

## Watcher Hunters Prologue

### Series Watcher Hunters

Summary just setting the scene.

### **England, Mercia, 1166.**

Joseph investigated the noise outside his dwelling. He found the lady Mary on the leafy ground outside his door. She had fallen from her horse. He bent to pick her up and carried her into his home. Her beauty struck him dumb, he feared to look upon her too closely, lest she wake and question his motives.

He bathed her ankle in witch hazel and bound it with dock leaves, which should reduce the swelling. He glanced all the time at the clay pot on the hearth. He heard the familiar ringing in his ears as his masters called to him. He nodded absently, the voices becoming insistent. He winced in pain shaking his head at the same time as bathing the head of the Lady on his bed.

He stood up suddenly with a growl and fetched a mallet from a chest in the corner. He chose two thorns from the clay pot on the hearth and bathed the Lady Mary's feet. If he was quick enough, she wouldn't wake and she would be changed without the agony of dying.

He held the thorn steady, its sharp evil point rooted into her skin and he struck the head home. Her scream pierced the surrounding forest, Joseph swallowed his anguish and held the second thorn, it rooted and he struck that one home too. Her screams carried on and on, he cast aside the mallet and wept sliding down the wall of his home with his hands covering his ears.

### **London, 1666**

"Joseph?" Mary called. He strode through the wreckage of the Watchers settlement with a broad smile on his face. His love had not aged; indeed, she had grown more beautiful with the passing centuries. Their task here was complete. It was time to return to their masters.

"Mary, come beloved..." Joseph smiled then scowled as a loan figure with a loaded crossbow let fly the quiver into his lover's flesh. He shouted a warning but too late, the deed was done. His love lay mortally wounded on the smouldering ruins of the town house. He held Mary's hand and held out his right hand toward the young girl who had killed his life partner. The Slayer evaporated into a bright white cinder and vanished on a gust of wind.

"My love...?" He knelt amongst the rubble and tenderly cradled Mary's head. She was gone. She had given him the last of her power to slay the Slayer. He was alone once more.

The darkness gathered at the edges of his consciousness and he retreated into the shadows staring back at his love, memorising her face so that he would recognise her in the centuries to come. His tears dried on his cheeks as he faded from the scene.

"Goodbye, my lady."

## Present Day.

I walked alongside Cathy. She was tall and confident, disciplined and dangerous the first of a new breed. She was also deeply troubled by nightmares and it was these that we discussed as we walked along.

"Joseph, I saw him again last night. The Watcher... He's strong; he has helpers all round him. I sensed no Slayer, but more of a group of Slayers... There is only one Slayer in every generation, that's right isn't it?"

"Yes, Cathy, that's right, but there is a prophecy..." I lowered my voice on the word prophecy and drew her back into the shadows of the grey corridor we traversed. I looked right and left. "A Watcher without a Slayer will bring about the fall of our masters, the Greys." My eyes locked onto her brown eyes, her eyes the reflection of Mary's.

"Joseph, do you think I'm the one?" Cathy whispered. "I saw another man, a powerful young man." She smiled as she remembered. "With green eyes and dark hair..."

I gazed at her longingly. She had that look that Mary and I shared after slaughtering a few hundred Watchers. I smiled along with her and made my decision.

"Cathy, I think he's your partner. I will make some colours for you both..." I knew it was death to manufacture coloured thorns, I paused and studied the grey floor; I had been too long here. I needed the fresh green of the forest and Mary in my arms. I wanted Cathy to be happy, and if she turned out to be a part of the prophecy, then so be it!

End.

### Watcher Hunters 1/10

Summary Joseph helps Cathy in her quest for a new partner.

Warning It gets much darker from now on.

She crept along the silent grey corridor; endless doors broke one wall, the other held the history of the Greys behind Perspex. Joseph had sent her a message to meet him in the Thorn room at midnight.

She tapped gently on the smooth door and it opened. Joseph wore his woodsman's cloak; the hood partially covered his eyes.

"Cathy, I've made you the colours." He held them out to her, two each of silver and blue. "I have to implant the blue ones. They will lead you to your partner when I'm gone."

Cathy looked up at her mentor, tears suddenly stinging at her eyes. "You can't go Joseph, they can't kill you. You were the first!" He stroked her cheek and urged her to lie down on the steel table. He carefully loaded the thorns into the firing mechanism.

"I have no choice, Cathy. They won't let me live after this. Ready?" His question made all argument moot.

She closed her eyes and nodded her clothing disappearing as she called upon her thorns power. The machine moved fluidly and fired the new thorns into her feet. The pain was brief.

The agony of longing for a partner hit her like a hammer blow, a hunger that could not be sated until she found the man whose image was impressed on her mind. Her thorn clothed her once more and Joseph helped her to stand.

"Cathy, hide the silver ones they're for him. Go quickly before you're discovered, I can only hold the alarm for a short while."

She smiled at him. "Joseph, I pray that you find Mary on the other side."

He kissed her forehead and waited quietly for the guards to come.

##

One of the subordinate Greys summoned her from her slumber. She followed silently behind him into the main meeting hall. She saw Joseph in a cell at the end of the room. He looked as though he had been tortured. She looked expectantly at her masters.

"Cathy, as you know you are our favourite Watcher Hunter." He sighed, "Joseph- After many years of faithful service, has decided to leave us." He handed Cathy a small device, "we wondered if you would like the honour of sending him on his way?"

Cathy held the device in her frozen hand. Joseph gazed at her through the toughened glass of his cell. His eyes held hers speaking volumes. \*Release me\*

She moved her finger over the button and Joseph moved away from the glass removing his hood so she could see his secret agony. The thorns he had been given when he was first chosen, had erupted from his skull and now resembled the horns of a "Dark Ages" demon.

Tears stung her eyes but she managed to smile as her heart broke in two. "My pleasure!" She stepped in front of the cell and placed her hand on the cold steel surface. She mouthed, "Go in Peace" to her friend and pressed the button. His body erupted into a pale grey mist fogging the glass.

She turned from the cell and held the Grey's steady gaze..."Was there something else?" She sincerely hoped not because she needed time to grieve. The Grey's had no perception of grief.

"We were hoping that you would begin to search for a new partner tonight, there is a Slayer that is giving our compatriots some vexation."

Her anger flashed to the surface, she couldn't help it. She answered back. "Perhaps, it might have been more efficient if we let Joseph deal with the Watcher, after all he might have been killed."

