

Rebecca hates what she has become. This occupation, if you can call it one, certainly has its perks. The pay is great, she makes her own hours, and she travels abroad. She is good at what she does and because of this, clients pass her name around to enlist her services. She has attended state dinners with members of Congress. On numerous occasions she has had front row seats to the Academy Awards. Executive officers of major companies have her number on speed dial. Her numerous checking accounts have no less than six-figures in each one. All of the houses and cars she owns are paid in cash at the time of purchase with nothing traceable back to her. With all this access to power and influence you would believe she enjoys being an empowered and accomplished individual in her industry. Yet through the years, this job has eaten away at her soul. The morals she once held onto growing up in San Antonio are almost non-existent. It is to the point she has to vomit before each meeting in order to regain her composure.

It was the same way when Rebecca started in this career. She would have to pretend to be someone or something that really was not her. It got easier after a while. She began to convince herself this job was the only way to make ends meet. The better she became at her job, the easier it was to convince herself she was not doing anything wrong. Back home in Texas, her family believes her to be a consultant. Rebecca tries to avoid detailed questions when asked about her job. She usually provides them with a vague description of a recent trip to Los Angeles or Chicago. Name dropping someone currently trending in the news keeps them off her back for any more details. The truth is she dropped out of college two months before graduation. She was burnt out from working and studying so hard to understand the subject; only to barely pass the assignments or exams. She wasn't able to secure an internship, and no company wanted to hire someone who was barely going to graduate. So she gave up everything she worked for and quit

school. Rebecca needed money and could not face her family, so she made the decision to enlist in the military. Unlike college, she excelled in every category and was top of her class. She trained in various fields and even had combat experience, but was injured during a training exercise and discharged. Unemployed, Rebecca needed money yet again and going to her family was not an option. A friend told her about a company looking for available women, but warned her it wasn't the most legitimate of professions. Seven years later, the rest is history.

It's almost midnight on a Saturday, and Rebecca gracefully walks towards the revolving doors of the five-star Manhattan hotel. Even at this hour, the courtyard is full of guests and visitors in route to nightclubs, after parties or one of a dozen nearby establishments that offer illegal services she knows very well. As some individuals and couples pass Rebecca, they can't help but stare. She feels judgment coming from behind their eyes. Rebecca cannot help but think if they know why she is there.

*"Has it become that obvious? What do they know about me anyways? Even if they are right, screw them for their judgmental thoughts and stares!"*

Rebecca stops before the doors and peers at herself in the window. She looks closer to try and recognize the person looking back at her. Staring intently at her reflection, Rebecca sees someone she does not recognize. The long blue evening gown, black heels with matching purse did nothing but compliment her beauty. Yet she instantly begins to pass judgment. Feelings of repeated punches to her gut cause her to throw up in a flower bed. The thought of not going through with this crosses her mind while she wipes her mouth. She could run. She could disappear. Yet the profession is all she knows now. This type of job is not really something you can put on a resume when applying to be a sales associate at the mall. While she has grown to

hate what will eventually happen tonight; she looks forward to knowing this is going to be all over in less than an hour.

*“Yet I’ll be back in this same situation before I know it.”*

Rebecca enters the lobby of the hotel and pauses to take a look around. She turns and walks towards the noises coming from the hotel bar. Standing at the entrance of the bar, she scans the room looking for her contact. Tasting vomit still in her mouth, she reaches into her purse and pulls out a breath mint. She is able to compose herself before she breaks down again. While adjusting her purse strap she hears someone call out to her.

"Miss Moreno?"

Rebecca looks up and makes eye contact with a well-dressed gentleman. Standing taller than her, the well-dressed gentleman raises an eyebrow waiting for a reply.

“Miss Moreno?”

“Yes?”

She has never used this particular name before. It is surprising she remembers the name at all with all the ones she has gone by. Sometimes she uses names the clients suggest, other times she comes up with names herself. “Miss Moreno” was her eleventh grade Marine Science teacher. Rebecca always thought “Alejandra Moreno” was the most exotic name she has ever heard. An exotic name is what she needed for this particular job.

"The Ambassador is ready for you, please follow me."

Well-dressed Man leads Rebecca through the bar to a booth in the corner bathed in shadows. A rotund man scoots out from behind the table and stands. Rebecca smiles when her eyes meet the Ambassador's. The Ambassador grabs her right hand, and kisses it gently.

"Good evening, Ambassador. It's a pleasure to finally meet you."

"The pleasure is mine, Ms. Moreno. Come. Join me please."

