no words of farewell; slamming the door shut behind her.

When she was eighteen, she ran away from home and lived in a rundown tenement with a group of transients who scraped

together enough money for rent and utilities by prostitution or small-time drug dealing.

The apartment was close enough to walk to Magnolia Avenue, where johns picked up the streetwalkers by trolling through in their cars. The girls were a loosely knit family whose regulars knew each other by nicknames, such as Angel, Peaches, Jewel, Tats, Cobra, Oxy-Roxy, Stoner, Juicy Lucy, Jade, Squirt, Sassy Ass, or Bee-Jay. Some of the monikers were random idioms, some implied their sexual specialties, and others their recreational drugs of choice. Tiffany went by Crystal because she preferred amphetamines; Squirt had wet-pee orgasms; Oxy-Roxy was a heroin addict; Cobra was obsessed with snakes; Tats catered to men who liked multi-tattooed women; while Bee-Jay's specialty, being overtly explicit, was something she never tired of bragging about: "I am the best... and *you* gals ain't nothin' but the rest."

At age nineteen, Tiffany got knocked-up by Gerald Miller, one of the drug dealers living in the building, forcing her to return home to live with her mother. Not at all pleased with her daughter's plight, Tiffany's mother refused to allow an abortion or to let her give the baby up to foster care. She told her daughter she would care for the child herself, seeing the baby as a second chance to do it right and given to her as a special gift from God. Court-appointed foster care as assigned to sober family members was not a new paradigm in the impoverished, drug-infested South where adoption often defaulted to aging grandparents, some of whom, despite personal illness or disabilities, would prefer taking care of their own 'kinfolk' than allow their progeny fall into the hands of unknown strangers.

Predictably, the baby's father showed little interest, but occasionally harassed Tiffany for money, telling her she should "get the fuck back to work" and that he knew a few perverts who would pay extra only to suck her breast milk. This badgering abruptly ended when Miller was handed a life

sentence for armed robbery and the shooting death of a counter clerk at a twenty-four-hour convenience store.

Having few, if any, maternal instincts, Tiffany briefly took a minimum-wage job to help pay expenses at home but was fired for showing up at work sloppily inebriated. After the confrontation, she was arrested for assaulting her boss, and mandated by a compassionate judge only to enter a rehabilitation facility. Part of the plea bargain was a decision that Tiffany's mother could formally adopt the baby after Child Protective Services visited the home. Inspectors cleared the environment to be safe, as by this time, the stepfather had moved out, lending relative stability to the household.

After she finished rehab, but now with a rap sheet, getting a job was nearly impossible, and with few remaining options, Tiffany went back to doing what she knew best: walking the street.

She found that most men, who cared little about her physical appearance, only wanted oral sex at thirty dollars a trick, with a handful willing to pay a hundred for condom intercourse—but almost no one wanted to shell out two hundred for riding bareback. Despite that, and with less risk for STDs, she made up to several hundred dollars a day in “cash-no tax,” which was more than she could net in two weeks flipping burgers and frying potatoes at a Burger King.

She also knew the best way to avoid arrest was to do it for her “client” while he drove, or that occasionally parking on a side street or alley was also safe and provided the opportunity for an upsell. If the john wanted additional security, and more than oral sex or an awkward ‘back-seat boogie,’ there was a nearby motel charging cash by the hour, with no questions asked. Tiffany and her friends knew it by the moniker “The No-Tell Mo-tel.”

The downside risk of motel work was the threat of being beaten, anally raped, or robbed of up-front pay, and after learning the hard way, Tiffany kept a small switchblade knife in her purse. She only had to use it once, leaving a belligerent



client with a facial scar he would never forget, and something he would also have to explain to his wife or girlfriend. Later, she bought a two-shot derringer, to be used if she felt her life might be threatened.

None of the streetwalkers had pimps, many of them were transients, but there was also a core cadre of women who knew each other well, bonded, traded stories or advice and quite often, even drugs. It was no secret that drugs played a large part in this subculture, as most of the women were addicted to tobacco, cocaine, methamphetamine, alcohol, or narcotics, and many of these substances in various combinations.