The subordinates muttered amongst themselves. No one ever questioned Grey One!

Grey One smiled indulgently. "Perhaps. You may have as long as you wish, bring him here

in three months..."

##

The traffic noise ceased finally around two am. He paced restlessly. Twice he'd gotten up and gone downstairs to the Gym to lift some weights to tire himself out enough to sleep. He had the oddest feeling something was going to happen. His life was going to change he glanced in the mirror, his green eyes stared back waiting. Well, when?

He shook his head and eased some tension in his neck muscles and glancing down at his erection, he muttered "When?"

##

"Now. "

He sat up blinking in the harsh light. Sharp metallic footsteps echoed round him, his heart thumped madly in his ears as he caught the smell of warm leather on warmer skin. She walked towards him from the shadows, her long legs carrying her with ease and feral stealth, her dark hair tumbled past her shoulder and she carried a leather flail in her hand. His mouth was dry, lying back on his bed the covers arranged to cover his trembling engorged cock. She strode to the bed, whipped back the covers and looked down at him with disdain...

"What have we here?" She smiled wickedly; stroking the soft leather strips of her flail down his length. "Is it painful?" She asked in mock concern. He nodded.

"I'm sure you can take a bit more pain, hmm?" She bent over him and he arched his hips toward her; closing his eyes ready for her exquisite mouth...

He screamed as the leather bit and "kissed" his balls. Tears formed in his eyes as he tumbled off his bed, cradling his injured "pride." When finally he opened his eyes he realised it was morning and the moisture he felt on his hand wasn't blood as he had thought.

"Oh, shit..." He murmured, as he staggered to his feet and made his way to his bathroom. A tiny camera followed his movements and the woman in leather drifted from the shadows to gaze up into the all-seeing eyes of her masters.

End of pt.1

Watcher Hunters pt. 2/10

Summary Cathy has chosen her new partner now she has to seduce him, bring him over to the dark side.

Dominic stepped from the shower and wiped the mist from the mirror. He didn't take much notice of his reflection; he just got on with the daily chore of shaving. Once he had grown a beard but it drove him mad! He smiled suddenly. His girlfriend didn't like it much either, beard burn made it difficult to walk.

He wolfed down his breakfast and slipped on his shoes, late as usual. The boss would be

CROSS.

##

"Dominic." Stephanie looked pointedly at her watch then the clock in the office they shared. He smiled at her and her heart melted, why did she have to work for a man who didn't know he was sex on legs.

"I know, I know. How many "new lambs" are there today?" He sat down behind the desk and glanced at the sheaf of application forms. Steph put a mug of coffee before him, "Thanks love. How many men have we got?" He turned them over one by one; there were a few and no one to stretch his combat muscles. He sipped his coffee and listened to an eerie metallic tapping noise... He put his mug down and looked round the room. "Steph? Do you hear that?"

She studied her boss' angled head he looked as though he was listening to something. "No, I hear nothing. Well just the usual impatient masses waiting for their instructor."

"I'm going! ... Bully!" He left the office and walked down the bright sunlit corridor.

He stopped dead in his tracks, the door to the street had opened and shut. He felt hot suddenly, footsteps echoed on the hardwood floor of the Gym. His breathing became ragged and his flesh warmed and hardened at the sound. He followed the steps, the strangers dark shadow leapt up the wall towards him and he reached out his hand to caress its cool depths.

He caught a glimpse of an arm and extended leg with each pillar the figure passed. His mouth was dry, his drink forgotten. He slowly descended the steps to the floor of the Gym; the woman approaching him was tall, lithe, and walked with supreme confidence, her eyes focussed solely on him. He swallowed when at last she stopped and smiled at him extending her leather-gloved hand.

He took her hand aware of his all over body blush; a woman had never had this effect on him before.

"Hello, my name is Cathy, are you Dominic?" He nodded. "A friend recommended your gym, would you be able to show me the ropes?"

Say something idiot! "Ropes?" Oh, the image that conjured up in his fevered mind! She smiled and he grinned back. He caressed her hand with his thumb.

Her eyes followed his caress and she found her heartbeat increasing, bringing a flush to her cheeks. He's the one, Joseph. I've found him! She stepped forward, she was not sure that he hadn't pulled her because he still held her hand. His mouth was so close to hers now, his breath disturbing the unruly curls surrounding her face.

"Well?" She murmured.

"Yes, very well thank you..." He returned.

Her smile widened... and he chuckled. "Sorry, I can show you the ropes. You seem so familiar, have we met before?"

"DOM-IN-NIC!" The screech broke the spell between them and he rolled his eyes.  
"Coming!"

"Cathy, would you like to sit in on a session, I'm afraid I'm late starting today..."

##

She drifted about the wide airy sunlit room listening to the repeated clank of the various machines. She smiled as the women all feigned innocence around Dominic. He had no clue that they had little wish to build muscle, in fact were interested only in HIS muscle.

She caught herself smiling as he tried to explain the intricacies of a nautilus machine to a particularly brain-dead specimen... He sighed as at last the woman conceded defeat and moved on to another less taxing piece of apparatus. He flopped onto the bench and gripped the weight handles, his knuckles whitening as he counted to ten.

She sat beside him and smiled at his profile. "Tough day?"

"Hmmm?" He looked up; she'd changed damn quickly! "I suppose I should expect it, they use this place as a pick up joint. Just once, I'd like to meet someone who wants to workout!" He pulled on the handles in frustration and the counterweight shot up.

"Teach me." She purred softly. He stared at her wondering how he could have heard her over the noise in the Gym. He smiled and knelt beside her, explaining muscle groups and how each co-operated with the other, then went on to nutrition and percentage of body fat and how many repetitions were required...

She listened intently and asked questions to obtain more information, he became animated in his conversation, and soon the rest of the world faded away as they got to know each other.

##

Grey One drifted across the room to study the bank of screens. His wide mouth parted in the alien equivalent of a smile. The chosen one had potential, Cathy liked him and that suited their purpose.

The Watchers had always had the upper hand throughout the centuries. No sooner had the Hunters wiped out a settlement, than a new one would spring up. The Watcher Hunters then needed to return to the Greys compound to renew and reanimate. They had fought a losing battle for close on a thousand years and were still no closer to repaying their debt to the demons that helped them when first they arrived on the Earth. Grey One glided to the tapestry on the wall and ran his six-fingered hand across the ancient canvas.

