

TAYLOR, MISSISSIPPI

THIS IS A CRIME SCENE, NOT A PLACE FOR AMATEURS...I SUGGEST THE TWO OF YOU HEAD BACK TO TOWN.

THERE'S EVEN ONE OF THOSE NEW AGE JOINTS THERE, WITH CRYSTALS AN' SHIT.

MY PARTNER IS BEING INDELICATE, BUT HE IS CORRECT--NO MATTER YOUR GOOD INTENTIONS, WE CANNOT RISK OUR INVESTIGATION BEING COMPROMISED.

WE DO NOT WISH TO HINDER YOUR EFFORTS, OFFICERS.

I AM JOSEPH LISTENS-TO-WIND. MY FRIEND'S NAME IS DRESDEN.

I'D BEEN AROUND ENOUGH LAW ENFORCEMENT TO KNOW FEDS WHEN I SAW THEM...

...AND I WASN'T IMPRESSED.

HARRY DRESDEN, HUH? YOU'RE TALLER THAN YOU LOOK ON VIDEO.

AND YOU ARE...?

WHOEVER THEY WERE, THEY SEEMED TO KNOW WHO AND WHAT I AM. IN MY AGITATED STATE, THOUGH, I DIDN'T STOP TO WORRY ABOUT HOW THAT MIGHT BE.



I'M AGENT BIGGS AND THIS IS AGENT LYTLE.

SERIOUSLY? WELL, AT LEAST YOU'RE APPROPRIATELY NAMED.



WATCH YOUR MOUTH, PAL. YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE DEALING WITH.

SURE I DO. AGENTS BIG AND LITTLE. YOU GUYS SHOULD HAVE YOUR OWN KIDS' SHOW.



I'M GONNA BE PROFESSIONAL AND OFFER YOU ONE LAST CHANCE TO SCURRY HOME.

AFTER THAT, ALL BETS ARE OFF.



WHAT'S THE LINE FROM THAT MOVIE? GO AHEAD, MAKE MY DAY.

DRESDEN, ENOUGH!

I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW DAMNED TIRED I WAS OF PEOPLE IN POSITIONS IN AUTHORITY GETTING IN THE WAY OF ME HELPING PEOPLE.

THERE WAS NOTHING I WANTED MORE IN THAT MOMENT THAN TO SHAKE OFF LISTENS-TO-WIND'S GRIP AND WIPE THAT SNEER FROM LYTLE'S FACE WITH MY FIST...



...BUT THEN MOUSE
PARKED HIMSELF IN
FRONT OF ME.


HE MAY LOOK LIKE
JUST A BIG CANINE,
BUT HE'S FAR MORE
THAN THAT.

A TEMPLE DOG,
POSSESSED OF
SUPERNATURAL
ANCESTRY, HIGHLY
INTELLIGENT--BUT
ABOVE EVERYTHING
ELSE, A FRIEND.

HE WAS PROTECTING
ME FROM MYSELF AS
MUCH AS FROM LYTLE,
AND KNOWING THAT
WAS ENOUGH TO
DRAIN MY ANGER.



DON'T
WORRY. HE'S
NOT WORTH THE
TROUBLE.



WE DESIRE NO
CONFLICT WITH
YOU, GENTLEMEN,
BUT WE HAVE
JURISDICTION
HERE.

YOU'LL EXCUSE US AS WE
GO ABOUT THE BUSINESS
OF SOLVING THIS CRIME. I
TRUST YOU WILL RESPECT
THE LAW AND STAY OUT
OF OUR WAY...



...IF NOT,
WE CANNOT
GUARANTEE
YOUR
SAFETY.



YOU MIND
TELLING ME
WHAT THAT
WAS ALL
ABOUT?



WHAT JURISDICTION ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT? WHAT AGENCY ARE THEY FROM?

AN AGENCY THAT DOESN'T OFFICIALLY EXIST.



WONDERFUL.

THIS IS DEEPLY TROUBLING. THE ONLY REASON THEY WOULD BE HERE IS IF THE DECISION HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE TO EXTERMINATE THE WOLF PEOPLE.



IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?

VERY DOUBTFUL.

AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS A POOR HISTORY OF DECIDING WHICH PEOPLE SHOULD BE KILLED TO PROTECT FARMERS.

MOREOVER, THIS ATTACK DOES NOT FIT THE WOLF PEOPLE'S PATTERN.

ARE YOU SAYING SOMETHING ELSE AROUND HERE COULD HAVE CAUSED THAT BLOODBATH?



IF THE WOLF PEOPLE HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE, THE DESTRUCTION WOULD HAVE BEEN FAR WORSE.

I WANT YOU TO DO A LITTLE DIGGING IN TOWN. SEE WHAT YOU CAN UNCOVER THERE.

DISCREETLY.

I WILL SURVEY THE WILD.

I WANTED TO BE ANGRY AT BEING TREATED LIKE A SIDEKICK, BUT IT'S HARD TO BE PISSED WHEN YOU'RE AWESTRUCK.

HIS TRANSFORMATION HAD BEEN INSTANTANEOUS, EFFORTLESS.

I SAT THERE FOR A FEW MINUTES, FEELING VERY SMALL...



...BUT I WAS EAGER TO BE PROACTIVE AFTER THE FRUSTRATIONS OF THE LAST SEVERAL HOURS, SO MOUSE AND I HEADED INTO WHAT PASSED FOR TAYLOR'S DOWNTOWN.



YOU WANT TO CUT RIGHT TO THE HEART OF A PLACE, FIND THE LOCAL WATERING HOLE.



IT'S WHERE PEOPLE GO TO FIND SYMPATHY, DENIGRATE THEIR NEIGHBORS, AND SPREAD GOSSIP LIKE THEIR LIVES DEPEND ON IT.

NICE LOOKING DOG. I TAKE IT HE'S, AH, WELL TRAINED? THIS PLACE MAY NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT WE LIKE TO KEEP IT CLEAN...

PLEASE, I'M THE ONE WHO'S MORE LIKELY TO MAKE A MESS.

WE'RE JUST PASSING THROUGH-- I PROMISE HE WON'T GET IN ANYONE'S WAY.



IN THAT CASE, WHAT'LL IT BE?

BEER. NOT IMPORTED. BEYOND THAT, WHATEVER YOU HAVE ON TAP.



HERE YOU GO. NOW...

...WHAT DID YOU REALLY COME IN HERE FOR?

