

DEVIL IN THE DETAILS



A Koi Blackthorn Novel

GEG

A serial killer is providing false leads to the FBI on missing person cases. The Special agent in charge, Koi, works with her new boyfriend, a homicide detective with NOPD, to find the real killer.

Devil in the Details

By GEG

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Sexually Explicit Material

Chapter 1

The Bayou is a mysterious place, with many myths. Native Americans, over the years, told stories, handed down over generations. Stories that included the Devil.

The Choctaw Indians described one such myth: “The Girl and the Devil.” The story goes, he called the girl, and she was unable to resist him, so she pushed the boat toward the spot where he stood. “Come nearer,” said the Devil, “so that I can step into your boat.” The girl said she could not do so, but she rested one end of her paddle on the side of the boat and the other end on the shore, telling the Devil to walk on the bridge thus made. He started to do so, but just as he reached the middle the girl jerked the paddle and the Devil fell into the water. He sank straight to the bottom of the bayou and never came up. The myth goes that the Devil would later trick women and claim their souls, thus getting his revenge.

June 2010:

The music playing: Marvin Gaye’s “Sexual Healing.” Dancing erotically, Kennedy felt hands underneath her mid-thigh dress, caressing the inside of her thighs and working up to her firm ass. The soft touch of lips, as they worked in between her legs. The pleasure was intense, Kennedy’s mind and body lost. Her lover’s hands worked their way up, sliding off the dress and licking her nipples. The lovemaking exquisite. This would be her last night on earth.

The killer brought Kennedy’s body to an abandon cemetery. With a shovel in hand, the grave would be like all the others, a resting place for their latest victim. Her parents and friends would never know where she had been laid to rest.

Established before the Civil War, the cemetery included a few Civil War soldiers among its occupants. Called The Sanctuary, abandoned since the 1930s, except for the recent additions over a ten-year period.

The headstones showed their wear from years of weather, numerous hurricanes, or plain neglect. Tucked away ten miles off Highway 61, the nearest main road. You needed to take a two-lane dirt road before reaching the cemetery. Some sixty-five miles from New Orleans, the killer's hideaway, where they visited often, interacting with the young women buried there.

The newest member of the graveyard, a twenty-two-year-old brunette who had been held captive for the last three weeks. Kennedy had started her career as a real estate professional after graduating from the University of Tennessee. A vibrant young woman who explored her sexuality, which ultimately ended her life.

Dressed in an outfit she would have worn on a night out with friends. The headstone only read "Kennedy" with 1988-2010, the year of her birth and death. The kidnapping took place in Nashville, after she had met up with her date. Her friends, at a loss after she disappeared. The only clues: friends believed her date was a college professor.

The numbers and text messages on her cell phone didn't reveal much, except a number from a disposable cell phone, untraceable.

As the killer finished digging the grave, they took the casket from the van and placed it in the grave. Some two hours later the job was done. The sun would come up in a couple of hours, and another young woman would join the killer's graveyard, now numbering sixteen. The van pulled away from the desolate cemetery, with the killer eyeing their next victim.

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Jordan Matthews became a homicide detective for the New Orleans police department after graduating from LSU. The youngest homicide detective in the department's history.

Character had become part of Jordan's DNA. A leader both on and off the field. At first glance a rough gruff look not unlike a cowboy from the late 1800's. After Hurricane Katrina, the department struggled recruiting younger officers. He came right out of college, attended the academy, and was hired by the department.

He played football at LSU and became their number one tight end during his playing career. During the later parts of the bowl game in his senior year, he tore his Achilles. The injury ended any opportunity for a pro career. He decided to start pursuing a career in law enforcement, hoping one day to be the commissioner of the department. His house, decorated with LSU gear including the jersey he wore during the national championship game they won in 2003. He scored once, with five receptions for eighty-four yards.

Jordan's father was a longtime detective for the Baton Rouge police department. His uncle and grandfather also worked in the department. The reason he didn't start Baton Rouge was that New Orleans needed help, and he wanted to blaze his own path.

He walked into the office on Broad Street. "Good morning, pup," said one of the detectives sitting at a desk. A nickname the older detectives had given Jordan, referring to his age, all in good fun.

"Did you get your nine hours in?" As the men began to snicker, trying to get a reaction.

"Don't mind them—they are jealous because you are good-looking and talented." Words of encouragement coming from one of the secretaries as she entered the office area.

“Capn wanted me to show you the email from the FBI office in New Orleans. He said it’s something you should look at, since you don’t have a case.” Monic spoke in a distinguished southern voice, one the Northerners made fun of but the locals understood. A lady with a large personality who befriended everyone.

“What is it regarding?”

