

THE QUICK AND THE JURASSIC UNDEAD

by

Wayne Kyle Spitzer

A Short Story

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After the time-storm ...

After the dinosaur apocalypse ...

They were in bad shape, and Williams knew it. The quill raptors had struck just when they were most vulnerable—when they were still waking up—and while they were able to fend them off (Ank did most the fending, because Williams had taken a quill early in the attack), the melee had left them cut up and exhausted. Worse, it had left Williams delirious—no matter that he'd managed to pull out the quill before it could deliver much of its poison. Enough remained that walking was difficult even on the smooth, level highway, plus he'd begun to see things—like the huge, Google-style sign which read: WELCOME TO DEVIL'S GORGE: LIKE THE OLD WEST, ONLY BETTER.

To say its oversized gunslinger and buxom saloon girl statues were incongruous with the bleak, rain-drenched landscape would have been an understatement, but there they were, bidding them welcome to a town “forgotten by time, alone against its hills, where adventure and thrills await!”

“You seeing what I’m seeing, Ank?”

The big ankylosaur didn’t respond, not so much as a mew. His gait, however, had slowed—enough to convince Williams that the sign was real and he was seeing it too. Sure enough, after they had taken the indicated exit, a town appeared—a town straight out of *Gunsmoke*, only this one was surrounded by a tall cyclone fence, its upper edge crudely festooned with concertina wire and its base reinforced with sandbags. Moreover, it was *inhabited*, for Williams could clearly see people rushing to greet them—or so he thought until two of the men took hold of the gates beneath the head arch and swung them shut. After that, all that was left to do was to approach the fence with hat in hand so to speak and inquire if perhaps there were a doctor.

“There’s a doctor,” said a man dressed all in black—a man wearing a badge—who reminded Williams for all the world of the gunslinger played by Yul Brynner in *Westworld*. “But care and medicine are rationed, like everything else here. What’s happened? And what are you doing with this ... *thing*?”

Williams started to speak then paused, wondering if he'd finally lost his sanity. For it wasn't just the man in black who looked like he'd stepped out of a western—the entire crowd was dressed in much the same manner, as though they'd raided one of those old-time photography boutiques you used to see at the State Fair. “Quill raptors,” he said at last, and added, “They caught us early this morning, before it was even daylight. I took a quill in the arm, my, ah, playing arm. As for this ‘thing,’” He indicated the ankylosaur. “His name is Ank.”

Ank mewed at the sound of his name and stepped forward, causing a riot of steel as several men aimed their rifles, including the man in black. Williams hurried to place himself between his friend and the weapons. “He’s gentle as a cow, I can assure you. Note the eyes ... there’s no light in the irises. No presence of ... them.” He indicated the queer lights in the sky, which bled in and out of each other silently. “He hasn’t been *touched*, you see. Not like the others.” He turned to face Ank and gestured with his hands. “Sit, Ank. Lay down. It is time to sleep.”

The great beast, which was the size of a small bus, looked at him, flies buzzing about its cow-brown eyes. At last it lowered on its haunches and everyone gasped—everyone, that is, except the man in black, who only tightened his grip on his smoky-barreled weapon and seemed to calculate cold equations.

“That’s it, Ank,” said Williams patiently. “Now lay down. It’s time to sleep.”

More gasps as the great, armored, turtle-like creature slid its front legs forward—then sloughed over on its side, causing rainwater collected in the mudpuddles of the ruddy road to splash and the fence to rattle slightly from the impact. Someone giggled, a woman—a woman dressed as a saloon girl—whom Williams was attracted to the instant he saw her.

“That’s enough,” said the man in black—the Sheriff, the Marshal, whatever—and the tittering stopped. “So you can make it do tricks. My question is—can you make it kill, also? Can you say, ‘Sic ‘em, boy,’ for example, and send him crashing through this fence?”

Williams approached the ankylosaur and stroked him between the eyes. “Crash through the fence—possibly. But kill? No. Not people. Not in a million years. He *likes* people. There’s, ah, no accounting for taste.” He made eye contact with the Marshal. “I dare say he even likes you.”

More titters—from the saloon girl and one other, a ruggedly-hand-some man who was also wearing a badge, but not dressed all in black. “I would remind the deputy of his duties to Devil’s Gorge,” said the Marshal, and to the saloon girl: “And saloon girl’s of their place.”