Arrests were random and infrequent, as most police activities dealt with more serious crimes. Occasionally undercover female police officers targeted the johns. These women, however, were more naïve than the pros, who learned how to spot a real john, and how to make their deals with vague jargon, such as opening a conversation with, "Are you lost? Do you need directions?"

If a monetary proposal for sex was offered, the next question might be, "Are you a cop or in any manner associated with law enforcement?" A negative response by an undercover agent might permit entrapment to be used as a legal defense in court, although never a guarantee for dismissal.

Most first-time offenders got off with fines, reduced or suspended sentences and probation, but recidivism rates remained extraordinarily high. As the saying went: "Once a hooker—always hooked."

So far, Tiffany had been cautious. So far, she had never been arrested. So far, she had come through unscathed.

### **The E-Zee Muffler Plant**

For James Ewell Brown, Tuesday promised to be an ordinary workday. He got dressed, packed his lunch, then drove to the muffler plant for his 8 p.m. twelve-hour shift.

Nothing seemed out of the ordinary, with a completely uneventful night. Then just when he was about to leave, the front desk secretary called out and waved him over.

“What’s up, Betsy?”

“Boss wants to see you before you go.”

“Anything wrong?”

“I ‘m not sure. All I know is he said to get you to his office before you left.”

JEB had only been called to the office a few times before over the previous ten years when he had been given modest salary raises or laudatory praise for his hard, loyal, competent work. His clerkish boss, John Cuffee was always courteous and affable on the few occasions he had to interact with JEB.

As he walked into Mr. Cuffee’s office, he felt a pleasant tingle of optimistic anticipation. Cuffee, on the other hand, seemed unusually tense as he repeatedly cracked his knuckles.

“Please sit down, James. It’s my most unpleasant responsibility to deliver some bad news.”

JEB’s optimism quickly faded to angst: “What? Is something wrong? Did I do something wrong?”

Cuffee was placating—almost apologetic, “No, James. Not at all. In fact, you’re one of the best employees we ever had. The problem is that over the years, and especially with the last recession, our inventory supplies have outstripped demand for our product. It’s also an unfortunate fact that mufflers get made much cheaper overseas, and all the car manufacturers are always looking for those less-expensive products. China, particularly, is eating our lunch.”

“But what does that have to do with me?”

“Unfortunately, we’re in the process of not only downsizing but also consolidating our three plants here into the one already operating in Chattanooga. It will also be modernized with robotics and streamlined automated inventory controls as we tailor our mufflers specifically to the Volkswagens they make down there. This is the only way we’ll be able to compete with foreign pricing.

“We intend to do a graduated shut-down, possibly leaving only a few office staff to maintain somewhat of a local presence. Bottom line, James, is I’m sorry to inform you that your job is being phased out, and after two more months we will no longer require your services.”

JEB reacted with tense denial, “I can’t believe it. Ain’t there nothin’ I can do here? This is my second home.”

“Sorry, no. But after those two months, we’ll give you another two months’ severance pay. You will also be able to COBRA your health insurance for eighteen months until you find another job. You’ll also retain your IRA, which you can roll over to a private plan.”

JEB became panicked: “Mr. Cuffee, it ain’t about some-and-such like that. I got a house paid for and some money put aside. But this here factory is my whole life, and now I’ll be losin’ it. It ain’t right.”

“Once again, James, I’m truly sorry, but I am also not the one who makes these decisions. I’m merely the awkward messenger. The word comes down from higher up; like the word of God.”

JEB lost control: “Well, I never thought I would say this blasphemy, but I will, sir. God be damned along with you, your company, and your higher-ups, too. You been good to me, sir, but I have to say it again...you and God can both be damned.”

Cuffee, pretending to read a document, looked down, unable to directly face JEB or look him in the eye: “Now, James. I understand your anger, but I’m sure you’ll be able to find employment elsewhere. So please depart from us on good terms and do not force me to call security. I’ll overlook your comments as a normal reaction to painful disappointment and will still be happy to forward credible recommendations to wherever your new path may lead you. Now please excuse yourself.”

JEB felt as though he had been hit by a blindsiding ton of bricks. He was confused and out of sorts, feeling as though the life had been sucked out of him. Having no place to turn or

anyone to talk to, the only alternative for consolation would be to seek out Pastor Richards. Although he knew Richards made it clear to his congregation that Tuesday was his day of personal reflective meditation, or the time that he used to prepare his Wednesday night Bible study topics and begin working on next Sunday's sermon, James nevertheless was nonplussed.

