

# DEVLIN'S DESCENT



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**CHAPTER 2:  
THE GHOST THAT  
HAUNTS ME**

The Little Man awoke. The young woman at his side, naked and smelling of last night's sex, was sleeping off a Pus High. He'd given her the dosage after the sex, not before, telling her that a good performance would ensure her satisfaction as well as his. One of the advantages of being in the position he was in was that he could have the young women brought in for psychiatric evaluations. More often than not, he would promise them he would go easy on them if they slept with him but, if they didn't, he would see to it that they were incarcerated for a long, long time. Some of them, the feminism-minded amongst them, protested and claimed they would go to a lawyer. But, in the end, they knew that their situation was futile.

They slept with him.

They had no other choice.

And, if they were particularly good in bed, he would keep them around for a while, telling them that the court had ordered a more in-depth evaluation. And, since most of them were addicted to Green Pus and he was the key supplier of the substance in the regions.... well, that only made him more attractive to them.

Only, it wasn't him they were attracted to.

It was the Pus.

He was a conceited little man, though, and believed they

actually cared for him. He stood barely five feet tall, with a slight roll of a gut underneath his dry-cleaned and pressed shirt. His dyed red hair had thinned so much that you could see the majority of his scalp. He tried to comb the little bit of hair he had left in a way that covered the balding area, but that goal was not achieved.

Instead, he looked like a pathetic little man who was trying to cover his aging. That, or some sort of misfit clown that had escaped from the circus and was still at large. Either way, he had more power than a man like he deserved.

The room was littered with sex toys. He liked to use them on the girls, dominate them. It gave him a thrill that normal sex couldn't give him, and it was the only way he could become aroused without taking a pill.

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*Maybe later*, he thought. In a few days when I've tired of her. He always liked to ejaculate inside each new woman he bedded at first. It was part of his power trip and, since they'd cured all venereal diseases back in 2013, he knew that he could stay clean. Giving them a dose of morning-after birth control with their Green Pus prevented any little Little Men from occurring.

*Wouldn't want that*, he thought. *Cramp my style.*

He lay there and looked at the young woman, thinking

that a good morning romp in the hay might not be a bad idea, when the phone rang.

He reached across the nightstand and picked up his cell, answered it.

“Hello?”

The moment he heard the voice, he knew who it was. Anders, his lab tech, the one who diluted the Green Pus for the masses, was on the phone. He could tell by the nasally New York accent as he said, “We got a problem, boss.”

The Little Man sat up. Beside him, the girl stirred, pushing the blanket away from her young, perfect breasts. “What is it?”

“Shipment to St. Louis got pulled over. Driver got busted.”

“How the *Hell* did that happen?” The Little Man asked. He had all the state police and most of the small town yokels in his back pocket. They knew which trucks to avoid as they rolled down the interstate. They were paid to look the other way.

“Some new crime task force,” Anders told him. “It’s all over the news.”

The Little Man said nothing as he reached for the television remote and turned on the set across the room. The room glowed with an ethereal light as sound came out of the box. He flicked the channel, found the regional news, and started watching.

Beside him, the young woman awoke.

“Hi,” she said, smiling.

“Go back to sleep, bitch,” he told her.

She looked shocked and upset, but rolled over and said nothing else.

The news changed from the story of a murder in south Chicago to the scene of a reporter standing beside a truck he recognized as she said:

“Mayor Donellson’s newfound taskforce on Green Pus has made its first significant bust.” She used her thumb to point out the truck behind her, then continued. “According

to authorities, this vehicle is transporting over one hundred gallons of the narcotic to St. Louis. Street value is estimated to be somewhere in the neighborhood of seven to eight million dollars. Authorities are not reporting the name of the driver of the vehicle, but inside sources reveal that the trucking firm involved is a contract carrier, and that the driver has little or no knowledge of what he was transporting."

