
Rumor

Julie Nossem

I hear this man butchers girls and eats them. He follows you to a gymnasium at night in his old dogcatchers' van and he waits under your car with his knife. When you return to your car, he slashes your Achilles, so you can't get away. Then he gags you before you can scream and ties your arms behind your back with plastic wrap. Then he chucks you into the back of his van where it's cold and smells like cat piss. The puddles of blood on the metal floor seep into your sweat pants, then panties. And you just cry because if you scream, he rattles on the cage behind you and you tense up and your ankles paralyze you with pain. No one can hear you anyway.

He brings you to his home. "Your new home," he says. He carries you downstairs draped over his shoulder like he's saving you from a fire, like he's some kind of hero. He ties you to a chair in his decaying basement where he proceeds to stitch your ankles and speaks sweetly using words you remember from your first real boyfriend:

“What’s the matter, Sweetheart?”

You’re still gagged.

“Stay still. This will only hurt a little, My Love.” He says these things like your doctor or your father would say them.

When he’s finished stitching, he unties you (keeping you gagged) and gives you clothes to change into. He watches you while you struggle to stand and peel the bloody clothes off your body to slip into the little tutu he’s given you.

He rapes you nightly and makes you eat dog food; once he sees you slitting your wrists, he lets you go.

So it’s not true. He doesn’t butcher you and eat you.