

# DEVLIN'S DESCENT



ROGER  
DALE  
TREXLER

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**CHAPTER 6:  
DARLING NIKKI**

It was on the third day of Devlin's incarceration with The Little Man that he met Nikki Coltrane. At the time, Devlin had experienced Green Pus only once, and then only in a very diluted form.

Nikki would change all that.

Or, rather, The Little Man would change it for both of them.

But, on the day he met Nikki, Devlin was sitting in a little observation room with a handful of other "patients". He was still tingling from the sensation of the Green Pus he had been given a couple hours earlier. The Little Man and an orderly had come into his room that morning while he slept. The orderly had held Devlin down while The Little Man pried Devlin's mouth open with something that looked like a shoe-horn and poured a glob of Green Pus down Devlin's throat. The substance burned all the way down, and The Little Man chuckled. "This will prepare you for later," he told Devlin. "That is, if you survive."

The orderly watched Devlin as the drug took hold of him. It was a slow, strange descent into delirium. Devlin's body began to sizzle, every nerve ending came to life. His mind seemed to drift off, and Devlin could not concentrate. The room seemed to move away from him, and there was nothing Devlin could do. He was along for the ride, but he wasn't the driver.

Green Pus was.

When the orderly thought Devlin was ready, he guided Devlin's down the hallway to a large observation room. Devlin didn't care if he was being watched; the Green Pus had made him care for nothing but his high.

The observation room seemed to burn with brilliance. It was as if someone had put a string of high-intensity lights

in the room. All the patients wore white robes, too, and it looked as if they were disembodied heads and hands floating though the room. It was, to say the least, one of the strangest places Devlin had ever been in.

He watched for what seemed hours as men and women flowed through the room. His mind seemingly traveled along with them; he imagined himself as a fly on their shoulder, traveling along incognito. But, for some reason, he could not leave the room with them. Once they moved out of sight, his mind sought out a new soul to travel along with until they, too, faded from sight.

*What has he done to me?* Devlin wondered during a lucid moment. Then, his mind moved off into territories it had never explored before. Part of him knew The Little Man had given him a dose of Green Pus. He did not know that it was a very diluted version of Green Pus designed to acclimate him to the drug. A “test run”, so to speak. Later, he would get a heavier dosage.

Somewhere during the course of the experience, hours later, Devlin mind could take no more and he nodded off. The orderly carried him back to his room. Or, at least, Devlin thought he had nodded off. He had a strange sensation of flying in his dreams.

##

His trip to the underground lab that The Little Man carried out his experiments in had been made at night, in the back of a police van. Devlin had no way of knowing where he was, although he was certain from the travel time involved that they weren’t terribly far from the city. When they took him from the van, he instinctively tried to record in his mind everything he could about his location. He could smell the air, a fresh wind blowing in off Lake Michigan. They were in an area that seemed to be old, abandoned warehouses of some type, and he saw signs as they pushed him toward the warehouse closest to them that read: KEEP OUT. INTRUDERS WILL BE SHOT. He tried to believe that the message had

long since lost its meaning; the place looked too run-down and deserted for anyone to want to shoot anyone for trespassing.

Still, Devlin thought appearances could be deceiving. He didn't want to find out, either way.

There were two other men with The Little Man; both of them uniformed police officers. Devlin had seen the men at the police station when he'd been arrested. One of them had brought Devlin to his first "interview" with The Little Man. Neither had been particularly friendly to Devlin on the drive from the police station, either.

They stopped at an elevator and the one who brought him to The Little Man spoke as he pushed the down button. "You want me to come down with you?"

The Little Man smiled wide. Devlin thought he looked like an insane clown with his bright red hair. "No, that won't be necessary." He turned and looked at Devlin. "I think I can handle it from here."

"Okay, boss," the officer replied.

The door opened, revealing a brilliantly lit elevator.

"Get in," the officer said, shoving Devlin forward.

Devlin almost lost his balance and toppled over, but managed to catch himself against the elevator wall with his shoulder. His handcuffs dug into his flesh as he straightened out and looked at the officer.