“The FBI thinks they may have a serial killer or serial kidnapper. Girls from the South only. No one sees anything, no leads from computers or cell phones, just girls disappearing.” She continued, “There is a case from 2004 with similarities to some of the others,” as Monic discussed the contents of the email.

“Remember the case of the young college student from LSU, who disappeared?” Monic paused, adding, “Her name, Angelica, I think?”

Puzzled for a moment, he thought back to his days at LSU. “I do remember. I met her a couple of times. My roommate’s girlfriend knew her well.” Jordan grabbed a bottle of vitamin water from the fridge before heading to his desk. The detective’s area similar to those of other stations, cubicles with computers and phones.

His mind began to wander, trying to recall the information, the news in the papers and on the internet. Some blamed a voodoo priest, after a couple of sororities teased a priest during a night of partying. Her disappearance, a complete mystery, an unsolved mystery.

As he sat at his desk, he read the email. He thought to himself, *A girl disappears and never seen again*. Did she find her fate that night, was she a sex slave, or did someone kill her accidentally and hide the body?

The FBI requested the detective’s assistance; he needed to respond to the email. First, he wanted to research the case by getting some background information. He summoned Monic back into his office.

She would find everything including contact information for the officers who handled the case.

“Hey, LSU.” Another nickname used to refer to Jordan.

“We caught a case, gear up,” said the thirty-year veteran Markus Jacobs. Markus’s nickname, Sarg. He lived his entire life in the Deep South. Having dealt with the KKK, murders, and the changing times, his career soon would end. A Marine vet, from the Vietnam War. No one believed him until he pulled out a picture of himself in Saigon from 1973.

After coming back from the war, Sarg received his degree from Southern University in Criminology. He had been the lead detective for the NOPD for the last twenty years. He endured life’s ups and downs. With retirement around the corner, he looked forward to spending time with his wife, kids, and grandkids. They planned on moving to the Panhandle in Florida, closer to the kids. A place where he could wake up late, drink on his back deck, and fish whenever he wanted. He didn’t want to move, but with his two children living in Florida, it made sense. The Bayou, however, would always be home.

The two gentlemen grabbed their gear and headed to the car, something Sarg did too many times over the years. Hopefully this would be his last case in 2010, and soon retirement.

Chapter 3

The afternoon dragged on, Jordan reading the additional statements. The revelations between the aunt and niece, contradictory.

His partner walked in and questioned him. “Who do you think is telling the truth?”

“Only Destiny believes he smoked,” offered Jordan. “This kid has goals, he’s focused, a vision. Drugs aren’t in his DNA.”

“Who did you interview,” queried Sarg.

“His brother and sister both said he was a straight shooter.”

“Got a motive?” said a puzzled Sarg, needing more information besides a college student with goals.

“Current GPA 3.8, 1450 on SAT going into pre-med First year at LSU, a 3.9. His brother says Destiny became jealous of Jaron’s girlfriend. Not sure it means anything, but something we should investigate.”

“I don’t know, kid, a little fragile to me.”

“I’ll keep digging,” said Jordan as Sarg left the room for a moment.

Monic came in needing an answer to her question. “Did you read the email?” giving the third degree. “The agent in charge called again.”

The agent in charge, Koi Blackthorn. She grew up in New Orleans, her mom and dad, Choctaw and African American. Her name Koi—means panther. She attended the Academy of Our Lady and became an excellent student. An outstanding volleyball player as well. She received a scholarship to attend Georgetown University.

Her upbringing, one of education and sports. Showing her competitive nature from a young age, her career blossomed in the FBI, after graduating from Georgetown. She later received a master's degree from the University of Virginia.

Muscular and exotic looks brought legions of commits and proposals, which she deflected and demanded respect with the threat of violence if you didn't acquiesce. She did not tolerate misogynistic men.

"She is going to call back after 1. You need to answer the call—I'm tired of taking messages you don't answer," demanded Monic.

"Patch her through if I'm here." Before he spoke another word, Monic interrupted, "You will be here, you will take the call, and you will answer her questions."

"Having a bad day?"

"No, not at all. Need some of you detectives to answer your messages."

"I will. I'm involved in this case," adding, "I'm a little stumped. Things aren't adding up."

Sarg entered the room with a wondering expression on his face. Slow and methodical, which made him an outstanding detective. Over the years he instituted rules in his detecting. When he didn't follow the rules, chaos happened.

"Got a call from an informant. Our young Ms. Destiny is a drug dealer. She spent a little time in juvie. My informant tells me she is a player in the dope game."

"I understand what you are saying, but that is not a motive for murder," rang out a voice from behind the partitioned desks.

"No, but she demanded Jaron push for her at LSU. Also, showed dislike for his girlfriend," added Sarg.

