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WITNESS
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Online Edition

Witness

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Older than time, I have seen civilizations come and go. It's always the same, growth begets power and power begets greed, and that is their undoing. I look like I am in my thirties because that's when it happened. I have no idea what really happened. I was there but clueless. I didn't have the brain power to articulate it at the time. One minute I'm normal and reached my 32nd birthday a month before and at the time that was old age! I was considered a senior citizen. The next minute I am walking into this strange fog. Then I am immortal! Yes, that's what I said, immortal. Trust me after a while I have tried to kill myself every which way you can, I even got pretty creative with it, but I'd wake up healed and breathing. It's like being trapped in my own personal nightmare. I am an abomination of humankind. What am I? Am I, a monster, an evil spirit, some kind of demon? I don't think so, I am just unlucky.

After resolving to the fact, that I was going to live forever I began learning everything I could, amassed a fortune so I could live comfortably. Maybe that's my purpose, to witness key moments in human history? My favourite invention through out all of times is the dryer. At the end of the day, I love going to bed with a fresh made bed and warm blankets. It's one of my guilty pleasures. Fresh from the dryer, smelling like fresh summer flowers, and in a quiet dark room, me and my wonderfully warm sheets and blankets.

"Hey sunshine!" Rossie called to me.

"Yeah Rossie?"

"Are you going to sit there and daydream all day or are you going to move your ass and help me?"

"Is it optional?"

Her eyes narrowed and her lips pressed together, the look on her face told me she was biting back words that would be hurtful to my feelings if they escaped her pretty lips. "No," she snapped.

"Alright then, don't get your panties in a bunch," I reluctantly got up and sauntered over to her picking up a shovel.

"And don't you worry a thing about my panties," she snarled.

"Just a phrase Rossie, not a sexual harassment statement I swear."

Her eyes narrowed, "You're lucky the boss likes you."

"I know. I know you like me too," I gave her a wink and continued to the job at hand. Today we were digging up a trench to put a sidewalk in. I did odd jobs here and there. I could easily go and get a better job, but I've been on this kick lately that I want to know how everything works. Like it or not there is going to come a time, when I am the only human left breathing on this god forsaken planet. I am going to need to know every job skill that exists.

The thought depresses me as I continue to dig my hole. The sun comes up and heats things up until it's almost unbearable to work. The day drags on and I am grateful when Rossie calls it quitting time. I've completed my job task. Tomorrow I'll be assigned somewhere else. Which is fine with me. Rossie is fun to work with, I know she doesn't think too highly of me, but she only sees me as a 30 year old kid, and she's divorce and in her 50s. I've buried more married spouses and I have lost count of the number. I've been around for 4094 years give or take a couple years.

I stop at the local bar two blocks from my apartment, grab a nice cold beer and sit quietly at the bar. The TV is on and it's a baseball game playing. I'm not a fan but I watch anyways. A woman enters, slowly walks over to the bar, and grabs the seat beside mine. She motions for the bartender to bring her one of what I am having. I don't look at her, from what I noticed she's in her mid to late forties, she is dressed in an expensive suit, and she smells like trouble.

I drink my beer fast and leave money on the counter and get up to leave.

“Mr. Carter please sit and have another one on me.”

“I’ve had my fill thank you,” she knows my name! How does she know my name? I quickly decide I don’t want to know.

“Mr. Carter, I insist,” she grabbed my arm.

Biting back the urge to leave, I begin to wonder who she is and what does she want.

“I work for the government.” It was like she was reading my mind. What did she want from me? I have always paid my taxes.

She took her drink and asked for another, Sam quickly obliged. I gave Sam a dirty look, but he avoided eye contact and rightfully so.

Mystery lady took two drinks and nodded to an empty table in the back corner. I followed her and took the seat across from her.

“I seem to be at a disadvantage, you know my name, but I don’t know yours.”

She passed me a glass of beer. “My name isn’t important. Trust me, you’re better off not knowing it. I do have a proposition for you.”

I laughed. Took a sip of cold beer, slowly put the glass down on the table. “Well let’s hear it.”

“We are aware of your unique situation.”

I laughed again, “I have a unique situation? I’m all ears, tell me all about it,” Smiling this ought to be good.

“You’re several hundred years old,” she began.

I felt me heart drop to my toes. My brain frantically raced through the last couple hundred years I have lived. I had been careful, I don’t get that close to people, I keep to myself. I use make up and dye my hair to look like I age. I change my name and identity.

“Yes, you were very careful Mr. Carter. It’s just that within the last couple of hundred years we have ears and eyes everywhere. We know your little secret and we are very curious as to how it came about. Are there others like you?”

I took another long drink, not taking my eyes off her. Setting the glass down I swallowed. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Please, don’t play coy. This can be easy, or it can be very, very hard. The choice is yours.”

Didn’t realized when I woke up this morning, I was choosing violence, but here I am. “I’m not interested.” I moved to get up but felt her leg under the table pressing up against mine as an attempt to block my exit.

“It’s not so easy Mr. Carter. And quite frankly we really don’t care if you are interested or not. You work for us now.”

“I thought I lived in the land of the free.”

She snorted a laugh, “we do. Yet, there are limitations to that sentiment.” She slid a business card across the table towards me.

“You start tomorrow morning at 9 am. Please be on time and wear a suit.” She stood up.

For the first time I noticed she was quite beautiful but there was a hardness to her eyes. I made no attempt to pick up the business card.

She started to walk away, paused, and turned back staring me directly in the eyes. “Don’t make me have to hunt you down. I do enjoy a good hunt, but my prey never does.” She smiled, but the smile didn’t reach her eyes. “Have a great day. See you in the morning.” She turned and left.

Sitting staring at the table, I was left with a glass and a half of beer, and an ominous business card which was an invitation to my new vocation. Frowning I drank the rest of my beer before starting on my mystery lady’s glass. Picking up the card and turning it over in my hand, I wondered what the next chapter of my life had in stored for me.

Cleaners, 144 Main Street, Suite 202. The card was white on the back in black ink scrawled 9 am sharp.

Two months later, I flew through training and was now one of the newest members of Alison's team. In between running tests, taking blood samples and swabs. I was being trained to go on secret missions, things that would be dangerous for normal humans but with my quirky genes I was the perfect candidate for the job. I still took extra precautions and watched my media attention; this couldn't last forever. I didn't need anyone else showing up on my door and demand my help or risk exposing me to the world. They gave me a code name "Witness" since I have witnessed so much for the time I have walked on this planet. Now I can add Secret Agent to my resume.