The reporter went on, but he didn't need to listen further. They had stopped a shipment. It would cost dearly, but there were shipments just like that one being transported all over the tri-state region on a daily basis. Multiple shipments. He kept the shipments down to one hundred gallon batches each and shipped through different trucking lines at different times of the day and week. That way, if a shipment got stopped, like this one had, the flow of Green Pus would continue. There was no way they could stop all of the shipments, what with all the budget cuts going on these days. At least, he hoped so.

He would (soon, he hoped) have a guarantee against just such a bust. He'd been experimenting on men and women; giving them highly concentrated dosages of Green Pus in a effort to promote the abnormal qualities the substance gave off. More often than not, however, he'd overdosed the test subjects and they had either gone completely bug-fuck mad, or become so violent that they had to be destroyed.

There was one subject who had shown promise, though.

Devlin was his name.

Devlin had been special. While the first or second dosage of undiluted Pus had driven the other test subjects mad, Devlin had not succumbed to insanity. He had, in fact, shown signs of the telekinetic abilities without the side effect of madness. That made Devlin very, very special.

Still, the news on television was unsettling. Until now, no one had dared interrupt the flow of Pus. But, politicians were always trying to find favor with the voting public, and Green Pus was a subject that the holy rollers and goody-two-shoes fought to bring to the forefront. *Why couldn't they just thump*

*their Bibles in peace and mind their own business?* The Little Man thought.

*That would be too easy, he realized. People had to bitch about something.*

The Little Man cursed Mayor Donnelson for being such an ass-kiss and made a mental note to hire an assassin before the end of the day. There was no way the trucking firm could be traced back to his operation and, if there were, he would have those persons with that knowledge assassinated as well. He had plenty of Pus Heads who would do the job for nothing more than the promise of a steady fix.

But, Devlin was special.

The Green Pus had made him...different. It had worked on him in ways that it had not worked on others. He was sure that it wasn't a unique situation, of course, but over forty test subjects later; he had failed to find a person as unique as Devlin.

The Little Man rolled out of bed, suddenly oblivious to the pretty young woman. The fact that a truck carrying Pus had been stopped was beginning to weigh more heavily on his soul. Mayor Donnelson had promised to crack down on the illegal drug trade but, unlike most politicians, he was trying to uphold his election year promises. The Little Man figured he would no longer be able to carry out those promises with a bullet between his eyes. And, it would send a message to his successor that the Pus Trade wasn't to be messed with.

He walked to the window, opened the blinds, and let the morning light shine in. It was May, and the weather outside looked to be a perfect sixty-five degrees and sunny. A beautiful day and one that held a promise of finding Devlin and continuing the experiments he had started with the man.

One experiment, in particular, confounded the Little Man. It went way beyond anything he had ever seen. Way beyond what he thought the Pus was capable of. He remembered it like it was yesterday, even though it was two months in the past now.

It was Devlin and another test subject. The man was a va-

grant, busted by the police for loitering and public urination. He had been busted countless times before, and the police just wanted him off the streets. His last name was Boulton. The Little Man couldn't remember his first name. It didn't really matter, he supposed. What mattered was what happened. It was a controlled experiment. The Little Man liked to test his subjects in different situations to see exactly how the undiluted dosages of Green Pus affected them.

This particular experiment was set in an indoor swimming pool. He knew from past experiments that Green Pus increase stamina and energy. He placed Devlin and Boulton in the pool after giving them a full dose of Green Pus.

At first, nothing seemed out of the normal. They swam laps until they tired, then sat at the edge of the pool and caught their breath. But, as the Pus took hold, the exhaustion seemed to diminish. They swam twenty laps each without having to catch their breath. The monitors he had placed on them reported that their heart rates did not significantly increase. For all intents and purposes, they had the metabolic responses of someone on nothing more than a casual walk.

"Dive down," the Little Man had instructed them. "See how long you can hold your breath."

They did so without questioning him. To question meant sobriety, time without Pus.

They dove in.

Almost ten minutes later, they were still under water.

Then, it happened.

The heart monitor on Boulton spiked, and he went into arrest. The Little Man did nothing. Boulton was a vagrant, after all. No one would miss him. And, for the sake of science, he was curious what would happen.