The genetic Cache, carefully preserved in their flight from a decaying planet and the knowledge they were willing to share with their new adopted home, the Watchers chose to destroy and in the blink of an eye, their culture was gone. Well, not all gone, but divided, fragmented between three Greys. The Grey society was so ordered that if one Grey fell in battle or was murdered, then all would suffer the same fate.

Such was the destiny of a society of clones.

##

On Cathy's return, the Greys had a request; they needed some genetic material from the chosen one for a cloning experiment. Cathy stared at the manifest in her hands; the request was for a sample of semen. She held her expression steady as Grey One asked her if the task were possible.

"It is not impossible, I had hoped I would have more time before becoming intimate with Dominic." She cursed her use of his name; she wanted Dom to herself for just a little while longer.

Her master smiled the smile that made her flesh crawl, the one that haunted her nightmares when he had been the one to press the Beelzebub thorns into her feet.

"The sooner you bring us the sample, the sooner we can manufacture the poison to feign his death and leave the clone in his place. Then we shall have our "New Watcher Hunters" and we shall be able to wipe out the cursed Watchers Council once and for all."

End of part 2

### Watcher Hunters 3/10

Warning bondage, domination, wreckage, showering, and tea imbibed.

Summary Cathy has chosen Dominic to be her partner serving the Greys, he doesn't know that his flat is rigged to observe and report to the Greys dimension.

Dom thrashed beneath his covers as he dreamt of his leather-clad goddess. Cathy haunted his days and nights with her presence. In the gym, he worked with her daily. Her body was so in tune with his own that, he almost felt part of her body and that she was part of his. They completed each other and it seemed he only knew peace when in her company.

He growled in his sleep and threw his leg out of the covers completely. He sighed as he felt a leather gloved hand glide over his heated skin enveloping his raging cock in a warmed leather embrace. His hips jerked in time with the motions of her fist and his head rolled on his pillow. The pale moonlight glinted off his newly pierced eyebrow, his hair was cut how she liked it and it gave his formerly "baby face" a hard edge.

His ragged breath echoed loudly in the bare room. His hands shoved the covers down past his hips and he tried to wake to see Cathy sucking him to climax, but his eyes refused to open. His breath caught in his throat and his fingers tangled in her hair, holding her fast to him.

Cathy fondled his balls and continued in her task, test tube at the ready. Dom came with a roar and a flood of cum and she hugged him close unable to quite relinquish her hold on him to please her masters with a "sample". She maintained her grip all the way to his cock head, and then quickly with a couple of strokes, the Greys had their DNA but she'd had the best of it!

Dom slipped his hands from her hair and slept as the dead. Cathy turned and inspected the half filled test tube in the moonlight. The light faded and Grey two stood before her, a



four-fingered hand outstretched for the prize.

Cathy placed the tube in Grey Two's palm. "You are quite accomplished at that, a pity we Greys have no need for your talent..."

She smiled until Grey Two faded from sight then made a wanking gesture in the air and turned back to her lover.

Dominic slept peacefully, she changed and slipped naked into the bed next to him, he kissed her shoulder as he snaked an arm around her, hiking up the covers with his other hand.

##

Grey Two glided through the metal tunnels of the Grey stronghold passing by subordinates on the way to Grey Three's lab, the key to their salvation nestled securely in a hand. Grey One's theories of a prophecy ripening in their midst; were best not dwelt upon

Grey Two and Three shared a traditional greeting and together they carefully prepared the specimen for cloning. The room was lined with glass sarcophagi all but one waiting for an occupant. With the addition of the male clone, the Greys would have a backup team should something happen to the originals.

However, these clones were unencumbered by colour thorns so were deadly and ruthless assassins. Grey Two smiled as the bodies grew encased in their incubators. A single view screen monitored life signs. They need only reach physical maturity with one Domclone its purpose being to die in place of the original. The second incubator held Dom's "enhanced" clone with boosted strength, endurance and aggression added to its psyche, this one would be a cruel killing machine, just as Cathy's clone was.

Grey Two hadn't told Grey One of the back-up plans, if the rumours of the prophecy proved true. The Watcher Hunter clones would destroy the Watcher and his mate to prevent them from having progeny. The offspring of the Watcher with a Slaying team would be an immortal hybrid who would bring about the end of demons on the Earth and the plague of humankind would spread and fester in goodness and peace.

Grey Two shuddered and glanced back at the naked form of Domclone and Tapped the glass, Domclone's eyes snapped open, and he took his first conscious breath of the heady super enriched atmosphere of the Greys stronghold.

##

Dom's eyes opened sleepily and his palm slid over the warm sheet beside him. He woke properly and scanned the room for Cathy. No clothes. Without a doubt she was the tidiest woman he'd ever known! However passionate they became she always had time to put her clothes away...

He heard the shower burst into life and smiled devilishly, leaping from the bed he padded stealthily into the bathroom and parted the curtain.

"Morning Dom..." Cathy smiled as she felt his disappointment at being discovered so soon. He sighed and stepped into the bath behind her.

"Mmm, you smell so good, Cath, Y'know I really need to... uhmm..." He backed her onto the tiled wall and held her hands pinned above her head. She shuddered as he advanced, his warm hard toned body pressed insistently into her own.

The hot shower streamed in steaming rivulets down the planes of his chest and rigid abs



to his glorious cock, straining at attention. Her knees buckled and she struggled futilely before he claimed her breasts with his mouth, he relinquished his grip on her hands as he snaked one strong arm round her waist, lifting her until she slid down on his rod, impaling her body in an impassioned love locked fuck.

Cathy growled as his cock entered her and held his head to her breast with one tender hand whilst raking her nails down his back from shoulders to hipbone with the other. Dom tensed and bit her nipple, she gasped and he lifted his head, his dark emerald rimmed eyes sought hers and she lifted her thigh to curl it around his strong back. He groaned and lunged into her deeper, forcing her shoulders onto the tile, he grabbed her other leg and she locked her legs round his waist.

He bent his head once more to her breast and traced the gentle upturned curve with his tongue and teeth, his eyes never left hers, testing and discovering what turned her on. His right hand closed around her neck and he held her gently while his hips powered his cock into her, his breath ragged with exertion and indescribable pleasure.

