

The Terrors at Night

She wasn't far. Detectable even with the dank smell of moss surrounding him, her scent was everywhere.

He stopped between two small trees and put his nose in the air. With a hand lightly on one of the trees and pressing his sore claws against the bark, he listened. His sense of smell could take him where he needed to go, and easily enough, but hearing always was so much faster.

In the distance, an owl's call urged him on. And a frog, in a pond he couldn't see, complained about the crickets.

The events of the earlier evening now seem to be a distant memory. A dream half forgotten. There may have been a movie, though he only remembered a story told, not the fact that it was at a drive in. With more certainty he remembered the cheeseburger and milkshake, and the reason likely had a lot to do with their remnants still being on his outer lips.

His mouth hurt, and he wasn't even hungry, but for some reason he needed to eat. If even for the taste. His prey, who only hours ago had taken sips of his milkshake and even nibbles of his burger, wasn't far away.

He had tried warning her of his condition, a condition which forced him to travel from town to town every handful of months. Well, had considered warning her. Then ultimately decided to let her see for herself.

As could be expected, it hadn't gone well, and his transformation into the shoeless, slobbering mess he now was had driven her to the edge of insanity. Insanity was the only word to describe a person thinking that running into the forest's interior was her best chance at salvation.

For these woods, and any woods like them, were his by default. Tonight, and every month on nights like this, he feared no creature. Not even bears. They were big and reasonably tough, but they were slow. Too slow for his claws.

He caught himself, stopping his mind from drifting further. There was damage to be done, and he was only too happy to do it.

Off to the far left, if he wasn't mistaken, he thought he may have heard a far off whimper.

He howled at the moon and took a step forward. He caught himself just before walking face first into a spider web. For a moment he thought he may have a heart attack. Goddamned spiders. He hated them.

When being completely honest with himself, maybe they were the one thing he had to share the forest with. Some of them got pretty big, and they were all gross. Little bastards they were.

He looked around frantically for the spinster of the web, but its cloak of cover proved too well. He then almost panicked wondering if the spider got on him, but a thorough search proved otherwise.

He stepped back, and walked around the trees the web hung on, giving the spider a wide berth. He collected himself, reminding himself he was the king of the woods, and continued in pursuit of his prey.