

PWP Collaborative Short, Short Story - 1999

Part I – Tom Wright

The vehicle passed Christine's '94 Nissan like it was standing still. The red and blue lights flashed in her eyes, blinding for just a second. A moment later, another set of colored flashing lights streaked by.

"Something's up." Randy, in the front passenger's seat leaned back and ran his long, spindly fingers through his scruffy brown hair. His eyes and face looked blank, the picture of indifference.

Christine didn't comment. Instead she watched the emergency vehicles move further up the road, beacons in the moonless night. Suddenly, the lights turned off to the left, and her chest tightened. She swallowed hard, then faced Randy. "They're turning down our street."

This woke her passenger up. Randy leaned forward, his eyes widening. "They are."

Part II – Elisa Drachenberg

Then he slumped back in his seat again. She almost had him going there. Women, always worrying. What the hell could happen in their street. The city had planned to tear down the houses long ago, but the tenants refused to move. Where could they go, as long as the rent was cheap they would put up with rats and cockroaches. And the rent was cheap in Desert-Delight. God, who thought up these names?

"Our street," Christine had called it. What a farce. This was never going to be his street, no matter how low he had sunk. He closed his eyes. The stench of garbage assaulted him as soon as Christine turned into "our street." There were no streetlights in this neighborhood and at two o'clock in the morning people were usually asleep. Most people, that is. Now the Garcias, they were different, they fought and screamed with endless energy, their fury did not know any time.

"Maybe Garcia finally killed his wife. Wouldn't that be great?" Christine did not respond. He closed his eyes again and felt the jabs of a beginning migraine. In the distance the sirens wailed on, the sound crept into his head and exploded over and over again. "Randy, Randy, not a dime for candy - Randy, Randy....," they howled and jeered.

"Randy, Randy... oh my God," Christine screamed as she braked. Randy opened his eyes not sure if he was still in his childhood nightmare. Then he looked outside and without warning he neatly vomited all over Christine's pride, her '94 Nissan.

Part III – John Rust

The cop's head bounced across the hood of the car. Christine screamed as blood whipped across the windshield.

Randy spat the last bit of bile onto the vomit-covered floorboard. Christine's screaming painfully rattled his brain.

Oh God. No way this is happening. No way.

Flashes from 9mm handguns lit up the night. Desert-Delight residents ran through the street screaming. Were their parents among them?

"We're not stopping it!" Randy somehow heard one of the Mesa police officers shout over the gunfire and Christine's hysterics.

He saw its outline framed by the muzzle flashes. The tall, lanky body. Scales thick like armor. Curved, razor-like teeth. And those eyes, those blood red eyes.

Blood red eyes staring at him.

Part IV – Kate Robinson

"Get it in reverse, give it all the gas its got, " he screamed with more passion than he ever knew he had. *Christ Almighty, this is worse than Jurassic Park.* He had heard these lame stories before, stuff in the tabloids, all that crap about little grey aliens and reptoids and Pleiadians circulating in the 1980s newsletters. The same crap was all over the Internet now. Only it wasn't crap. Where the hell were the Pleiadians? According to stories, earth's space brothers weren't going to allow any non-human domination of earth when push came to shove.

The seven-foot creature responded to the backing of the car with the intelligence of a primate and the speed of a lizard. It made a dazzling ninja leap-kick forward and snagged the front bumper of the Nissan with a size fifteen clawed foot, clutching at a strange powerdrill-like weapon hanging from its belt. Christine shuddered in a continuous wail. Rubber burned the pavement, stray rocks spraying everywhere.

"Keep your foot on the gas, keep it down!" Randy pushed on Christine's leg fiercely. The Nissan surged back in jerks as the bumper peeled away.

Part V – Geri Davis

This can't be happening! Christine's mind screamed. But that *thing*, Randy's shouts, his forceful hand keeping her foot pressed down on the accelerator... "Lord, Oh lord, oooh, lord," Christine gasped in a senseless litany.

She was unable to focus, unable to articulate, unable to comprehend just what the hell was going on. She had to keep in command of herself, and the car as it backed down the street at high speed.

"Oooh, no," There were people all over, running out into the street into the path of her dangerously swerving, out-of-control vehicle.

Please... Any second now Bobby Ewing would step out of the shower, smile at Pam as he dried off and convince Christine "...why honey, you're jist havin' a bad dream."

Part VI – Agnes Franz

Out of control and in reverse or not, the Nissan slapped Christine and Randy around the corner and hit smack into the Desert Delight Circle K front window. Crash! Shards of glass flew over the car roof, skated over the concrete parking area. The car stopped dead. They both felt dead. No cops in sight. Why weren't they out trying to kill the monster? Was any of the cops still alive? "Betcha that the two of us are in sci-fi hell." Randy's voice was thick and raspy.

Boy, the Nissan sure pissed off the mutant! The lizard leaper bent down to deliver what might be a death bite to the car, with Christine and Randy still inside. No, it started to lick up the moist red blood of the cop Christine had hit. It licked the hood hoggishly at first, then it stopped, shook its head. "The cop's blood," Christine said, her voice began to crack. "He doesn't like it." She squinted at Randy, waiting for some reaction.

Part VII – Marleen Baird

The Crodlopoid gagged, then burped a cloud of putrid, moist air. His monstrous red-streaked eyes rolled upward. The alligator-like mouth opened to 90 degrees and he began to claw at his tongue. Five-inche fangs dug into the green flesh, ripping it, shredding it. Blood poured from his mouth, black as tar. Screaming some ungodly curse to the sky, he strained upward on his hind legs. His lumbering body swerved out of control.

"Get out!" shouted Randy, puling Christine across the car seat. Christine ran to the back of the Circle K but Randy could not help watching. The monster's body swayed, then recovered. Now his screaming sounded more like a plea. Then he toppled, crushing the Nissan.

The silence, after the sirens, the screams, the window crashing, the horrible wail from the creature and the crumbling car, made the earth stand still. Only eyes moved as dumbstruck people watched the Crodlopoid's body shrink. The Inky blood slipped back into the mouth as if in a film seen in reverse. The mouth closed and puckered into itself. The bulging red eyes sunk into the skull, which folded and compacted. The thick arms and legs tucked into the belly, which rose like bread dough, then compressed again, covering all.

Sitting on top of the concave Nissan, to this day, is a scaly basketball.

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Every city has a massive piece of artwork for which the citizens paid too much money and which dominates an otherwise attractive public gathering spot. Only in Desert-Delight did they get their money's worth.

The end.