Their bodies moved as one, striving for release, she driving downward meeting his strokes with tightening sinews. He tensed and coiled open to all stimuli. He threw back his head and clawed over her breast as she came, her legs tightened around his spine and he drove into her desperately, thumping the her back against the wall, at last he roared and gripped hip and shoulder forcing her down on his exploding cock. At the very last moment they kissed and the tenderness of the act washed over them both, cleansing them and providing a soothing balm to the savage beast aroused when they made love.

##

He stared at the paperwork on his desk. Stephanie had deposited his post and coffee on his desk half an hour ago. He showed no interest in either.

Cathy had gone somewhere on business for a few days and he missed her. He spent his nights in the gym working up a sweat and his days in the office dreaming of her.

"Dominic? " Stephanie stepped through the doorway and stood awkwardly on the threshold.

He turned his stony glare of disinterest at her. She swallowed her fear.

"There's some trouble in the gym... some Mafia types are downstairs-" She didn't have to say anymore. Dom leapt over his desk and flew down the stairs.

He quickly scanned the floor of the gym and located the "gentlemen" they wore bulky suits and were testing the machines in said suits. The rest of his clientèle were in the juice bar-very sensible.

"I'm Dominic, the owner. Can I help you with something?" He decided on the nice approach first.

One man turned at his voice, he looked anonymous, and he probably paid someone a great deal of money to look anonymous. His voice betrayed his origins, having a gravel-like quality of one who has had too many punches to his throat.

"Dominic... I would like to make you a business proposition..."

Dom, smiled and shook his head, he turned to leave but found a meaty hand on his chest. He looked the Neanderthal in the eye and clobbered him with a dumbbell that rested beneath his fingertips.

He dropped in a split to avoid a roundhouse blow and then spun the dumbbell along the ground at the crowd of men surrounding "Mr. Big"

The Neanderthal grabbed Dom's foot so he kicked him in the groin sending him howling to the ground in pain. He sprang to his feet ready for his next opponent.

Three lined up against him with drawn weapons. He drew a sharp breath and executed a spinning kick that disarmed all his adversaries. His foot remained extended as he pivoted slowly; he flexed his knee and booted "Mr. Big" in the chest.

"As I believe I told you, I am the owner and can refuse entry to anyone I please." He locked gazes with the sweating man. "Take you proposition elsewhere." He shoved the man into the far wall, before he placed his foot on the floor and glared at the rest of the men, who scurried after their fallen boss and weapons.

The Boss halted at the threshold. "This isn't over, you'll be hearing from us some dark night..." He left the threat hanging. Dom walked into the juice bar for a drink, rolling his head on his shoulders trying to get rid of an annoying kink in a muscle.

Stephanie had watched all the moves Dom made. She'd never seen him so precise. It was a joy to see, but she still had the nagging feeling that something was wrong. He had changed since Cathy came on the scene, with her, he was a kitten, without her he was a Panther.

##

The next morning he prowled about the gym until he felt familiar warmth, he turned round and Cathy smiled at him embarrassed at being caught out. He loped toward her and lifted her from the ground spinning her in the middle of the weights. His arms were full, his heart light and her sweet lips were his again. Nothing mattered now. The world could go hang. He had Cathy back

Cathy sighed, enjoying his strong embrace. She knew she couldn't live without him now, but how could she betray him to the Greys? The cold vial of poison nestled in her pocket, Grey two had told her before she departed that he had to have the poison in his system for twenty-four hours before they took him with a final overdose. This was to be his last day as a human. She swallowed her tears.

"Cath? " he gazed into her eyes. "What's the matter, love? Why tears? "

She sniffed. " I missed you..." He smiled and her heart broke, she rested her head on his broad shoulder and wept. He hugged her close. Her thoughts came wild and sped madly through her mind.

He would never grow old; never know disease or hunger. He would remain young, vital and strong and they would be together forever.

She shook her head. In order to exist in the Grey universe he would have to die in this one. And he would remember with the coloured thorns all of his life before conversion. He would hate her forever.

She lifted her head from his shoulder and smiled weakly at him, stroking his silky dark hair, "Love Me?" she murmured.

"Always Darling..." He kissed her nose and led her up the steps to his bedroom.

End of part 3

#### Watcher Hunters 4/10

Warning sex, violence, and dominance.

Summary Cathy has returned from the Greys stronghold where Grey two has manufactured poison to kill Dominic in readiness for conversion. She and Dom are spending their last day of freedom in bed.

Dom's hands closed on the leather binding his wrists to his bedposts. He lay on this stomach and sweat and blood vied for precedence on his back. Cathy towered above the bed in gleaming leather thigh boots and long black kid gloves. Her dark glittering eyes met his and he sighed as the soft, slick strands of her whip caressed his back.

"Turn Dom..." she whispered. He obeyed leaving go of his bonds and flicking his wrists free of his voluntary restraint. She smiled at his slight wince as his back hit the sheets.

She conjured a jade scarf from thin air and his grin got wider. "Time you didn't see what's coming..." she chuckled. She leaned forward and he brushed her nipples with a swipe of his tongue. He lifted his head for the blindfold and waited for instruction.

Her clothes melted away as she straddled his tumescent cock and rode him fast and hard. He fell into her rhythm, trying to slow her down but she wasn't to be slowed... She popped the lid on the vial as his mouth opened wide in desperate passion. She leaned forward dripping the contents of the vial into his mouth, at the same time her hand outstretched behind her to fondle his balls and massage her juices into them.

He swallowed all that she gave to him; it briefly stained his lips black before being absorbed into his tissues. His hands reached up to caress her back as he shot his seed into her. He would never see her tears at his loss of fertility. The poison robbed as well as bestowed.

##

Greys one, two and three watched the view screen as the scene unfolded. Soon they would have their Watcher Hunter team. Grey one held Grey two in his thrall for a second or two.

"You see? Friend, your fears are groundless. There will be no fulfilled prophecy. All is well." With a last gleeful glance at the screen, he glided out to prepare the thorn room.

Grey two and three did not share Grey one's faith in Cathy, they watched as Dominic tied her hands behind her back and then eased his body between her clasped hands. When he

was done, he had complete control over her. She knelt on the bed and he rested his knees on the bed frame either side of her knees. He ran his palms over her erect nipples keeping her balanced and with his back muscles. He slid into her tight steaming cunt and drove home as she arched her head back and exposing her throat for his kiss.

##

Cathy moaned and wailed as Dom fucked her deep, and long. He came again and bit her shoulder, drawing just a little blood. He sighed and suckled gently at the wound.

