

The concrete street seemed even colder with the corpse of an overweight adult male face down against the curb. She had seen dead bodies before, but since joining the homicide division, it was still unnerving. Kimberly Seraphin had come along way down a convoluted path. Just four years ago she was standing in front of an attentive church congregation. A job she adored until heinous massacre of her closest family members. Her mother and two sisters were taken from her that indelible night. Consequently it was the last time she uttered a prayer to her beloved God. This past life was far removed from her now on this early, bitterly cold morning. Questions of this current employment now nagged at the back of her mind, as she stared at the lifeless body before her. The blank countenance was a mask of pure horror. Streaks of dried blood seemingly ran from both ears and the teeth were extracted in a meticulous manner. The eyes seemed transfixed on their final unimaginable sight. Something horrific had been the last image this poor soul had remembered before having his life stolen from him. The coroner and his partner collected various samples to take back to the lab.

Politics as usual encompassed the 5th floor of the precinct when Kim emerged through the windowed door. A manhunt would surely be undertaken soon. Mr. Robert Underwood was the 14th victim of this city's latest psychopath. The M.O. was gruesomely carved into the victim's chest. So far they had been a paraphrasing of Shakespeare's sonnets. However, this particular verse had stumped the literary experts from the detective's office but Kimberly knew where it came from. She had spoken it numerous in front of her congregation back home. The rest of the afternoon was spent jostling about pieces of this

maligned puzzle. The victims had very few things of common interest or so they thought. Presumably the killer had chosen the overweight victims for more artistic space.

Kimberly wondered how much horror people with the same genetic makeup as she could enact such violent demonstrations. How could they be so different from the rest of the human race? “Products of society” was a hackneyed response she heard from most of the clinical psych doctors. Had society birthed such malefic individuals that they found it necessary to carve messages into another’s flesh? More and more she thought back to the night her family was slaughtered. It didn’t seem remotely fair. The loss of one let alone three members of a family at the same instant. The next year of her life would bring chaos and anger. She came close to complete breakdown almost daily. Irony found her training in the police force six months after the death of her family. God had not entered her thoughts until today and a coppery taste swelled in her mouth and she realized she was biting her lip. A faint trickle of blood dropped on the stark white papers on her desk. The months spent in police training had relieved her of the grisly memories and transformed her body into a powerful tool. Marksmanship was her specialty and quickly she rose up the ranks. One day an opening in the homicide division strangely called to her. Many of the veterans were supercilious at her promotion and made life unbearable until she proved herself. The amount of intellect and imagination were her best defenses. She quickly became a vital part of this close-knit team. The group conducted their affairs with tacit responses and esoteric gestures. Other members of the precinct were wary of the group’s intentions. All had extraordinary backgrounds not initiated in the police force.

Who would want to do that kind of work anyway? The gore seen by these people had to affect them somehow.

Kim fingered a couple of pages the dust collected bible they had kept from a previous murder investigation. The book of Job was her main focus right now. She had to find that passage and expunge any clues that might yield these killings.