Processing the information, Jordan leaned back in his chair. He needed to access Destiny's arrest record. He took a sip of coffee before he typed away on his computer, searching for the records.

In a matter of moments the info came on the screen. Only twenty-two, Destiny, with a sizable rap sheet. Twice pleaded No Contest for transporting with intent to distribute marijuana. *Why kill her cousin? It doesn't pass the smell test. There is another connection.*

"What did you come up with?" quizzed Sarg.

"She's a player. We might need to bring her in," said Jordan.

"There is something else, besides saying no to pushing."

"You think your CI can help us fill in the blanks?"

"Maybe—we are meeting later," said Sarg, finishing the conversation.

The phone at Jordan's desk rang as he came in from lunch. On the other end of the line, the FBI. "Detective Matthews?" said the voice on the other end.

"Yes, this is Detective Matthews."

"This is Special Agent Blackthorn. Did you read my email regarding the disappearance of Angelica Lawrence?"

The agent in charge of the case worked inside the BAU unit, which began investigating numerous disappearances over a ten-year period, with similar evidence.

Jordan answered, "I have briefly read the email."

"We have some leads on a serial kidnapper, possibly serial killer. I'm looking for information on Angelica Lawrence. I heard you attended LSU at the same time she did?"

“I didn’t know her personally. We meet a couple of times, but my roommate’s girlfriend and her were friends. I’ll talk with her. Anything in particular you want me to ask?”

“Basic info would be great—friends, hangouts, etc. I appreciate this. Can we meet on Wednesday around 10 a.m.?”

“I don’t see why not.” They both hung up. Their lives would be linked forever.

Reading the email, the detective unlocked the files that Agent Blackthorn had sent over. The disappearance of Angelica baffled friends and family, along with the police. Jordan remembered the posters as well as the vigils held in her honor.

One week turned into two, then a month, and before he knew it, students would mention the disappearance from time to time.

He reached out to his old roommate, Dylan Patterson. “Dylan, this is Jordan. How have you been, bro?”

“Jordan, long time. How are things in the Bayou?” Dylan had been drafted by the San Diego Chargers and became an All-Pro DE. The two men stayed in touch only by email recently.

“Things are good. Did you hear about my promotion?”

“Yes, congratulations.”

“How is the year looking?” said Jordan, asking about the upcoming season.

They talked for a couple more minutes about the season, before Jordan asked, “Can I ask you a question? Does Brittnei stay in touch with Angelica’s family, and can I ask her a couple of questions?”

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“She does stay in touch with the family, and if you call back around three our time you can speak to her,” answered a befuddled Dylan. “What’s this about?”

“The FBI is looking into the disappearance, and I am gathering information for them, with the chance the local police missed something.” The two men soon hung up.

Thinking about days gone by, Jordan walked over to the window, thinking about how the parents handled the disappearance of their daughter over the years. Had they given up? What about her friends? Did anyone think of her as she became a footnote in history? Jordan had never thought about Angelica since the time of her disappearance.

Chapter 21

A cup of coffee and reports started Koi's morning. A young agent named Brett Yukolvich knocked on the door. He wanted to see Koi about some information he had followed up on.

She waved the agent to come in. "Good morning. I bring news on the Katrinov case."

"Give me some good news, please!" replied Koi.

"We found a number from a cell phone our kidnapper used to contact Elena. The number comes from a company that sells phones out of Jamaica."

"How did we come about this information?" quizzed Koi.

"The number is unlisted, with Elena's records showing no trace; however, one of our hackers tracked the number. The number came from a store in Jamaica, which sells untraceable phones. Drug dealers use this outfit a lot, to hide the numbers they use."

"This is excellent. Can I talk to the hacker?"

"Yes, you can. Would you like me to find her?"

"Yes, please, this might be a possible break," said Koi. Brett left the room to retrieve the hacker, Liz Ferguson. The FBI knew the phones were untraceable but hoped the new information would help provide a lead.

Her thoughts wondered, what might the girls be going through—their treatment, possible torture, or other unspeakable acts? An uneasiness came over Koi. This wasn't a typical kidnapper case.

The women were all gorgeous, and smart, which led her to believe the person doing the kidnapping was a genuine con artist. The perp conveyed a sense of trustworthiness, essentially a trap for these women.

About fifteen minutes later, Brett came back with Liz. “Agent Blackthorn, this is Liz. We used her last year cracking the embezzlement case on the Hamas terrorists. They funneled money through an Arabic restaurant, using the funds for operations against America.”

“I remember reading your name on the reports, Liz. I’m Koi,” as Koi reached out to shake the hacker’s hand. Young, brash, and off the wall, Liz’s talents, unmatched within the FBI walls.