"Hmmm, never thought I'd have vampiric tendencies... you bring out the demon in me lover." Dom kissed her warm flesh and blinked as a wave of dizziness washed over him. He slid from her and watched from the bed as Cathy slipped her bonds and clothed herself using the thorns power.

Dom scooted away from her, his back hitting the wall and still she advanced on long leather-clad limbs. Her dark hair tumbled over her shoulders, an eyebrow arched menacingly. He stared at her lips, just a moment ago they were soft, ripe for kissing; now they curled upwards in a mocking, evil burgundy smile.

"At last you realise something's amiss?" Cathy loomed over Dom and whispered so the Greys couldn't hear " We're going on a journey, Dom. I've been training you... They're watching us. "

Dom looked puzzled, but then saw love and compassion in her clear brown eyes and was still. Cathy shifted her hair away from her face so he could see the faint red light in the corner of the room. His eyes flickered with anger and he grabbed her hair roughly, bringing his mouth to her ear.

"Where are we going? Will you be with me?" He kissed her ear lobe and she gasped at the heat of his lips. Soon he would expire for the first and only time.

"A place of long life, health, strength and vigour. I will be with you always, my darling Dom. " She smiled sadly as he struggled for breath, growing pale and his lips dry and blue.

"When..." the question died on his lips and Cathy sealed his fate with a poisoned kiss.

"Now..." She checked for his pulse and felt none. She stooped to scoop up his dead body from the bed, a noise behind her alerted her to the arrival of Grey three and his clone.

She turned and saw Dom-clone readying a noose for his suicide. She glanced down at her Dom and clutched him tighter to her breast. She weaved past the impostor and strode through the wall to the Grey dimension, unwilling to witness her lover die a second time.

##

She excused herself to visit her cell and levered the silver thorns from her flesh, transferring them to her boot cuffs. The thorns imbued with her essence would guide Dom through the madness of the conversion process.

##

She strode alongside the metal table. Dom had been dead for four hours, but already his colour had improved because of the charged atmosphere of the Greys stronghold.

Once through the doors of the Thorn room, the antidote was given to him and he revived suddenly, fighting all the way. She followed and took up her position at the end of the thorn table. She tried to keep her emotions in check but Dom fought so hard!

With a pneumatic hiss the operation started. Her hand gripped the handle of the mallet she would use for her thorns.

The first thorn rooted and embedded. Dom's screams seemed endless. Grey two had paralysed him so he couldn't see the progress of the mechanical arm to his left foot...

Cathy waited as the thorn rooted and was driven home in one slick action. She stepped forward knowing she had only seconds to drive home her colour, to claim him as mate and trainee. Dom raged against his bonds both mental and physical, the physical ones gave way first.

Dom stared at Cathy as she placed the thorn and struck it home in one stroke. He roared and sat bolt upright and gripped her neck, the Greys in his head urged him to kill. It was imperative for him to kill their common enemy, though he didn't know who the "enemy" was.

Warmth flooded through his body and he remembered laughter and a sun filled meadow where he and Cathy had picnicked. He loosed his grip of her throat and crashed back down onto the stretcher, gripping its metal sides to control the pain.

Cathy hammered the second colour home and allowed herself a smile of triumph. Somewhere in the back of her mind, she heard Joseph applauding her.

Grey one entered the thorn room and Cathy lowered her gaze respectfully. Grey one spared her a glance on his way to study Dom. "An excellent choice, Cathy and on time too. Now we have our Watcher Hunter team."

"She has claimed him as mate, with a colour thorn" Grey two snidely informed Grey one.

Grey one shot a disapproving look at Cathy, but still smiled and gave the alien equivalent of a shrug. "Tis done cannot be undone."

##

Dom shivered on the floor of the cold grey cell, the furniture lay in a crushed heap in the far corner. His feet hurt and he curled round hugging his body shuddering. He thought of Cathy trying to conjure up warmth where there was none.

He shot up straight at the sound of the door opening. He swallowed his distaste at the appearance of his captors. The slurred words he had yet to learn to understand. He recognised one word-Pain. He staggered to his feet and bit back the agony of his thorned feet, stooping to try to control it.

Someone else entered the room; he smelt Cathy's perfume and shuffled to the corner resting his warm forehead on the cool wall. The Grey left and Cathy remained. He heard

her approach and his heart beat faster, remembering another time when she'd first worn heels.

"Trainee!" She shouted and he snapped his head round to face her. He registered her shock at his appearance then her face-hardened and a whip appeared in her hand, the tip cracking at his ankles.

"Walk!" Dom didn't move. Cathy cracked the whip again, this time licking and slicing the flesh from his calves. He fell to his knees and yelled.

"Rise! Are you a child who needs to be taught everything? Do you need to be watched at every turn?" Cathy stood before him and stared just over his head. His shoulders slumped in defeat, then he realised what she had said. She was doing this because they were being watched again? He looked up into her eyes.

"I am a child mistress, teach me so I don't have to be watched." He held her gaze for agonised seconds before the whip disappeared and she joined him on the floor in floods of tears.

"Dom! Are you alright? I'm sorry... so sorry. I had to have a partner and..." Cathy sobbed.

Dom stretched out his hand and stroked her hair, his eyes closing in relief as he touched her once more. He'd been afraid that this was his personal Hell. He lifted her trembling chin and smiled, the soft loving woman he knew trembled and fought for composure.

"Dom, we...we don't have much time. You've been changed, you're like me now, and I have to teach you to walk. Trust me?" She pleaded.

He nodded his mind a whirl of a hundred questions. He got to his feet shakily and winced as his ragged, wounded feet shuffled forward.

"Hands on the wall, and lift your foot." She instructed. He did as he was told; Cathy applied a layer of soothing balm to his feet and then turned him round. "First lesson. On the way to healing yourself Dom. Concentrate on the thorns and clothe yourself."

Dom looked at her strangely, then closed his eyes, and summoned clothes. He felt them on his skin and opened his eyes again.

Cathy was very close." Perfect..." she purred in his ear. He smiled to himself, he felt much better now his feet were inside boots. He stood and tried a couple of paces. Cathy smiled but Dom looked past her assuming a submissive posture.

Her head snapped round and saw Grey two in the doorway.

"You've been relieved. He's mine." Grey two glided into the cell, with a sweep of his hand he repaired the furniture, and placed a naked struggling Dom on a rack in the centre of the room. Cathy was driven back by the Greys force of will and could only watch horrified as Grey two employed a laser-whip to instil obedience in Dom.