“And I would remind the Marshal that there’s a sick man standing hat in hand outside our gates ... and that I’ve got a duty, as well.” A man stepped forward from the crowd—an unarmed man. A mild-mannered man in a trim vest who looked as though he might be a barber ... or a country doctor. “A raptor quill doesn’t have to be a big thing if it’s removed promptly, which this young man has done. But that wound has to be treated.” He looked up at the Marshal with his own cow-brown eyes. “Most of us came to be here through these gates and under similar questioning ... I see no reason why we should turn this one man away.”

“I agree,” said the deputy.

“So do I,” said the saloon girl, clearly not remembering her place. “Can you play that guitar, mister?”

“Williams,” he said, and took off his hat. He approached the fence at once cautious and cavalier. “And ma’am, I can play this guitar like the angels sing. Once my arm heals, you understand.”

“Well, that settles it,” said someone else. “Ain’t none of the saloon’s been the same since the power went out. A little live music would be good for morale.”

“And what about his ‘friend?’ Are you just going to tie him up with the rest of the horses?” The Marshal was beyond annoyed. “Him in here, *it* out there. Do you see what could go wrong here?”

“I see that that dinosaur would be a site more useful than a mule for getting thing’s done around here,” said Someone Else. “Why not let him in? You can see with your own two eyes there’s no alien fire in ‘im.”

“Jesus, Mary and Joseph,” the Marshal said at last. “You people take the cake, you know that? You really take the fucking cake.” He lowered his weapon at last. “All right. Looks like it’s just not my day. I’ve got two deputies down with the flu and that means I’m not in a position to argue with the whole damn town.” He made eye contact with each and every person who had gone against him, including his own deputy. “But, when you find the time, the more vocal of you might want to take a walk out to Serpent’s Butte ... and remember our shared history.”

He turned to Williams. “You’ve got some time on the inside, I ain’t saying how much. But the *thing* stays outside the fence. The rules of Devil’s Gorge are simple: Make yourself useful. Don’t break the law. And check your weapons at the armory until called upon to use them.” He motioned to his deputy. “Open the man door.”

Williams turned to Ank. “Okay, *stay*. It’s time to sleep. *Back*. I will be back.”

He stepped through the man door but was stopped by the Marshal.

“Your guitar case. I’ll need you to open it up.”

Williams paused as though taken aback. “It’s just a guitar ...”

“Then you’ll have no problem showing it to me.”

Williams looked from the Marshal to the deputy, and finally the saloon girl. Everyone nodded.

“Okay,” he said, and crouched, opening the case. He looked up at the Marshal. “Satisfied?”

“As long as you don’t play it in my company.” He spat upon the ground. “I’ve got no use for a guitar man.”

They all started walking, everyone talking at once (except, of course, the Marshal, who watched Williams’ every move, his lips pressed tightly closed).

“You can stay at the inn above the Long Branch Saloon,” said the girl, “if you’ll agree to play your guitar in the tavern most nights. Can you play anything else? There’s a beautiful piano set up just past—”

“How did you and that beast ever hook up, anyway?” asked Someone Else. “I ain’t never seen anything like it. Say, do you think we could get him to—”

“A raptor quill is nothing to fool with, son, even if it was removed quickly,” said the doctor. “First thing we’ll do is clean up that wound. Then we’ll make sure no remnants got left behind when—”

“Don’t let Marshal Rimshaw here scare you— not too much, anyway,” said the deputy. “Everyone knows he’s just a big pussycat. Decker’s the name, by the way. John Deck—”

There was a tremendous *crash!* behind them and they all turned around, and Williams was horrified to see that Ank had rolled over the security fence like an M1-A1 Abrams tank, and was now plodding to catch up with them.

Marshal Rimshaw wasted no time and had already squeezed off several rounds before Williams was able to holler to the others, “Hold your fire!”—and to his amazement, they did. Rimshaw’s slugs, meanwhile, only bounced off Ank’s armor with complete impotence—until the Marshal got wise to the problem and sighted one of the creature’s eyes. He was just beginning to squeeze when Decker knocked his barrel away with his own and targeted Rimshaw himself. “Not today, Marshal,” he said, adding, “Maybe tomorrow. Maybe the next day. But not today.”