Richards also let it be known he would still be available for emergencies but emphasized that "calling ahead would be most appreciated." In his agitated state of mind, James forgot this request and headed straight over to the church.

As he drove into the parking lot, he noticed the Pastor's car was the only one there, and innocently assumed he could beg for a small indulgence of the Pastor's time. James was desperate for a consoling explanation as to why God would allow such a disastrous thing to happen.

Because he had a key to the basement door, he quietly let himself in and climbed the stairs leading to Pastor Richards' office landing. That doorway was one of two leading to a small waiting room outside the office; the other being the entry on the main floor of the church itself. But as he entered the foyer, JEB suddenly stopped.

The Pastor's office door was half-way open and soft moans punctuated by louder cries emanated from within. A woman's voice came first.

"Oh, God. Yes, yes. Do it like that. That's it. I love it like that. Keep doing it. Oh, fuck yes, I'm gonna cum. Yes, yes...more. Oh...oh, Jesus. Just like that. Oh my God. Please, please, please. Take me...take me."

"Mmm, baby, you're the best. Now cum for me. Come on baby."

"Oh, God. Oh, God. Yes...yes...ohhh my God! Holy shit...that was sooo good."

"Now get ready baby, 'cause here it comes...here it comes. Ah...ah...sweet Jesus...yeahhhh!"

“Stop. Stop. Don’t take it out. Leave it inside. Leave it in. One more minute. I think I’m going to cum again. Oh yes. Oh my God...that was sooo fucking good.”

James was mutely stunned and virtually transfixed as he carefully peered through the door. With his back facing the door, Pastor Richards’ pants were dropped, his shirt, shoes, and socks still on, as he had just finished having sex with Mrs. Johnston on his desk. She was sitting, propped up with her hands supporting her from behind, head thrown back, partially dressed as well, with her shoes, stockings, and panties on the floor and her skirt hiked up around her waist. Luckily for JEB, her eyes were shut in ecstasy, just long enough for him to make a hasty exit.

He paused at the top of the stairs while the couple casually dressed, hearing her say she could only stay for about ten more minutes. Although her children were in school and her husband was at work, she didn’t want to risk too long an absence. She asked the Pastor to drive her back to the shopping mall where her car was parked.

“Okay, John,” JEB heard Mrs. Johnston say, “Maybe we’ll try again for next week. Then I’ll see you Sunday as usual, sittin’ prim and proper like in the front row. But from now on I want it in a bed. I’m sick and tired of leavin’ here all rumbled up and lookin’ like I’ve been rode hard and put up wet. And do not for one solitary second *ever* forget—this is only about sex. I will never cotton to getting a divorce. My husband and I may not be intimate anymore, but I will never break up my home.”

“You know, that’s perfectly fine with me,” Richards replied, “because anything like that would unequivocally ruin my reputation anyway. And you can forget about how you might look because the people in this church would ride me out of town on a rail—most likely after I was tarred and feathered. Then I’d be blackballed by the Church and never allowed to acquire another position. As such, this affair will remain our sinful little secret. Mutual adulation, so to speak. But I still don’t

know how I'm going to deflect their never-ending quest to find me a new wife. They tell me it will lend stability to the church."

"Well then, you can tell them you're still mourning the loss of your poor recently deceased wife, and sometimes it takes a very long time for those emotional scars to heal. As far as I'm concerned, right now you belong to me, and I for one will not let it go."

"Yes, that might be true," Richards agreed, "but when inevitably I do re-marry, I shall remain faithful to my new wife and will not be blackmailed or coerced to continue this sinful tryst. Remember what is said in Matthew 6:24: *No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Mammon.* Therefore, let us both not forget that a DNA test on your youngest son, little Richey, may or may not put a few nails in your high and mighty self-righteous coffin.

"As for our current situation," he added, "you are just what I need to ease my current sorrows, and I too will not let it go. Or as the Holy Bible teaches us about usury: Psalms 112:5-6, *'A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.'*"

"Okay, John. Okay. Then as long as we both understand the situation; I too will quote scripture: Proverbs 23:27: *'For a prostitute is a deep pit; an adulteress is a narrow well.'* Meaning I am now your narrow well, and a well without a rope tied to its bucket. In fact, no strings attached at either end—which also means we may serve each other equally. As such, you shall never say you love me, nor I tell you the same, and therefore we shall also serve each other with neither love nor hate."