Grey one led her away; she hid her face in her hands as Dom's screams pierced the silence. "CATH? Cathy...PLEASE!" His scream chillingly cut off when the doors slid shut behind them.



Grey one was talking to her. "...Too close Cathy. You have a nice long rest and we'll call you with your new assignment and a brand new obedient Dom, how about that?" Grey one smiled his "flesh crawling" smile and dialled the security lock on her chamber for three months; she stepped in and fell asleep.

##

Cathy reported to the briefing room. Her heart leapt into her throat. Dom was there, tall, strong, and powerful. She smiled a greeting and he ignored her. Her heart sank, how long had they kept her under?

Dom glanced over the mission notes, by rights Grey two should have been there to bask in the reflected glory of a well-trained Watcher Hunter, but he and all of his section had mysteriously disappeared.

"Dom and Cathy together at last. " Grey one sounded almost content. "Your mission is to find Ethan Rayne, he will lead you to your primary target, the Watcher. Any other havoc you can wreak I leave to your discretion. Dom you're beta in this mission, Cathy you're alpha. I know it's a chore Dom but you'll just have to follow Cathy's lead."

Cathy maintained a passive exterior whilst her insides revolved, what happened to Dom while she slept? What did Grey two do to him?

Dom thrust the mission details into her hands and stood at ease until Grey one left the room. She lifted her hand and Dom stepped back giving her a hate filled glare.

"We're going to Sunnydale, home of Demons and one Slayer."

She folded the papers and secured them into the long zipped pocket of her trouser leg. She straightened and Dom snapped to attention, she shook her head sadly and marched off through the wall...

End of part 4

Watcher Hunters. 5/10

Summary Someone hunts the Slayers Watcher,

The hunters arrived in the alley behind the bronze. They walked apart, sniffing the air. The one they sought was near. They entered the Bronze and found the music loud and the atmosphere smoky. They glanced at each other and split, approaching their prey from opposite sides.

##

"Take it or leave it. It's a fair price." Ethan was bartering with a half demon with a penchant for glittery things. The demon looked to left and right behind Ethan and disappeared in a puff of smoke. Ethan gritted his teeth in annoyance cancelling the glamour spell on the base metal bauble in his hands. He turned on those who had frightened his customer off.

"You cost me a," his voice tailed off as his eyes focused on the couple in leather. One of



each, his favourite combination. He smirked.

"Hello..." He purred. "My compliments to you tailor. What can I do you for?" He looked from one to the other as they each took an arm, lifting him from the floor and propelled him out of the back door.

"Ripper sent you didn't he?" He muttered

##

Together they threw him back. Ethan hit the brick wall, hard. Pain racked his body. He barely landed on his feet. Although the woman halted in the doorway, the man continued his menacing advance.

"Now, see-" Ethan's protest was cut off by a punch to his solar plexus. The blow was directed upwards and with such force that Ethan was lifted off his feet and back into the wall.

Before Ethan slumped, the man spun ninety degrees and kicked his lowered chin. Ethan's head crashed against the wall, his attacker's foot holding him there.

The fighter dropped his leg at the woman's silent command and replaced it with a powerful right hand. He increased the pressure, and with an impressive display of power, lifted him until Ethan's feet dangled just above the ground. He held him up effortlessly. He moved a pace back allowing the woman access to question Ethan, his hand slowly exerting pressure on Ethan's throat choking him. He struggled, but to no avail, black spots forming in front of his eyes. The woman spoke, deliberately slow.

"Where can we find Rupert Giles?" The pressure lessened, Ethan gasped for air "What?" He stalled. The man ground harder into his throat, before lessening the pressure once more so, he could speak.

"Where can we find the Watcher?" The woman inquired. Ethan stared into her eyes. "Go to hell!"

The man released him abruptly and Ethan fell to his knees rubbing his sore throat. The man scissored his legs. One foot catching Ethan hard on the back of his skull, slamming him down. When Ethan tried to get up the man's foot pressed down, cracking his head on the ground.

"Enough!" The woman's command halted Ethan's punishment.

He kicked Ethan one last time before pulling him up by his hair. The man held him steady, while she produced a small black gun. She pressed it against Ethan's chest and fired. His body jerked with a sudden, searing pain.

Then he was airborne again. Ethan landed awkwardly on his damaged ribs. He thought of Ripper as he staggered to his feet and despite his injuries started to run.

##

Ethan lurched down the street from lamppost to lamppost, pausing to heave in a breath,

allowing his eyes to focus on a familiar building. He half fell down the steps and hammered on the door.

"Ripper!" He shouted ignoring the grate of his broken ribs. He braced his body against the door-jamb and waited for the door to open. He felt the cloak of unconsciousness dropping over him.

##

Rupert hastily dragged on his robe, "This had better be good..." Rupert said through clenched teeth. He opened the door and Ethan tumbled unceremoniously to the floor. "Willow, get the kit." She nodded and hurried to the kitchen.

"What happened to you?" Rupert murmured to himself as he surveyed his friend's injuries. He found something just under Ethan's skin and touched it. "Not a bullet..." he pondered to himself. "It looks like a thorn." Ethan stirred as a semi clad Willow knelt beside him with a bowl and bandages.

"Willow, my dear, a sight for sore eyes..." Even severe injuries did not prevent him from noticing the turn of a shapely ankle or the upturn of a youthful breast. Willow blushed under the attentive gaze of the older man, her fingers fumbled self-consciously at her hastily refastened robe.

"What did you do this time, Ethan?" Rupert's tone was accusing but not life threatening.

"Nothing." He wheezed. "Two leather-clad terrorists jumped me at the Bronze. They were looking for you."

He smiled as Willow cleaned off the blood on his face. He felt Ripper staring at him. "They wanted me to tell them where you lived. I didn't. So after the man kicked the shit out of me the woman shot me ... they went...don't know where."

"What kind of weapon was it?" Rupert asked as he crossed to the bookshelf and searched for a particular volume. Ethan eased himself down into the sofa.

"Oh, it was a gun..." He winced and Willow was beside him again with the wash-cloth. He took it from her and dabbed at the blood that trickled from his mouth. She was about to tell Giles that Ethan was seriously hurt but he stopped her shaking his head. "Nose in a book again Rupert? Is it going to help?" He asked jovially.

"Aha! Yes, look." He passed the book to Ethan. The page was illustrated the picture showing a couple in hunting garb leaving a burning village.