The officer grinned. "Don't you worry there, pal. I'm the least of your concerns now."

Then, he punched the elevator button and the door slid shut before him.

##

The elevator descended for what seemed five minutes. Devlin looked quizzically at The Little Man.

"Yes," The Little Man said. "We are that deep."

Then, he turned and looked straight in front of him, the conversation over.

When the door opened, it opened onto a long corridor that Devlin could not see the end of because of the brilliant lighting. "Why's it gotta be so bright in here?" he asked The Little Man as he stepped out of the elevator and the door slid shut behind him.

"Oh," The Little Man said. "That'll take far more explaining than I'm willing to spend the time on right now. Suffice it to say, the brightness is for your own protection."

Devlin didn't understand, but he followed The Little Man anyway. He found it funny to think that a person would sometimes follow someone, even if they didn't have a clue what would happen to them when they reached their destination. People want to be led, Devlin thought, and he was no different. Like others, he wanted his life to be spelled out in nice, convenient terms. The Little Man had promised Devlin the world. So far, he had delivered diddly-squat. Devlin had almost given up on the man. Then, today, he had come to him. "I'm getting you out of here today," he said, his grin somehow more sinister than normal. "That is, if you want to."

*Of course I want out of here,* Devlin thought. The place smells like stale urine.

And, so, he had left the jail with The Little Man and found himself in an underground facility somewhere in the industrial district.

The Little Man guided Devlin to a door. "You'll be staying here for the time being," he told Devlin. "It's late and I have other things to attend to. We'll start your treatment in the morning."

"What sort of treatment?" Devlin asked.

The Little Man nodded. "Oh, nothing too life-threatening, I promise." He removed Devlin's restraints and opened the door. "There, that's better, isn't it?" Devlin rubbed his bruised wrists. "Yeah."

The Little Man curtsied for Devlin to enter the room. "Get some sleep. We'll start early tomorrow morning."

Devlin stepped into the room and The Little Man closed

the door behind him. Devlin heard the door click shut, then he tried the lock. The door would not open. The Little Man had locked him in.

##

The room was roughly six feet wide by ten feet long. There was a twin bed nestled in the far corner; an exposed toilet, a sink and a shower completed the room. The walls were painted white and the light inside the room was just as bright as it was outside in the corridor.

Devlin walked to the bed and sat on the mattress. At least it's soft, he thought, feeling the fabric. The jail's bunks had been uncomfortable, to say the least, and he thought he would probably get a good night's sleep on the bed, even if he was underground in some weirdly-lit facility where they did God knew what.

He glanced at the shower and saw that a white terry cloth robe and a towel were hanging on the shower door.

*What the Hell? I could use a shower,* he thought.

He undressed and walked to the shower. The water that came out was warm and felt good. Soap and shampoo had been supplied, and he bathed.

When done, he exited the shower and lay on the bed. Exhaustion overwhelmed him quickly, and he slid off into sleep.

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He awoke to the sound of a woman screaming. The scream startled him and he jumped up in bed. The room had gone dark and, for a moment, he didn't know where he was. But, then, reality returned to him and he remembered The Little Man bringing him there.

The woman screamed again.

The sound of her voice seemed closer now and, he realized, she was moving down the corridor that stretched out

from the elevator. He could hear other sounds, too, as she approached. The sound of feet falling on the concrete floor.

The woman screamed yet again.

There was the sound of scuffling in the hallway outside Devlin's door, and he walked to the door slowly, as if walking toward it would invite the outside world in with him.

He stood there and listened.

He heard a man say, "She couldn't handle it, either, boss."

The woman, now being restrained, was cursing them. Her speech was so slurred that he could hardly understand her. "Let me go you bastards! Let me go!"

There was a smack of flesh striking flesh, and she said no more.

Then, he heard The Little Man's voice. "Put her down. She's of no use to us now."

There was a thin, muffled sound that Devlin almost recognized.

"That's better," The Little Man said.

"I'm sorry, she got away from us."

"Don't let it happen again," said The Little Man.