Devlin remained underwater, his heart rate normal, as Boulton convulsed and drowned.

He sank to the bottom of the pool and lay there motionless.

Then, the water above his dead body started to roll. It was as if was boiling. From the angle the Little Man watched

from, he saw something exit the dead man's body. Something that moved through the water like a ghost, a ripple of some form of energy. That was the only way he could think to describe it. A ripple of energy. A pocket of ectoplasmic energy.

The Little Man had no doubt what it was.

It was Boulton's soul escaping his body.

And, it moved toward Devlin.

Devlin watched as it approached him, his heart monitor escalating to a dangerous level.

Still yet, the Little Man did nothing.

The apparition stopped a foot in front of Devlin and Devlin stared at it. There seemed to be an exchange between Devlin and the man's soul. This lasted thirty seconds at best, then Devlin nodded as if acknowledging something the ghost had said. The thing shot out of the water an instant later, spraying hundreds of gallons of water over the entire pool area and blinding The Little Man momentarily.

When he could see again, he saw Devlin, now sitting on the edge of the pool, staring off into space.

His heart rate had returned to normal.

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Devlin did not speak or move for two days afterwards. The Little Man had him carried back to his room, dressed, and placed in his bed. He stared at the ceiling, seldom blinking.

When he did come around, Devlin was a changed man. It was more than just the Green Pus. Devlin had experienced something that very few other people would ever experience. The Little Man wasn't exactly sure what that was, but he knew Devlin was unique because of it.

When asked about what had happened, all Devlin said was: "I wanted to say goodbye to him."

Nothing more.

The Little Man tried to fathom what that meant. *Had Devlin somehow managed to free Boulton's soul from his body? Did Devlin have the ability to summon such spirits while on a Pus*

*High? Could he talk to the dead?*

*If so, how much more was he capable of?*

So many questions; so few answers.

A week after the incident in the swimming pool with Boulton, Devlin managed to escape. The circumstances of that escape were still unclear, but the Little Man knew that Devlin had negotiated several doors that were locked with coded passwords that only employees knew. That Devlin had evaded three armed guards. That there was no way he could have escaped....

.... But, he did.

Devlin was special. Devlin could be unstoppable, given the right training.

There was only one problem — Devlin was gone. If Devlin had managed to seclude himself from the guards' minds, that meant he had a virtual invisibility. He could cloud anyone's mind. The primary question the Little Man needed answered was this: how long did the effect last? Could it be made permanent with enough dosages of undiluted Green Pus? And, most importantly, how could he control it?

The answer to the last question was obvious. Devlin's wife. Caroline. The Little Man was, after all, a psychiatrist. He had explored Devlin's weaknesses: Caroline was at the top of the list. If he could make the woman cooperate, she would be able to bring Devlin under control. He still loved her. She had betrayed him, but his love for her remained. The Little Man knew that much about Devlin. She was his Achilles' heel. She was the weakness he needed to exploit if he was going to get control of Devlin.

*If he could control Devlin.*

He just conceited enough to try.

He walked to the television and turned it off. The news of a shipment being busted was bad, but the Green Pus flow would not stop. He was a cunning little shit of a man, and each shipment had a back-up sitting in a warehouse, just waiting to be picked up and delivered. This one was no exception. It was a delay and nothing more. An inconvenience.

Right now, his primary concern was finding Devlin. He already knew where his wife was. A phone call would have her in his custody within the hour.

Just then, the girl in his bed rolled toward him again, her perfect, young breasts inviting him to come over and play again. He smiled. *I'll call later, he thought. I've waited this long, another thirty minutes or so won't matter.*

With that thought, he reached for the tazer on the nightstand.

"This is going to hurt you worse than it's going to hurt me," he said. Then, he zapped her. Her scream echoed though out the room, but no one would come to her aid.

No one would help. If there was one thing the Little Man understood, it was human nature.

And, ultimately, it was human nature that would bring Devlin to his knees.

He zapped the girl again.

And again.

Suddenly, Devlin was the last thing on his mind.