Rebecca accepts the offer and sits on his side of the booth. While the well-dressed man stands a few feet away from the booth with his back to the couple. Reading the profile of the Ambassador, Rebecca knew he was a large man, but she did not know he was morbidly obese. He dresses the way one might in this position of government, but his girth and appearance physically disgust Rebecca. She courtesy laughs at a joke the Ambassador tells to show interest in him and it works. The Ambassador laughs at the joke too and puts his hand on Rebecca's exposed thigh. Her stomach turns and she belittles him with her thoughts.

*"Get your hand off me you fat sack of pudding."*

If she could get away with it out here, she would stab him in the eye with his salad fork. She just smiles and keeps the Ambassador happy.

"Mister Ambassador, you don't want to buy your date a drink first?"

The Ambassador chuckles and calls to the well-dressed man, "Henri, get Miss Moreno a drink."

"Yes sir, right away."

Henri leaves the area and the Ambassador leans closer to Rebecca. It takes a lot of energy not to cough from his smell. His breath reeks of alcohol and calling it malodorous would be an insult to foul smelling odors. Likely due to the alcohol and Rebecca's slight flirtations, the Ambassador wastes no time trying to take advantage of his date. He runs his fat chubby digits through her red hair.

*"Think of the money. Think of the money. Damn!! No amount of money is worth this deprecation."*

This is an Ambassador though. Other men she has met through this position have been high ranking officials, but no one the stature of the Ambassador. If she is able to satisfy her client, she would have carte blanche to any client she wants. She would be the top with her employers. Rebecca holds back vomit once more. She wants this over and over quickly. "Mister Ambassador, I'm not real thirsty. Do you mind if we skip the drinks and head to your room? Hopefully get to the point of this rendezvous."

"Oh, you sly vixen! Just let me inform Henri of our intentions..."

"Don't bother Henri. He's a smart man; he knows where you'll be."

Rebecca knew with the Ambassador's current condition, she didn't have to make a clear cogent argument. It made completing her job that much easier actually.

"No wonder you're so highly recommended. You get right to the point."

Even with a woman as beautiful as Rebecca being seen with a large man like the Ambassador; they are able to sneak away from the bar without drawing any unwanted attention to themselves. They make their way to elevator and up to his presidential suite; the entire time with Rebecca feigning flirtation by fighting off his advances.

"Wait until the room, sir. We don't want to call any unwarranted attention to ourselves."

It takes few tries for the keycard to work, but by the time they get to the room his slacks are around his ankles. Rebecca playfully teases him as he stumbles through the room.

"You're not wasting time are you Mister Ambassador? Go over to the bed!"

The Ambassador complies as Rebecca opens her purse. Her smile changes to a smirk as she pulls out a small pistol and silencer. She quickly screws on the cylinder and points her weapon at the Ambassador.

"There's just one more thing you bulbous ass..."

Rebecca's arm remains outstretched and vomit rises up from her stomach. The Ambassador trips backwards onto the king size bed. Rebecca does not know if it's from his inebriation or an involuntary reflex to avoid being shot.

“Miss Moreno? What is this?”

She tries hard to pull the trigger, but her muscles will not let her. The vomit reaches her mouth and she can't help but to hurl on the hotel carpet between her and the Ambassador.

*“What the hell is happening? This has become second nature to me, why can't I kill this fat drunkard?”*

The Ambassador tries to rush Rebecca, but she comes back to her senses in time to smash the butt of her pistol to bridge of his nose. The Ambassador moans out in pain as he covers his nose and stumbles back onto the bed. Rebecca does not know what is currently going on with her senses, but for the first time in a long time, she does not want to kill this individual. He probably deserves it for whatever crisis he helped cause, but this fat bastard just helped Rebecca realize she doesn't have the right to be the paid executioner. She puts the gun back in her purse, wipes her mouth with the back of her hand and approaches the Ambassador grabbing him by his bloody tie.

“I don't know what storm you are responsible for to have someone hire me and take you out, but you made me realize this job isn't worth it. Consider this your second chance. Whoever wants you dead is going to send someone else after I leave. You either better quit what you're doing, or get better security. Because when I don't check in tonight, they're going to know something is up and send someone else. Do you understand me?”

The Ambassador nods his head in agreement and Rebecca lets go of his tie. She turns her back to him, adjusts her purse and walks out the door. She presses the call button and

waits. Taking a mint out of her purse she can't help but smile. The elevator doors open as she enters the car and presses the button for the lobby. Her thoughts shift to which untraceable house she is going to be hiding out in for the next couple years. She sees her reflection in the bronze doors of the elevator and for the first time in a long time Rebecca recognizes the person staring back at her.