

Homicide: The Game

Presents

Painseeker

“The Purge”

by Kyle McAllister

March 6, 1999 is this web site’s most deliberately misinterpreted day in Raychel’s life. You have already heard what happened from other sources. Now you can hear it from me. Then you’ll know why I did what I did.

I had known for a week I wanted to do it. I spent the week planning my actions, placing phone calls to make my arrangements for the next few months. I had not planned my every step, choosing instead to leave an element of flexibility for things beyond my control. I had a framework and that was all I needed.

The first setback happened before I even walked through the door at Safehaven. I had arrived at the bar in my car at 7:30 p.m. The Bleeders meeting was no doubt in full swing at the time. I wanted to go in but I couldn’t. I couldn’t stop my hands from shaking. Maybe it was a last gasp of self-conscious guilt, doubt. Maybe I needed a drink. If that was the case I was in hard luck, as walking into Safehaven in that condition would have drawn immediate attention. Attention I neither wanted or needed. So I waited for my nerves to settle.

By 10:00 I was in jeopardy of missing my opportunity. If I didn’t act now, it would continue for another week. Worse, I would be less able to act, having backed out on my first attempt. I believe that if you refuse to act on something, the failure becomes easier and easier to accept. The world is full of people who refuse to act for any number of reasons. I was in danger of becoming one of them. I knew what I wanted and if I didn’t act now I would probably never achieve it. For those of you who may believe that Raychel would have been better off had I not acted, I don’t think you know the whole story. For those of you who think you do, I pity you.

I finally entered Safehaven somewhere around 10:15 p.m. The first thing that struck me was Raychel. She was standing on the stage, reading from her poetry. I don’t

remember what it was. She looked up for a moment, probably hearing the door shut angrily behind me. We exchanged brief glances and I was instantly dazzled. She could do that. She could look at you like no other person on earth. You just didn't know what her look meant. Maybe she was just happy to see me. Maybe she knew what I was thinking. She broke contact from me and continued reading as I stood there and recognized the other people in the room.

The room was full of the usual cast of characters. Artists of many varieties and little capability. Laura Douglass and Lance Wagner sat regally in their corner booth. I knew that I could not be near them. The vipers were protective of Raychel and would probably smell my intentions. I headed toward a table away from most of the action. A waitress came and took my order. She brought back a shot of tequila and a small bottle of Tabasco sauce.

Before I could enjoy my shot, Laura Douglass invited herself to my table and sat down. I wished her away as best I could. I pretended that she wasn't there because the thought of actually tolerating her company was offensive to me. While Laura can seem like a decent person at first impression, there is a deformed beast inside her. When Laura realized Raychel's talent, she began working her way into Raychel's life as she knows best. It is a subtle surgery. Offer the person a nice place to stay. Providing a comforting and understanding environment where people hang on your every word. It is easy to fall for if you've never had it before. Then come Laura's hooks. Heroin. Cocaine. Whatever you want and whenever you need it. Laura has money and knows exactly how she wants to use it. If she thinks you have talent, you can have part of it. The talentless crave what Raychel had and will stop at nothing to have a piece of it. The tragedy is that people like Laura pervert the talent of people like Raychel and it dies. Like crossing Midas with the Reaper.

Laura's voice hammered at my head for what felt like an eternity. She was trying to keep me occupied. Maybe she sensed what I intended and was trying to fend me off. She was determined, but so was I. I spoke what I hoped would be my final words to her, ever, "Laura, could you do me a favor? Make a pain in the ass of yourself somewhere else." I turned what little attention I had paid her back to the stage. Back to Raychel.

I listened to Raychel and understood why I was doing what I was doing. It wasn't because I knew Laura and Lance were wrong and I was right. It wasn't just because I knew I could help. It wasn't even out of some sense of obligation. I had dated a number of people from The Bleeders since my joining them in November. They were all a pale imitation of Raychel. When I figured out what I was doing, I became determined that I would not repeat my mistake. I loved Raychel and she needed my help. Her plea for help was being broadcast and no one was moving.

A room full of people listened as Raychel's life spilled out and flooded the room. Her voice rang like rusted iron. Forged from a lifetime of abuse and remaining resolute through it all, stubborn to succeed but buckling under. I could hear it. Raychel had lost her way and needed help. She was stuck in the muck of Lance and Laura.

Raychel finished her reading and the room thundered with applause. Anticipating her actions, I made my way to the bar to intercept her. I had a lot of company. Most of The Bleeders came to the bar to compliment her before she had even arrived there. The only good thing was that the hubbub covered me from Lance or Laura's view. But not perfectly, as my abandoned chair had been noticed. I heard Laura ask the room, "Has anyone seen Kyle?" As heads began turning, I tried to bury myself further into the crowd. I could barely get an elbow in edgewise. I knew my chance of success was shrinking. Growing edgier, I tried to get a good line on Raychel.

Raychel was up against the rail, entertaining a couple of writers. They were commenting on how realistic her work rang. Out of the corner of my eye I could see Laura approaching me. Out of patience and time, I shoved hard through the sheets of well wishers and banged into one of the two writers. He turned and regarded me as his servant, faux accent attached, "There's no need to brow beat at a bar. Nobody's boxing."

I could see Laura looking. I was out of time. I growled, "Move now or I'll put you in a box."

Raychel laughed as the writer retreated, "What a man you are, Kyle. A real knight in shinning armor."

“You should be so lucky, “ I told her.

“Would I be?” she drawled. She put an arm on my shoulder. I bristled at the sight of her needle tracks. She hadn’t even bothered to cover them up. It only confirmed what I had already known. She was full fledged junkie. Not for long, though.

I knew he was coming before I heard him. Just sensed it I guess. Lance was riding to the rescue. But it wasn’t Raychel’s rescue. It was his own rescue. I waited until I could almost feel him. Then I wheeled with a forward fist and caught him flush in the face. I hit him so hard he lifted off the ground before landing with a thud. I had hit a home run. But it wasn’t enough. A single punch wasn’t what Lance deserved.

I fell on Lance and began jackhammering him with my right hand, words flying in my mind.

evil piece of crap won't fight back not this time I'm gonna teach you not to help her she needed you but you won't help cause if you do she'll leave you for not getting junk for her what could you do was be a man and help the helpless if you won't do it I will you evil piece of crap

He was pulp when I stopped. I wasn’t tired. No one had pulled me away from him. I just remembered what I was there to do. I grabbed Raychel and we flew out the door. Away from Safehaven. Horrible name for a den of artists and junkies. Laura said Raychel was screaming. Maybe she was. She would scream more before she was through.

Raychel was too weak to fight me. Or she really wanted to go. She fell into the passenger seat of my car easily and waited as I ran around to the driver’s side. I was in the car and we sped away.

I tried to look in my rearview mirror to see if we were being followed but I couldn’t see anything because half of my apartment was packed in the back of the car and obstructing my view. I had everything I needed. Raychel, on the other hand, only

had the clothes on her back. I would buy new clothes for her later. Now we had a long drive ahead of us.

Raychel needed help.

I knew where to get it.

We were off to my home in North Dakota.

I had a doctor I could trust there.

He specialized in MMTs.

Methadone Maintenance Treatments.

That's how I beat my heroin addiction.

That was how Raychel would win her battle.

Before she could begin to fight, though, Raychel had to escape her present situation. Only after purging her life of the leeches at Safehaven would she have even a prayer breaking her addiction. Without help, she was an overdose waiting to happen.

Her poetry screamed for help. I was the one who answered.