Neither of the men moved or said anything for what seemed a long time. At length Ank lumbered up to them and began licking Rimshaw’s face, knocking his hat off with his great, slimy tongue and lapping at him again and again until it seemed he had been dunked into a trough of fetid water.

And everyone laughed—everyone, that is, except Rimshaw—not out of mean-spiritedness but out of sheer surprise, and because they were convinced the Marshal would begin laughing too. But he did not, and by the time Ank had sated his affection the man who was Marshal appeared to be drenched in anger as well as spit.

“No,” he said at last, and picked up his hat before swatting away Decker’s rifle with surprising violence, “today is just not my day at all.” He wiped his face with his handkerchief and then redonned his cover. “There it is. You’ve all had a good laugh at my expense ... and I’ve had a good reminder of two things I already knew.” He began pacing slowly and everyone gave him a wide girth. “The first is that a 10-ton dinosaur, when left alive to do so, does precisely what it wants to do. In this case, it wanted to get to its master—this man, right here, *fucking Guitar Man*. A man admitted to this encampment against my wishes and in flagrant disregard of my authority. A man whom any asshole could tell you is and will remain nothing but trouble. The second is that there’s but two kinds of people in Devil’s Gorge—those that are the Law, and those that ain’t. Me and those deputies I trust are the Law. You ain’t.” He gestured at the hills, at Serpent’s Butte. “Now I know none of you have forgotten what happened the last time we went through this. What happened the last time you all acted up. And I’m here to tell you, the same thing can happen again.”

He shifted his gaze to Williams, who had crouched low to the ground with his guitar case and remained there throughout the action, and sneered. “Ready to play a song, were ya? Well know this. You’ve got forty-eight hours to heal up and get on down the road with your stupid guitar and your goddamn dinosaur. If you’re here one second longer, so help me God, I’ll have you shot.”

Several people gasped and Williams realized by looking at their faces that they were reliving a nightmare they had all experienced before.

“And I’ll kill the dinosaur, too. Two shots. One through each eye. Let’s see his goddamn armor stop that.” He moved to leave then paused. “Oh, and Decker, give your firearm and badge to Smithson. You’re fired.” He gestured at the downed gates. “Smithson, guard the goddamn hole.”

Then he tipped his hat to everyone present and was gone.

WILLIAMS WANTED THREE things more than anything in the world when he entered the Long Branch Saloon after being treated by Doc Allen and watering Ank—a tall glass of water for himself (or twenty), a cold beer, and the answer to a single question:

“Why do y’all talk and dress like it’s 1865?”

The saloon girl—her name was Katrina—didn’t respond right away, only sat his water and beer in front of him and busied herself by wringing out a bar towel in the basin. At last she said, “You have to remember, Mr. Williams, this place was a tourist attraction before it was a functioning city. Before the Flashback. Those of us who worked here were encouraged to talk that way—it was part of our job.” She laughed. “It’s funny, because we found ourselves talking that way even when we weren’t at work. My mother said it was because dialects are contagious.” She propped her elbows against the bar and leaned toward him, and he had to struggle not to glance at her cleavage. “Listen to you. You’ve only been here a couple of hours and you’re already saying, ‘y’all.’”

Williams smiled and tipped his beer to his lips; it was warm, stale. She was precisely right, of course. Language was contagious. The entire old-time vibe of this place was contagious. He watched as she bent over a bin of beers and began collecting bottles for the shelf. She was contagious.

“But the clothes ... that Marshal ...”

“The clothes,” She laughed again. “Well, there’s a couple of reasons for that. I guess you would have had to have been here right after the Flashback. We lost power sooner than most, is what I understand. So when the clean clothes started running out we turned toward Fly’s Photo Studio; it was easier than washing everything by hand. You have to understand, things were no different here than they were everywhere else during the Flashback: we were fighting for our very survival. Tyrannosaurs, saber-toothed cats, quill raptors— if it had teeth and claws, it wanted a piece of us. That’s how it all began, anyway. As for why it’s continued, well, look no further than Marshal Rimshaw and his

deputies—not Decker, mind you, but his real deputies. The ones who got the illness. Ha! The flu. You should see ‘em: pale and black-eyed as serpents, just lying there in the Rio Grande like zombies.” She leaned toward him over the bar again and he caught a whiff of her fragrance, and there was a stirring in his groin he hadn’t felt since, well, since he couldn’t remember.

