

The Gatherer

The location for Paul's Tune-up Garage was perfectly and beautifully positioned on top of a little hill called Angora Heights located right in the center of the little town of Washington, Pennsylvania. Paul Jacobs, a short and stocky man, with oil black hair, was the owner and head mechanic of the garage. The location of his garage was ideal because you could access easily from any direction.

It was around one o'clock in the afternoon on a Sunny humid July day, and Paul was outside the garage, working on a midnight blue 67 Pontiac GTO. The fan belt needed replaced, so he knew he would be busy for at least several hours. Other than Paul, his brother Jim helped out around the garage if the work got to backed up, but on this particular day, Paul was alone. While he was working on the GTO Paul would poke his head out from behind the hood to look around, and check to see if he had any customers, or just to see what was going on around him.

After loosening a few bolts to get to the fan belt, which was underneath a lot of hoses, and other engine parts, he poked his head out to take a breather. When he did he saw something that caught his attention. Coming up the road from the direction of the local church, was a beautiful shiny black 57 Chevy. There was chrome all over the body, and it glistened in the bright sunlight. The one thing that puzzled him was that the windows were mirror black. You could not see anything inside this mysterious car, only the reflection of the surrounding landscape.

The Chevy made a sharp turn into the garage parking lot, and as Paul came out from behind the GTO he was working on the Chevy slowly pulled up on the right side of him positioning the vehicle as if he was about ready to race someone. As the car stopped, a giant silky black raven swooped down from the sky, and landed on a nearby telephone pole.

The driver's side door opened slowly. When it did a small cloud of smoke swirled around in the air as a man dressed completely in black stepped out. He came around and stood in front of the cars open door. His coat perfectly blended with the color of his car, it almost seemed as if this mysterious man was somehow a part of, or connected to his car.

Paul could just make out the interior of the Chevy, which was just as black as the rest of the car, but had a red ominous glow to it.

The man in black said "Hello. My name is Devilyn, and I hear that you're the man to see about cars."

Paul noticed a strange sound in the man's voice almost like burning fire.

"Yes, I am the town's mechanic. What seems to be the problem?"

As Paul finished the question, Devilyn walked forward a little, putting his hand underneath his chin, rubbing it like he was thinking.

"Well, it is kind of hard to explain. Probably even something you have never come across before."

Paul started to get some really bad vibes from this guy, and made a mental note to stay on his toes, and to watch Devilyn closer then paint on a wall.

Devilyn continued his explanation. "You see, I have been driving for many days across the country. I am known as, "The Gatherer".

Paul's left eyebrow raised slightly, "Umm...what sort of things do you GATHER?" Paul asked with a slight hesitation in his voice.

Devilyn knew he had to get straight to the point, because Paul was different from others he has come across. Paul was more alert; he had a wisdom that didn't come from just plain ole book reading. He also had an unusual source of power flowing threw him, that gave Devilyn the shivers.

"Well" Devilyn began to answer after a short pause. "I collect souls, human souls to be precise. I have a quota that I have to fill before I can, "Go back to the office" so to speak.

For the first time Paul saw the evil grin on Devilyn's face. He knew this meant trouble. "But I have run into a streak of bad luck, and have been unable to maintain the fuel source for my car." Devilyn said with an fake sadness in his face.

"I have to make sure to produce at least 10 souls per day in order to keep this fine vehicle running."

Devilyn walked around to the front of his Black Chevy, and popped the hood.

"But as you can see, I have been unable to do that." Devilyn said with an evil grin on his face.

What Paul saw under the hood of the Chevy, made his eyes almost pop out of his head. Where the engine should have been was ventricle looking tubes, which reminded Paul of human intestines. There were about a dozen of them running into the center of this glassy like

sphere that appeared to be semi full of smoke at first, then he saw little black shadows swimming around inside. What he saw next made his heart skip a beat. While looking at the glassy sphere like object, watching the little black shadows swim around, one of shadows produced a face, the face of a man that had so much pain and sorrow in it. From somewhere deep inside, like a rush of wind, Paul felt anger and indignation. All at once, with great irritation in his voice Paul asked.

"So what is it exactly that you want me to do about it?"

Up on the phone pole, the giant raven that had landed there earlier let out a couple loud Squawks. Both Paul and Devilyn looked to see him. Devilyn not interested in the bird, turned back to Paul, and said;

"Because I have been unable to fill my quota, and have not found enough souls to keep my car running, I need to have a Godly man, such as yourself, bow to me and renounce God." "This will give my car enough power to get back to "the office" so I can get the souls I do have, processed."

This irritated Paul even more, and he asked. "What makes you think that I would even do such a thing?"

Devilyn now with fire in his eyes answered back quickly. "O, I have the power to give you anything you desire. Riches, fame, power, I can even make you the greatest mechanic in the world. All you have to do is bow, and renounce, it is so easy."

Paul with a new found boldness in his voice spoke loudly.

"And what if I refuse to give you what you ask?"

An evil grin came over Devilyn's face, more evil then before, and the flames in his eyes grew taller, as smoke started to seep out of his coat.

"Ah, yes. I also have the power to make terrible accidents happen, car hoods to fall and break a person's neck or a cars fan to start up while one is trying to replace a belt cutting his hands off. O yes, there are many things that could happen."

With an anger and supernatural power in his eyes he began to rebuke this imp from hell.

"How dare you come to my home, and threaten me with your powerless words! I know who you are, you viper! I know your tricks, and schemes, I have been fighting them for years, and have been preparing for them for just as long. You have no power here, I have been given power, by the one who created you, and sentenced you to your prison. So now I command you to leave, be gone! Go back to the underworld from where you came, and never set foot in my presence again!"

The words that Paul spoke were so strong, that they knocked Devilyn backwards on the ground. With an amazed look on his face, he looked up at Paul, and said.

"I think I might have slightly underestimated you."

At that moment the Giant raven that was sitting on the telephone pole, swooped down onto Devilyn. The raven dug its claws into Devilyn's chest, and started pecking away at his eyes, viciously ripping them out of the sockets. Devilyn let out an unholy scream that could be heard for miles. A red light penetrated through the eye sockets, as his body disintegrated. A large black shadowy figure flew out of the

corpse, reeling in pain. The figure shot straight up into the air, then just as quickly shot straight down in to the earth. As that happened the 57 Chevy also sunk into the ground, and disappeared without a trace. Paul stood there with a look of victory on his face, but also amazement of what he just saw. The giant raven flew over and landed on the raised hood of the GTO. He cocked his head and tilted it so that one little black eye was looking at Paul. The raven squawked several times, and then flew off in to the air disappearing into the clouds. Paul knew that he had been helped that day, in the most unlikely creature, a black raven. But he never forgot it, and till this day, anytime he sees a black raven, it reminds him of the daily battle we face, but that the power within us is greater no matter how small we feel.