"Perhaps you misread the lines. I know it as *'An adulteress is also treacherous. Her lips drip with honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil. But in the end, she is as bitter as wormwood, as sharp as a two-edged sword.'*"

JEB was aghast as his entire world imploded in only one day. He lost his job, lost his faith in God, and lost all trust in God's hypocritical representative on Earth. Even worse, two of the iconic people he admired most at church had invoked and taken the names of God and Jesus in vain while they were having adulterous promiscuous sex.

His secure, private world suddenly shattered, and the flood gates of his emotions ripped open as his heart drowned in a sea of self-pitying sorrow. With his entire belief system virtually erased, he felt abandoned—as lost as the wandering Jew he read about in the Bible—the man who taunted Jesus on the way to his crucifixion and was then condemned to walk the Earth aimlessly until the Second Coming.

But for James Ewell Brown there would be no Second Coming of Christ. Or at least it would not be loving, but instead born of wrath. Yes, he was through with sweet, loving Jesus, and done with church. Then he cursed God out loud as Job had done for tormenting and forsaking him, as he fell so far away from his prior loving state of grace.

Not known to ever drink alcohol, JEB stopped by a liquor store, bought a pint of Wild Turkey whiskey, went to bed, chewed tobacco, and drank himself to sleep.

### **The Greater Knoxville Choose Life Council**

The Greater Knoxville Choose Life Council, an organization of loosely affiliated Christian evangelical churches and independent anti-abortion factions, embraced a joint mission to persistently pressure the Tennessee State Government to pass legislation banning the right for a woman to have an abortion on an absolute basis. This ban included pregnancy resulting from rape of any kind; its only concession being to exempt situations in which the life of the mother would potentially be endangered.

These efforts had already gained traction in states like Texas, which in passing such a law, had pitted the state against a Federal judge who overturned it. Several other states

including Missouri, Georgia, and Alabama then joined Texas in a new crusade to bring the issue to the Supreme Court, in a bid to either overturn *Roe v. Wade* or to modify the law on a states' rights basis.

When news of the family planning project became public, the Council Chairman, Joshua Bennett, called for an emergency meeting, which was held in the dank, dimly lit, musty basement of a local Baptist church. Folding chairs were set up in rows on an old scuffed linoleum floor, and a small table offered refreshments of water, coffee, and powdered-sugar doughnuts; alongside a stack of donation envelopes.

After the venue filled to standing-room-only, a beefy, balding, baby-faced, and rosy-cheeked Bennett stood at a small dais to address the congregation, which occasionally interrupted his harangue with loud perseverating shouts of "Amen!" "Praise the Lord" or "Right on, brother!" Bennett paused to take off his suit jacket and wiped his sweaty forehead with a handkerchief he then stuffed into his pants pocket for easy retrieval.

"Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and thank y'all for coming in today. Now, most of y'all know me, but for those of you who do not, I'm the Reverend Joshua Bennett of the West Park First Baptist Church. As Chairman of this great council and at the special request of our diligent brother, Mr. Robert Lee Barber, we have called this urgent meeting because of the recent news bulletins announced by the University of Knoxville.

"As you may already know, the Knoxville University Medical Center has decided to establish a planned-parenthood clinic, as well as a sperm bank.

"Mr. Barber here has let me know his feelings on this issue but believes that I might be more eloquent than he would be in presenting the case. So, first I'll begin, and then we will open the meeting to a general discussion."

As Bennett paused to take a sip of water, murmured whispers dwindled to silence as the audience became riveted.



“Now all y’all and I too certainly know that this ain’t nothing but damned doublespeak for condoning unnatural conception, as well as unmitigated encouragement to take the easy way out with abortions. Even worse, it leaves an open invitation for our young teens to engage in pre-marital sex without fear, to have access to virtual godless pharmacies where our children can obtain birth control pills or the so-called ‘morning-after pill,’ and then with a clear conscience have *unlicensed* sex without remorse for its consequences.