Then, the hallway was quiet. Devlin thought he heard the sound of them dragging something off, but he couldn't attest to the fact.

He stood at the door for a long time, wondering what sort of mess he had gotten himself into.

Later, he lay down in bed and tried to sleep, but it wouldn't come.

That was his first experience with The House of Pain.

##

"Get up."

The voice was unfamiliar, and Devlin opened his eyes to find a large man standing before him. The room was, once again, flooded with brilliant light. The orderly's disembodied head moved toward him and a hand grasped Devlin arm. A

second later, the man jerked him up out of the bed with brutal force. Devlin literally flew out of the bed and onto his feet, staggering.

The big man pushed Devlin forward.

The door to the bedroom was open, and they stepped out into the hallway. The light was bright out there again, too, and Devlin saw a handful of people walking to and fro, all of them in white jumpsuits and looking like apparitions as they moved down the hall.

They moved to the left and the floor seemed to descend further into the earth as they walked.

They walked for several minutes until the hallway ended at a door.

The orderly keyed a code into the touch screen attached to the door, and it slid open.

Devlin shielded his eyes. Inside, the light was normal, and a ghostly haze enveloped his vision. But, when his eyes adjusted, he saw that he was in some sort of laboratory or surgical center. There were two white medical beds in the room and, on one of them, a woman lay. She was strapped down and completely naked.

Devlin couldn't help but look at her.

She was beautiful. Her long, brown hair fell at shoulder-length. Her breasts were perfect. Not too large and not too small. She looked physically fit, and Devlin found himself wondering what in the hell had brought her to The Little Man.

His eyes met hers for a moment, and, oddly enough, she smiled at him. "Hi," she said.

Devlin looked back at the brutish man who'd guided him there. He was walking out the door. The door clicked shut behind him.

A voice he recognized boomed through an intercom. He recognized the voice instantly. It was The Little Man.

"Disrobe and lay on the bed," The Little Man told him.

Devlin looked up in the direction the voice had come from and saw an intercom speaker. Beyond that, he saw a glass

window with a series of chairs. It was a surgical observation room. There were several people, some of them in military uniforms, sitting in the seats. And, The Little Man was standing there, smiling.

“No,” Devlin said defiantly.

The Little Man shook his head. “All right, we’ll do it the hard way, then.”

The door to the room opened and the brute that’d brought him there, along with two other men equally as large, came in. They said nothing to him as they grabbed him and threw him onto the bed. Devlin fought them, but they were stronger. They literally tore the robe he’d fallen asleep in off of his body and clamped him into the bed.

In a matter of seconds, Devlin could no longer struggle.

He looked up into the observatory window. The Little Man was no longer there.

He heard another door open, and The Little Man came down into the room. He carried two vials with him. Both were green. One of them was a darker shade of green than the other, though.

“What the hell are you doing?” Devlin yelled.

“Freeing you,” The Little Man replied. “Isn’t that what you wanted? To be free?” He held up the vials. “You two are going to help me with an experiment. In this vial,” he held up the dark tube, “is the undiluted substance known on the street as Green Pus.” He walked over and laid the vial squarely between the woman’s breasts. “Nikki here has been with us a few weeks now, and she’s showed a certain amount of promise. We think she’s the best candidate for this experiment.”

He walked to Devlin. “You have certain traits we think might work for our needs as well.” He held the lighter vial in the air, displaying for those watching in the amphitheater above. “This is diluted Green Pus,” he told them. “It can be found on just about every street corner in America these days. It’s a powerful narcotic that heightens awareness.” He looked down at Devlin again. “Open wide,” he said.

For some reason that he could not explain, Devlin did as he was instructed. The Little Man opened the vial and put it to Devlin's lips. He poured the contents into Devlin's mouth. When the substance hit Devlin's tongue, he gasped. The dosage he'd had earlier was like drinking Kool-Aid in comparison to this. It had a bitter flavor, but it also made every nerve ending in Devlin's mouth come to life. He swallowed and the Green Pus ignited his throat on the way down.