“What do you mean, like zombies?”

“I mean like zombies, like men who are dead but still walking, or lying there staring at the ceiling. See, something attacked us only a few weeks after the Flashback ... something ... *new*. At first everyone just assumed it was a rogue raptor, because it didn’t have a pack—that was the first thing. But then it started talking, like a parrot, I suppose, saying things like ‘Pig’ and ‘Eggsucker,’” She laughed her contagious laugh. “Can you imagine? A raptor calling you names as it attacked you? Deputies Creebald and Teller put up one hell of a fight, you can be sure, and they did eventually kill it, with Rimshaw’s help, but all of them were wounded in the fight, and the deputies worst of all. After that, things started changing around here. At first it was just Creebald and Teller acting strangely, abusing their power, you might say, telling me not to forget to paint on my mole, or insisting Doc Allen wear that ridiculous little vest. But then Marshal Rimshaw started getting into the act, as well, and before any of us knew it we were living in a kind of police state. Decker was the only one who didn’t pile on, which is funny, because he was the only one not wounded in the fight with the raptor. It all came to a head when Deputy Teller had his way with one of the saloon girls—Molly, was her name—after which there was a full-blown shootout between the Marshal and his deputies—not Decker, he tried to maintain the peace—and the rest of the town.” She unscrewed the cap from a bottle of beer and took a swig, then concealed it behind the bar. “You didn’t see that. Anyway, the town didn’t fair so well, and now there’s a row of graves out by Serpent’s Butte.” She paused, locking her beautiful brown eyes up in his own. “They were good men, Williams. The best I’ve

ever known. And now they're just as dead as that raptor." She snapped the bar towel in her hands and then wiped the counter. "And that's why we all talk and dress this way." She indicated his empty glass. "You want another?"

"Sure," he said.

She pulled one from the wall and unscrewed its cap, sat it down in front of him.

At last she said, "So what about you? What's your story? And how did you come to be travelling with an armored dinosaur?"

Williams took a swig of his beer and then glanced out the saloon window, where Ank was standing with several horses. "Well, Ank and I don't talk much about it. We just ... sort of crashed into each other at the intersection of his life and mine. As for myself, I guess you might say ... that I'm seeking Tanelorn." He laughed a little to himself. "Do you know what that means? To be seeking Tanelorn?"

She shook her head slowly, her eyes never leaving his own.

"Yeah, well, who would? It's something from an old novel—one I only partially remember. But what it means to me is to feel homesick ... not just homesick, but homesick for a place you've never been, or don't entirely remember." He toyed with his beer distantly, began peeling the wrapper from its smooth, brown glass. "And to want to find that place. See, I wasn't exactly myself when Ank first found me—rescued me, for all intents. I had, how do you say it? Amnesia. I knew things had been different ... I just wasn't sure how. I guess I just knew that something terrible had happened, not only to me but to the entire world ... and that there hadn't been flesh-eating dinosaurs waiting to eat you around every corner before." Now they both laughed. "And I knew that I'd been separated from something," He glanced up from the bottle. "*Someone*, who had been vitally important to me. Someone who was ... is ... waiting for me even now."

He stared into her eyes which betrayed a hint of disappointment.

“And that they are north of here, somewhere.” He quaffed the rest of his beer and sat the empty bottle on the counter, a little too hard. “And that’s it ... that’s all I know.” He winked at her. “All I want to know, if you want the truth. So long as I’m in your company.”

She quickly recomposed herself, staring back at him with something like bedroom eyes, and said, “I’ve always been a sucker for a man with a guitar. I know you’re still healing ... but you’re sure you won’t play something?”

He didn’t respond right away, only continued looking at her. At last he managed, “Look, Katrina, there’s something—”

And then there was a scream, a ragged, wet, blood-curdling scream, which came from the general area of the downed gates, and when Williams looked instinctively out the saloon’s window he saw that while the horses had remained completely un-phased, Ank had vanished without a trace.

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THE MAN—SMITHSON—WAS dead, all right, but his killer or killers hadn’t been content just to carry him away or let him lie. No, whoever or whatever had killed him had felt the need to leave a calling card—his severed head—which they’d sat atop a thick, wooden post so that the vertical railroad tie resembled a grizzly kind of totem pole. Otherwise, save for a nearby pile of spurned entrails, there was no trace of him.

