

SCARY LITTLE MONSTER

Alice has told me that during her years in Chicago, she always felt like she was living in the happening place, the center of the universe. The city attracted radical social reformers who tested their ideas on the citizenry of Chicago before moving on to other cities. She watched as societal trends she first observed in Chicago took root in the 1930s and spread across the country in due course. Some people call Chicago the “New York of the Midwest” and I believe Alice would agree with that.

My sister found that living among humans while also feeding on them was easier in Chicago than it had been in Jackson. For one thing, there were so many more people in Chicago and the mix was itinerant and constantly changing. People were not missed as readily as they were in a smaller city. For another thing, in the big city she could be in company, but remain a stranger. Nobody questioned her too much about her origins.

It was a Saturday night at the Dill Pickle Club and Alice had found a large crowd gathered there. The featured speaker was Margaret Sanger, a woman whose mother bore eighteen children before dying at age fifty. Miss Sanger had made it her life’s mission to see birth control legal and available throughout the country.



The lecture proceeded for forty minutes after which the speaker took a five-minute break. During that time, she and her friend, anarchist Emma Goldman, carried a plain brown box around the room and began distributing rubber diaphragms and latex condoms to the attendees.

Suddenly, a gang of local police barged into the club and declared that the women were under arrest for the distribution of obscene materials.

The coffeehouse/tearoom was a regular hangout for anarchists, communists, suffragists, and queer rights activists—all of whom were frequently at odds with the police—and so, predictably, the crowd began to boo and hiss and throw whatever they could get their hands on at the officers.

It did no good, of course, merely caused ten more people to be hustled outside and loaded into the waiting paddy wagon. Clearly, an informant had tipped off the police to the illegal activity and they had come to break up the “Commie” meeting.



Alice was offended less by the political aspects of the intrusion than she was by the forced dispersal of the crowd several hours before she felt it was safe to hunt. She was plenty offended by that!

As the police wagon departed with its ample load, Alice casually followed it, keeping to the shadows. Waiting until it turned down a deserted side street, she leaped onto the floorboard, yanked the driver's side door from its hinges with one hand, and tossed it away. Then she grabbed the driver himself by the neck, pulled him from his seat, and flipped him over her head. He landed with a dull, wet thud against the

front of a brick building and plopped to the sidewalk. She ignored the yelling and banging that she heard coming from the back of the truck.

“Good evening,” she said politely to the second officer across the seat from her who was sitting there frozen in shock.

When the policeman belatedly reached for his sidearm, she plucked it from his hand and flipped it through the door opening, though he never saw her move. Terrified, he tried to scramble out of the vehicle, but she pulled him back and tucked his arm under hers, flashing him a pleasant smile as she calmly drove the truck into a blind alley.

Having found a good spot to abandon it, she cut the truck’s engine, hauled the policeman out, and cheekily transferred his hat to her own head. With a tinkling bell of a giggle, she lifted him slightly off the ground with an arm around his waist and then walked to the back of the van and snapped off the padlock holding the doors shut.

“You’re free to go,” she called cheerfully to the detainees.

Taking a few quick steps as a run-up, Alice leaped onto the roof of the three-story brick building at the end of the alley, hauling her reluctant package with her. Once there, she looked around to make sure that no one could observe them and then said, “I’m so sorry, Mr. Policeman, but everybody’s got to eat!” Then she sank her teeth into his neck hungrily and drank, struggling a little to keep up as his racing heart pumped out his life’s blood extraordinarily fast.

The light left his eyes too soon and his heart stopped shortly after that. Alice dropped him with a thump and made her way home across the rooftops.

The dustup at the Dill Pickle Club was chronicled in the Chicago Tribune the following day. The police department had found the empty paddy wagon, but could not find the body someone had reported nearby—only a large stain on a storefront that appeared to have been scrubbed.

So two officers had gone missing, at least one was presumed dead, and no witnesses to the incident could be found, though the police van had been loaded with anarchists and Commies, who incidentally, were set free. You didn't have to be a genius to solve that riddle. No doubt the consequences to the socially undesirable citizens in the neighborhood were dire, but my sister didn't trouble herself with such human concerns.

Many years later, when Alice discovered how important Margaret Sanger had been to the rights of women in America, she was exceedingly glad that she'd not had the opportunity to drink her for dinner.

Edward

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