The Little Man turned to Nikki. She had her mouth open wide already; she was hungry for what the Pus could give her. The Little Man smiled and poured the vial into her mouth.

Devlin's mind began to race as the Pus took hold of him. Unlike before, this was no slow buzz — the effects were immediate and intense. His whole body felt alive. He was tingling as if a low-grade electrical shock had been administered.

He looked over at Nikki.

She was looking at him, smiling.

"We're gonna have fun," she told him.

"That, you are," The Little Man said. He removed Nikki's restraints and the woman rose. She walked to Devlin and ran her hand through his chest hair. Then, she bent and kissed him.

It was the most passionate kiss Devlin thought he had ever experienced.

**THIS SECTION HEAVILY EDITED DUE TO STRONG SEXUAL CONTENT. WANT TO READ THE UNEDITED VERSION? SEND \$1 TO RTREXLER@SIU.EDU FOR A 4-CHAPTER SEGMENT (PLEASE SPECIFY CHAPTERS).**

"That feel good?" she asked.

"Yes," Devlin told her. It did feel good. Better than he thought it had ever felt before.

He glanced up at the amphitheater. The Little Man had

returned to his observation post.

He was speaking to the crowd. Some of them had left their seats and were standing at the edge of the glass, getting a better view of what Nikki was doing to Devlin.

Devlin didn't care that they watched. He didn't care about anything anymore. But, the Green Pus had made at least part of his body care again.

Devlin cried out.

"Unbuckle him," The Little Man's voice said over the intercom.

Nikki did as she was instructed. She unbuckled Devlin's arms first, and he grabbed her and pulled her to him, kissing her ferociously. She returned the kiss.

Nikki cried out.

The men in the amphitheater above did not matter now. Devlin quickly unbuckled his legs from their restraints and jumped off the gurney.

Devlin stopped, but she kept on slamming into him.

He pulled out and away.

Nikki turned and looked at him, and there was a mad woman behind her eyes now. She stood there, breathing hard and drooling on herself. Dribble ran down her chin and fell onto her sweat-soaked breast.

Over the intercom, Devlin heard The Little Man say, "As with the other patients who have been exposed to the undiluted substance, the patient experiences a euphoric state that gives way to madness."

Nikki charged Devlin.

Then, she looked down at Devlin, and he felt a chill course through him. There was no longer a woman behind those eyes. What was there now was pure animal.... and absolutely

insane.

“Stop,” he told her.

She did not.

Devlin tried to push her away from him, but he could not.

Nikki slammed her hands into his chest and dug her fingernails in. She gouged ten ruts in his chest and blood began oozing from the wounds.

Devlin pushed her away again and, this time, she moved.

It was a second later that he realized he had not moved her; the three orderlies who’d subdued him had. She thrashed about wildly and it took all three men to contain her. She screamed, but what she screamed did not make sense. It was animal, pure and primal.

She snapped at them like an alligator and the big man who’d led him down the corridor earlier hit her squarely on the jaw. There was an audible pop, and she crumpled to the ground.

Devlin looked up at The Little Man. He was smiling.

The orderly who’d struck her picked her up off the floor. Her neck hung in an unnatural way. One of the other orderlies checked her pulse. “She’s dead, boss,” the man said, looking up at The Little Man. He seemed genuinely afraid of what The Little Man might do.

The Little Man nodded nonchalantly. “She’s served her purpose. Take her down to the bio-furnace and burn her.”

Devlin, still reeling from the fact that a woman he’d been having sex with a minute earlier was now dead, couldn’t move. He just lay there and watched as they carried Nikki’s corpse out of the room.

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The rest was a haze to Devlin. He remembered one of the orderlies helping him to his feet and putting his robe about him. He remembered the thick, rich blood as it flowed down

his chest and pooled in his groin region. He remembered them cleaning his wounds with alcohol, the way that the alcohol burned.

Later, he would remember Nikki, the way she had ground herself into him. The way the Green Pus had made him feel. The way it had driven her to madness.

It was his first experience with undiluted Green Pus. Unfortunately for him, it would not be his last.