“Now I want you all to take a long, hard look at this,” said Rimshaw, projecting his voice so that everyone could hear him, even those in the back of the mob. “And I want you to remember it next time someone gets the wise idea to question my judgement.”

Williams scanned the crowd, Katrina beside him, trying to gauge their mood, seeking signs of a lynch tenor. Because Rimshaw had a point: if he hadn’t been allowed into the compound the gates would still be standing ... which meant he was responsible, however indirectly, for

Smithson's death—assuming the townsfolk even believed the attack had come from outside. If they believed otherwise, that meant the door was open to blame Ank—regardless if he was herbivorous or not, and regardless of the absurdity that a quadrupedal animal, or any animal, could leave such a gruesome calling card.

Something attacked us only a few weeks after the Flashback ... something ... new.

Something which had talked, she'd said.

"Now the way I see it is there's only two possibilities," continued Rimshaw. "And that is that a man, or men, did this ... or that that armored dinosaur has been touched all along and is not what he appears. If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times: these things are *not* dinosaurs—not animals. They're weapons made of flesh and blood, sent here by *them*"—he indicated the lights in the sky—"to exterminate us no different than we would an infestation of rats. And now we've got one among us—right now—somewhere in Devil's Gorge. Hiding, perhaps, until dark. But that's okay. Because we've got another among us whose true nature must also be suspect. And I think if we were to shackle this man right here, against this very post, and begin whipping him, say ... the beast would show its face."

Williams began to recoil even before Rimshaw pointed him out, and then he was seized suddenly by the men around him as Decker protested and Katrina cried out, his guitar case falling to the pavement as they drug him to the post while still others began shouting for a rope.

"No," he exclaimed, struggling furiously. "Can't you see you've got this all wrong? Can't you see what's really happened? Katrina herself told me you were attacked by something different, something new. Something with the power of speech, that used words like 'pig' and 'eggsucker.' Can't you see that that's what did this? That there was more than just one of them?"

He fell silent and doubled over as someone punched him in the stomach, then toppled completely as someone else shoved him. And

then, suddenly, there was a cry—a cry that sounded as though it had come from Ank and yet utterly different from any Williams had ever heard. A warbling, frightened, pitiful cry—the kind an animal might make if it were sinking into tar while surrounded by predators.

“Marshal?” said someone. “That came from the Lonestar Corral.”

“Then that means we’ve got ‘im cornered,” said Rimshaw, and shouted, “Johnson! Let ‘em into the armory! Let ‘em all in!” And to everyone else he said: “Get your weapons and meet me at the corral. And someone fetch Creebald and Teller. I don’t care how sick they are. I want them by my side.”

“But, Marshal, I just came from there,” said Johnson, pausing. “And they’re plumb gone.”

“What do mean, *gone*?” snapped Rimshaw.

“I mean they ain’t there. They’re not at the Rio Grande. *No one’s* at the Rio Grande.”

Williams craned his neck on the ground to observe Rimshaw’s reaction, and what he saw sent a chill up his spine, for it all but confirmed what he’d begun to suspect. For as Rimshaw stared at the man coldly, his eyes black as coals and his face pale as the dead, his tongue slipped between his lips like a snake’s and was just as quickly sucked back in.

And Williams knew exactly what and who had killed Smithson even as the townsfolk’s boots pounded past him on all sides and he tried to get up but could only grip his stomach in both hands.

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TO SAY ANK WAS CORNERED would have been an understatement; in fact, he was surrounded: surrounded by the strange, pale raptors who circled him slowly within the corral, surrounded by the corral’s fencing, surrounded by the townsfolk who had pressed against its perimeter and trained their rifles and pistols upon them, and surrounded by the sound of Rimshaw’s voice, which echoed off the nearby buildings, the Pa-

pago Cash Store and Bauer's Union Market, Fly's Boarding House, the Palace Saloon.

"You only need remember two things," he shouted, aiming his rifle at Ank—and only Ank. "And that is to aim for the armored dinosaur's eyes ... and that he is the bigger threat. Now let loose some hell, and let's take back our town."

His voice cracked and seemed to change tenor as he shouted.

"Belay that order!" belted Decker, leaping onto the first wrung of the fence so that everyone could see him. "Can't you see what's going on here? Look at them! They're the same type of animal that almost killed Creebald and Teller."