“Remember now; I’m only a simple country boy. But I was still raised in the Church of God to believe that sex is a sacred bond belonging in, *and only within*, the boundaries of legal marriage.

“As such, normal pregnancy is the natural way for us men and women to procreate humanity. Meanwhile, birth control is only a misguided invitation to lust, while abortion of any kind is simply an unnatural evil sin against the Lord. We believe instead, that pre-marital sex, abortion, drug-induced abortions, late-term abortions, and abnormal insemination—especially with unknown sperm donations—to be the work of the Devil incarnate.

“It’s abhorrent enough to have an extracted egg fertilized by the husband, then implanted in the womb, simply because a wife might be sterile. But can you then imagine something worse? That a woman can willy-nilly pick out some random stranger’s sperm, based on what she thinks might be the anonymous father’s I.Q., physical attributes, eye color, hair color or, God forbid, skin color, too—then go right straight ahead and use that bastardized egg only because her husband might be sterile? Or *good lord, Judas Priest...* that a woman can hire a surrogate and use another woman’s womb to carry her spawn? Whatever depth of depravity has this sinful world sunk to? All the way down to the Devil’s own salty swamp? It ain’t natural and not accepting of God’s will, for whatever reason he may have, which we do not consider, nor shall we ever

understand, as being part of his overall plan. No, no! This abomination shall not stand.”

He paused for prolonged applause, laced with shouts of “Amen!” and “Praise the Lord!”

“Now, I do unfortunately know we must live with the accursed Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, which we will oppose until the day we die—as we hope and pray that one glorious, blessed sun-shining morn *before* that very day—we shall awake to see it overturned. But by shoving this abomination straight in our faces, our otherwise esteemed University must be opposed at every level. We have a state-funded educational system, and we will not stand idly by. We shall not kneel; nor shall we grovel; nor shall we throw dust upon our heads, as we stand aside to see our tax dollars fly in the face of God’s sacred teachings.

“We are gathered here today to organize a picketing protest against this sinful clinic, that we will widely advertise as we round-up all the support we can get. We will have *signs!*—*posters!*—*literature!*—*pamphlets!*—and wide-ranging petitions to our legislators, to shut down this damned, accursed facility. Yes, indeed, close it clear down to the ground...or even *burn* it to the ground if we must! Praise be to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the only begotten son of God.”

The meeting hall erupted with loud applause and more expletive shouts, then after allowing the accolades to wane, Bennett concluded: “Mr. Barber? Do you have anything else to add to our conversation?”

An alcohol-intoxicated Bobby Lee stumbled to the microphone and shouted, “Yes, I do! And all I can say is, amen to all y’all brothers and sisters. Amen and praise be to Jesus, our Lord, and God, who will guide us in this Holy Crusade.”

Simultaneously he was also plotting a personal vendetta against the figurehead of this damned clinic, this so-called she-devil, Dr. Greer.

### **JEB's house**

It took several days before James Ewell Brown rebounded from his emotional turmoil, the worst of it being his devastating loss of faith in Jesus. He knew he would never be the same, and after briefly considering suicide, immediately discarded the thought. After all, why should he kill himself when only other people deserved punishment for their sins?

Sipping coffee and perusing local newspaper want-ads, he noticed one that suited his fancy or, in some small manner, might allow him to exact a modicum of revenge on God, Jesus, and his church.

Yes—perhaps indeed this was the time for a Second Coming. However, this manifestation would be more like a vengeful Roman general leading an army of righteous Praetorians instead of a milquetoast prophet of peace and love. Jesus: a man who held the power of the universe in his hands yet laid down like a whimpering dog as they flogged him, crowned his head with thorns, then nailed him to a cross. Indeed, it should be a *real* Messiah, who would eradicate every infidel with the hammer of God, as he wiped the slate clean and began anew. A new world order, originating in a new Garden of Eden, emanating from virgin loins, then crowned as a Virgin King. Only this time, the king would bear the unadulterated seed of a vindictive God; the God described in the book of Nahum: *The Lord is a jealous and vengeful God; the Lord is vengeful and strong in wrath. The Lord is vengeful against his foes; he rages against his enemies.*

### **WANTED/KNOXVILLE**

*Custodian for newly opened Family Planning Clinic.*

*Must be experienced and qualified in custodial/janitorial/handyman skills; willing and able to work night shifts.*

*The Celibates*

*Wages and benefits discussed at job interview—standard employment package.*

*Inquire for application at [FPC.employ.org](http://FPC.employ.org) or call 865-408-7766*

JEB called immediately and spoke to Dorothy Halstead, a pleasant-sounding woman in the Human Resources Department. She said an application could be sent to him via the Internet, after which she would schedule an appointment. Then as a caveat and before doing so, she had only one question to ask: “Mr. Brown. Do you know about the scope of family planning services, and do you have any strong religious convictions that might bias your ability to work for us?”