"Sorry Ripper love, my Latin's not what it was, care to elucidate?"

Rupert scowled good-humouredly. "You never studied." He muttered, "It says here that in the Middle Ages a Watcher settlement was razed to the ground by two hunters sent by Beelzebub to destroy the Watchers Council of the day. These two had amazing strength and destroyed the settlement by merely linking their hands." He closed the book and placed it on his desk.

"Willow," he asked quietly. She looked up she didn't like it when he used that tone. "Is

there anyone outside the house?" She left the sofa and peeked out of the window.

She saw the couple that Ethan had described. They were standing side by side watching the house. "Yes, it's them."

"Shit!" Ripper exclaimed. "Willow get dressed. Then get the books on..." He thought for a second and reeled off a list of titles. She nodded and set to her tasks. "Ethan? Watch them, tell us if they move." His friend sighed as he hobbled to the window to take up his vigil.

Giles raced upstairs to get dressed; he had no idea how much time they had before the hunters would strike.

"They're moving together Ripper..." Ethan warned. Giles nodded and grabbed the bag of books from his desk.

"Come on," He motioned them to follow "Hurry! They're getting ready!" Giles and Willow supported Ethan between them as they ran unsteadily from the house as though the Hounds of Hell were on their heels.

"Where are we going?" Willow gasped.

"Xander's" Rupert threw over his shoulder. They were out of the house and away down the street when it exploded.

##

The man looked into the distance and saw three figures running away. He felt her hands close over his. He glared at her with open hostility. Their hands clasped long enough to destroy the Watcher's home but no longer. He broke contact first roughly casting aside her comforting fingers. Green eyes locked on brown ones; the former filled with hatred and pain, the latter with love and desire.

End of pt.5

### Watcher Hunters 6/10

Summary two mysterious strangers have blown up Giles' home, Ethan has been beaten to a pulp and they, Willow included, are racing to Xander's basement to regroup.

Ethan dropped to the ground again; Giles looked back the way they came. His books, his clothes, his memories were blown to smithereens. He shut his eyes in horror trying to remember if there was anyone else in his block. He shook his head, glancing at Ethan he noticed that his friend was very pale, a streak of blood stained his shirt. Giles swallowed the lump of fear that had formed in his throat. Ethan's hand on his arm indicated he had rested enough.

"How far?" He asked, Giles had never heard his friend sound so weak.

"Not far," he said gently. "Willow? Run on ahead with the books, warn Xander that there's

trouble brewing." Willow set off for Xander's with the books, wondering if Giles was going to be following her or making a stand.

Giles dragged Ethan up and held him tenderly. Ethan smiled wanly.

"You've not held me this close in years, Ripper." Ethan's eyes gleamed. Giles tried a scowl but couldn't quite pull it off.

"Shut up Ethan," Ethan flinched as they set off once more. They were nearly at Xander's when he felt something tear and coughed. Rupert looked down and hoisted Ethan up carrying him the last thirty feet or so to Xander's door. It opened on his approach and he tripped down the stairs with his heavy burden. His face was a mask.

"Lock the door Xander. Have you any medical supplies?"

The boy took a chest from under the stairs and put it on the table. Giles looked through the huge array of dressings and equipment.

"Where did you get this?" Giles asked in wonder. "Why have you got this?" Xander blushed under Giles' gaze.

"Well, you're always prepared. I thought I better get prepared too. I help out at the hospital and they let me have that lot wholesale." He grinned a little self-consciously. Willow looked proudly at him.

"Ahem, dying man...Needing ministering Angel..." Ethan's weakened voice piped up from Xander's bed. Rupert tended to his friend while Willow unpacked their meagre library. Xander flopped down on his beanbag chair and started to read even before being told what to research, it was a habit picked up from "the library days."

"Uhm, what's the big evil this week?" He looked at Willow she was busy with her laptop. Giles answered.

"I'm being pursued by Watcher Hunters. They have super-human strength and the ability to destroy buildings with a thought..."

"Ah, the usual then." Xander's attempt at levity crashed in flames'

Giles groaned. Ethan smiled up at him. "You deserved that, don't make light of things!"

"You're one to talk! Look at you, you're a mess!" Rupert scolded, Ethan smiled contentedly, when the straight-laced Watcher image slipped, and Ripper emerged. The sensual Ripper he loved, not the one bent on his destruction.

"We need to get you to hospital, Ethan. You're losing a lot of blood."

"No, not while you're in danger, I can help research..." He propped himself up and found his glasses. Rupert smiled.

"All right, but rest while you read."

##

An excited squeal from the far side of the room attracted Rupert's attention. Willow had found something. He looked over her shoulder at the screen and saw an image of one of the books he thought destroyed. He gazed at his love with a mixture of awe and wonder.

"Willow, how did you access this information?" She blushed it was going to be a surprise for his birthday.

"I finished scanning all of the books last week, I was going to create a virtual library for you to browse in. Just in time, huh?" He kissed her his eyes brimming with tears. All his books, his children were here!

"Thank you..." She moved her head into his palm as he stroked her hair. "Now," he cleared his throat. "What have you found?"

Xander and Ethan gathered round the screen as Willow explained the origins of the Watcher Hunters.

"The earliest sighting was in the England of the Middle Ages. There was a settlement that encouraged all members of the community in the pursuit of knowledge, arcane and modern. Unusually the elders made no distinction between men and women."

"They were equal? I thought that came much later with the bondage thing..." Xander commented. Ethan regarded him with interest. He had never equated Women's Suffrage with Bondage before that was quite an image!

Willow carried on. "The Watcher community were attacked by two strangers, dressed in hunting garb. A man and woman. "Neither spoke, smiting in silence, all those that opposed them." They were captured briefly..."

"Does it say how?" Rupert asked eagerly. "They were trapped in a curing shed." He looked thoughtful for a moment.

"Does it mention Beelzebub's Thorns?" Rupert looked at his friends' chest and Ethan fingered his bandaged wound idly.

"Yes, it says they were used to destroy identified Watchers or their associates. I'm afraid no-one survived the removal of a Thorn."

Ethan sank down on Xander's bed, his face blank. He had no glib remark for this situation Rupert took over the research, he read the text swiftly, the pages flicked on the screen and away with lightening speed Willow couldn't believe anyone could read that fast. Then she realised that he was scanning the pages for a one word reference "removal." He shut his eyes after five minutes.