“Please sit down, and fill me in on what you have learned.” Koi extended her hand to show Liz where to sit.

Both Brett and Liz took their seats.

Liz, a twenty-four-year-old hacker whom the FBI found after she hacked into a DOD website. The FBI tracked her down and offered her two choices: one, prison for a few years; two, work for the FBI.

A typical generation Xer, either she wore clothes three sizes too big or very revealing. Comfortable with her body, but she disliked how men looked at her. Beautiful green eyes, nice smile, and purple hair, with a personality to match. The FBI allowed her to smoke marijuana, which curtailed her occasional angered outbursts.

She set aside her anti-government perception after the government hired her. A few friends decided to end their friendship once they learned of her new job.

Solving puzzles became her trait as did breaking into other people’s computers. She did this to gather information the FBI used to apprehend and convict criminals.

Her talent became indefensible to the agency, even though her personality could be described as odd. Her superiors thought her talents outweighed her strange behavior; better working for the government, as opposed to working against them.

“You look sweet. Dating anyone?” Liz, bisexual, made no bones about her sexuality.

“Not sure it is any of your business,” replied Koi, agitated with the question.

“Don’t worry, I’m harmless. Trying to get a lay of the land, what type of person I’m dealing with, since I don’t trust uppity ass agents who think they are perfect,” said Liz, as she stared at Brett with an offbeat smile.

“Why do you work for us?” questioned Koi while crossing her arms and displaying an expression. *This girl needs her ass kicked.*

“Can’t do jail, darlin’. Besides, you geniuses need my help in catching killers.”

“Now we’ve disposed of your biases, what do you have for me?”

The young brash hacker laid things out on the conference type table. She explained about coming across a number she tracked, the number came from a store in Jamaica.

The Hamas perpetrators used the same system when trying to communicate with their operatives in the U.S., which is why she came across this number.

Both Koi and Liz stood together going over the data. Before Liz left, she brushed up against Koi, running her hand over her ass.

Koi grabbed Liz’s hand, before admonishing her. “Two things, Liz. I am not into women, and I have a boyfriend. You need to stop with the

sexual flirtations,” Koi said while raising her eyebrows and voice simultaneously.

“You don’t like girls, no problem. I’m a playful sort of girl. No harm, no foul, right?”

“Let’s leave it there, and nothing more will be said,” added Koi. Liz nodded and understood.

“Thanks for the information, and if you come up with anything more, I would appreciate you letting me know ASAP.”

With past experience as a barometer, Koi never thought of getting a warrant through legal channels with the Jamaican government. Jamaica, a poor country that offered sanctuary for all types of criminal activity, with money being funneled to the prime minister and his cabinet. The criminal activity flourished as long as he got paid.

The FBI, with Koi being the lead investigator, pushed for arrests of certain Jamaican government officials three years earlier, when she discovered girls from all over the world were being kidnapped and taken to Jamaica. The officials sold the girls as sex slaves to rich buyers from all over the world

The evidence impelled the FBI to seek a warrant with the Jamaican government. The government relented, offering up the minister of National Security, a fall guy. The Jamaican authorities said they would handle the prosecution.

After a heated exchange with her superiors, the FBI explained they would not go after the prime minister. Koi thought about quitting but decided men would not push her away from her career.

U.S. government officials made a deal for the security adviser and received information regarding three minor drug dealers. In Koi’s

mind, the FBI traded drug couriers for the young girl's lives, and this didn't sit well with her.

Koi needed a break and decided to text Jordan. They texted back and forth for around ten minutes, with an occasional provocative text. He sent a pic of himself shirtless.

Koi responded, "Seen it, no biggie, lol." She found something she never experienced. Someone who would listen and stick by her side when she needed him.

Walking down the hall to visit Agent Jorgenson, originally from Norway, he came to the U.S. and enlisted in the military. He left the military after ten years, to pursue a career in the FBI, after becoming a U.S. citizen. His colleagues liked his demeanor, and stick-to-itiveness. Calm and deliberate, and searched for meaning, or reasons why certain criminals did what they did.

"Do you have any follow-up information on Elena?" asked Koi, looking for answers and more pieces to the puzzle.

"Not yet, Ms. Blackthorn," answered Gabor.

"I need some answers, Gabor," demanded Koi before continuing. "We need to stop this before the next girl disappears. I understand you are methodical, but please understand the urgency."

"Ms. Blackthorn, I want this guy caught like you. I want to make sure we don't overlook anything."

"I know, Gabor. I'm lost, like this guy is toying with us, and it's going to continue."

"We will find him; I promise you." Koi left the room. She needed Jordan more than ever.

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