JEB fibbed, “Yes, ma’am, I do. And no, ma’am, I don’t.”  
“Perfect, then.”

After the call, JEB decided to delay leaving notes in Pastor Richards’ and Mrs. Johnston’s mailboxes, indicating his knowledge of their carnal sins. He would also postpone doing anything at all until he discerned a more appropriate time to drop this little bombshell. The notes would eventually include a copy of the formal accusation he intended to send the entire congregation on the church’s Facebook site.

Motivated only by getting even rather than blackmail or monetary gain, he recalled a quote he heard once in a movie: *“Revenge is a dish best served cold.”*

No. James would let his temper simmer down, see how things panned out if he got the job, then sit back, biding his time. And although he did know that the clinic performed abortions, he would ignore the contrary sentiment of any prior religious indoctrination designating such procedures as sinful. There was also nothing about the job that would tempt him to change his vow to maintain his virginal state of grace. He still took great pride in his celibacy, God, or no God, and if women were dumb enough to get themselves knocked up, it wouldn’t be his problem or in any manner adversely affect his life.

## **Knoxville Nightly News**

JEB, Bobby Lee, and Lynn Greer coincidentally watched the WKVX/TV 6 o'clock news when the news anchor, Bill Scranton, began a concise follow-up about the opening date of the Family Planning Clinic.

Scranton, generically prep-boy handsome like so many others of his ilk, but now approaching his late thirties, was tired of being confined to a local station. Realistically or not, he had his sights set on landing a spot with a national network, such as FOX or CNN. But because there was little chance to get the exposure he craved; Scranton was prompted to become a bottom-feeder when it came to the news. Therefore, he decided he would scrape any part of the barrel to bring attention to himself.

He knew this story could be a hot button, so he detailed the clinic's location, its University affiliation, and the range of services it would provide for the community. Thinking the item might be relatively innocuous or neutral, he was elated when, during his elucidation, the TV station's phone board lit up like a Christmas tree.

Some of the calls were supportive enough, suggesting it was "about time," but the majority were blatantly hostile diatribes, filled with numerous threats of a protest, four-letter expletives, or invocations about God, Jesus, and the work of the Devil.

Scranton thought, *What the heck? Who knew this would bump our ratings? Good for us, good for me, and great, if they go ahead and picket the place. I'll be the first one there with live, on-the-scene coverage. National feeds might even pick it up.* Then he told his assistant producer to see if he could get an exclusive interview with the Clinic's Director.

An ecstatic Bobby Lee continued working on his part to organize the picket.

JEB, being indifferent to this news, was filling out his job application, wondering when and where the protest might be

staged, thinking it would certainly be interesting to attend as a nonpartisan, neutral observer.

Lynn felt nauseatingly deflated. She knew the news would eventually gain widespread attention, but still didn't fully appreciate the staunch level of continued Southern Evangelical religious opposition. She took the clinic position, thinking these biased people must surely be a minority of unenlightened, medieval Neanderthals. Paradoxically, even some of the most devout Catholics who voted liberal Democrat Party lines, were also pro-choice, although this renegade belief flew straight in the face of the Pope's antiquated proscriptions.

Feeling the dreaded aura of a cluster migraine headache, she went to get her Imitrex injector.

# *The Celibates*

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*Alan Evetts Cooper*

*Knoxville, Tennessee  
detective, Julie Boucher  
investigates a cluster of  
brutal murders.*

*Gynecologist, Lynn Greer,  
faces Evangelical  
opposition  
to Family Planning services  
at her clinic.*

*A female dominatrix,  
seduces a disaffected  
Christian celibate.*

*These interwoven lives are  
changed forever, after a  
scandal rattles the clinic.*

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