"Pig," said one of the raptors, glaring at him.

"Eggsucker," said the other.

"Don't you see? Ank has lured them here to *protect us*, not hurt anyone. *Let them fight*. If you can get a clear shot at the raptors, take it. But let the armored dinosaur be."

There was a *crack!* As Rimshaw squeezed off a shot at him, grazing him in the leg, and he toppled from the fence.

And then everything was chaos and fury as the raptors charged and the townsfolk opened fire—at Ank, apparently, for his great shell sparked and crackled as though strung with firecrackers. And so furious was the combat that few noticed the guns being shot from everyone's hands one by one—nor Decker crawling toward Rimshaw until he was able to grapple with him from the ground—at least until Ank spun suddenly and brought his great, clubbed tail whistling around, knocking one of the raptors clean off its feet and sending it smashing through the boards of the corral ... where Williams stood propped up by Katrina, his guitar case open upon the ground and his hands sighting what appeared to be an exquisitely-crafted rifle, which he pumped and fired again, knocking the weapon from Rimshaw's hands.

His *claws*.

Then the wounded raptor pounced upon both Rimshaw and Decker—or perhaps just Decker, it wasn't entirely clear—and Williams simply took it out, *pow, like that*, right between its eyes. At last he looked at Ank in time to see the armored dinosaur charge the remaining raptor like a ram—smashing it off its feet so that it blasted through the boards of the corral and took out the window of the Papago Cash Store.

And then it was over, save for the struggle between Rimshaw and Decker—who managed to free himself from the half-man's grip even as the former Marshal completed his transformation into a slathering beast, which circled and paced as the townsfolk gathered around and Williams levelled his rifle.

"Pig," spat the Rimshaw-raptor venomously. "Eggsucker."

Williams squinted, sighting him between the eyes.

"Pig-fucker. Human filth."

Decker stood, bracing himself against the fence. "And behold their latest abomination," he said, and indicated Teller's body, which had reverted to human form and lay dead upon the ground. Someone handed him his rifle. "A dinosaur that will not only tear you to pieces ... but turn you into itself if you survive. Like a werewolf. Or a zombie."

He gazed at the sky, at the alien lights which bled in and out of each other and seemed redder than usual, angrier. "Just their latest attempt to scrub us from the face of the earth. To erase us from time itself." He looked back at the thing that was Rimshaw. "The Marshal, having been wounded the least, took longer to transition. That's all."

"Pestilence!" hissed the raptor. "Ape-man. Evolutionary dead-end. A mistake of your God."

And then its eyes lightened inexplicably and its voice became like that of Rimshaw, the old Rimshaw—only tortured, frightened, alone. "Help me," he—it—whimpered softly, agonizingly. "Please ... God. Shoot me."

But Williams couldn't do it, and only continued staring at him down the length of his barrel.

“Please ... God. Do it.” His voice changed yet again. “Pig-fucker. Eggsucker. Human— ”

And the thing leapt at him—at which instant there was a *crack!* as Decker fired and a stream of blood shot no less than seven feet from its head. Then it fell, convulsing ... and died. And no one said anything as thunder rumbled in the distance and rain began to spot everyone’s faces, including Ank’s, which only looked on, grayly, stoically.

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BY THE TIME EVERYONE gathered at the downed gates to see Ank and Williams off, there were three new graves out at Serpent’s Butte and the worst of the rain had passed.

“See?” said Williams, showing someone the hidden compartment beneath the guitar façade in his case for the millionth time. “I don’t play. I never have. At least, I don’t think I did.”

“But how’d you come to be so good with that rifle?” asked Someone Else. “Ain’t never seen anything like that in my whole life.”

Williams stroked Ank between the eyes. “That’s something I hope to find out ...” He glanced at Katrina and smiled. “When I get to Tanelorn.”

She approached him slowly and looked up into his eyes, then kissed him softly on the cheek. “You know where we’re at, cowboy, if you don’t find what you’re looking for. Or even if you do.”

He smiled down at her, as inexplicably drawn to her as he had been from the beginning. “I will. Take care of yourself, okay?” He looked at Decker, who was wearing a bigger badge than he had before. “Marshal.”

And then they were on their way, north toward Washington State and a city called Spokane, leaving Devil’s Gorge to brood beneath the rain, forgotten by time, alone against its hills.

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The End