"It can't be done, the Thorn, once embedded prevents any healing, so as you were injured, you'll continue to bleed and you could die...."

As if on cue Ethan had an explosive coughing fit. Rupert was by his side in a second. He didn't look well, his skin was clammy and dark circles ringed his eyes. Rupert patted the sweat away with his handkerchief. "The thorn leads the hunters to their prey, they're attuned to it somehow. It's probably electronic nowadays." Ethan coughed some more and grimaced as gouts of blood began to flow from his mouth. Rupert grabbed at the dressings

from Xander's chest. The boy went to his fridge for some ice.

While Giles and Xander were busy with the ice, Ethan moved off the bed and headed for the stairs, gripping pieces of furniture to steady himself.

"Where the bloody hell do you think you're going?" Ripper asked indignantly.

"As far away from you as I can get!" Ethan answered bitterly.

"No, you're not" Rupert murmured. Ethan turned to glare at him, his eyes burning with the shadow of death.

"What's the matter Ripper? No one else can be noble? I'd much rather be outside, than ruin the carpet when I finally expire, thank you."

"Ethan, come back here. Rest tonight, you can be noble in the morning. More people about to see you in the daylight" His tone appealing to his friend's vanity and craving for approval. Ethan halted at the stairs.

"Ripper? I can't make it back to the bed..."

##

Willow sipped the tea that Xander had made them. He seemed to like the company. As the evening wore on his quips became less and the Xander clown mask slipped to reveal his serious side.

"Giles, is the thorn beneath the surface of his skin?" Giles nodded, his eyes glowing with pride as Xander struggled to a conclusion. "Then it has to react with air. Leaving it in means he dies, taking it out he dies. How does it kill?"

"The settlement was razed to the ground and the Watcher's were well.... They only found pieces." Willow shuddered. Giles looked at Xander expectantly.

"Uhm, we have exploding buildings and Watcher's. Why destroy Watcher's?"

"A Slayer is weakened without her Watcher she has no guidance. No Watcher's mean the Slayer's are easier to slay." Giles finished his tea. "But a mistake has been made. I'm not a Watcher. Why are the Hunter's after me? Buffy doesn't need guidance she truly has answered her calling."

"Giles ...Giles! I think I've found them!" Willow cried excitedly. Willow showed him the screen of a local motel. Rupert smiled, always thinking ahead was Willow.

"Good work, love!" He read the names on the motel register Catherine and Dominic Smith, not very original. The clerk had noted "no luggage" and "overnight stay" in the comments section of the electronic form.

"Y'know, you're very clever!" Rupert's smile warmed her heart. "Right! We know they're settled for the night. I suggest we get some sleep too. Tomorrow we have to leave. I don't want to endanger you further Xander. Thank you for giving us a place to crash."

End Pt.6

### Watcher Hunters 7/10

Summary Someone Hunts the Slayers Watcher.

He reached down and slowly unzipped his boot. He slid it from his foot as carefully as he could, putting his foot down experimentally. He hissed in pain at the barest touch, and hopped backwards, away from the bed; away from her.

He sat on the top of a set of drawers to examine his foot. Two circular discs lying flush with the sole, one each of silver and black.

He stared at the hated thorns. The black one, embedded in heel, had revived him, after the Greys had killed him. This ebony monstrosity gave him tremendous power. Chief among the abilities he now "enjoyed" was the capacity to endure pain beyond the human norm. This fuelled his desire to inflict pain beyond human endurance.

The Beelzebub thorns, as their masters called them, controlled the levels of aggression in the hunters, making them prisoners of their emotions. He had already witnessed first hand the pain their masters could inflict through the thorns by simply standing! His gaze shifted to the silver one. Now, the silver one-

"Why do you change like that?" She questioned from the bed.

He glared glacially at her, he didn't want to talk to her or acknowledge the obvious effect she was having on his body.

"Use the thorns" she urged "I know how much that hurts." She gestured to his feet resting on the floor.

He put his foot down, and started to unzip the other boot slowly. "It reminds me," he intoned coldly "That I was human. Once." He sat atop the chest and continued to undress the old-fashioned way.

She shifted, and even in the darkness of the dingy hotel room, he could see that barb hit home. Good! He undressed swiftly now that he was off his feet. He removed his jacket and shirt, whilst continuing his bitter tirade.

"I miss the little things. Changing, feeling hungry, laughing." He pulled his top clean over his head, snapping his head back up, his accusing emerald glare meeting her hurt soulful eyes. "Being in love." He threw his confession away as though she meant nothing. He saw her eyes fill with tears and stared at his discarded clothes "I miss that most of all," his voice cracked and he fell silent.

She knelt up on the large bed "I lo-"

"Don't say it!" He barked looking at her tear-stained face. "Don't lie to me again!"

"It's not a lie. Dominic, I love you. I thought-- I thought you-"



He studied the floor, choosing to shut his companion out of his mind, sight and earshot

"I loved Cathy." He murmured "With all my heart." there he stopped. He didn't want to go down that road; he started anew. "That man today. I broke his ribs and cracked his skull. I choked him for so long, I could feel his life slipping away." His voice quaked to a standstill and he swallowed his anger. "I can do that!" He prodded himself in the chest finally feeling bold enough to meet her gaze "I do that! And I enjoyed doing it..." He stared at her. "When I was hurting him, MY pain stopped." He grimaced remembering. "I had focus... I."

His anger ran out unexpectedly, replaced with a horrific realisation

"You did this to me!"

She stood approaching him by half a step. The moonlight in the room glinting on her naked form, highlighting her tumbling hair He backed away fearfully. "The woman I loved ... she ... she wouldn't have done this to me." He stammered. As she advanced, he retreated. "She wouldn't have watched them fire the thorns into my feet" he finished venomously.

"Please," she pleaded.

"No." He continued "She wouldn't have ... have..." he closed his eyes. "...Have taken a hammer and. " He couldn't go on. He thought of the silver thorns and re-lived the pain when they had pierced his feet, the pain in his heart when he realised that she had been responsible. He leaned against the wall, fighting for breath, avoiding her gentle face.

##

Cathy perched on the bed, and curled her own feet beneath her. "After I had inserted the first thorn, you freed your hand, do you remember."

"Yes." He answered still looking elsewhere.

"You could have strangled me. I wouldn't have stopped you. But you let go, you allowed me to insert the second thorn."

If he heard her he made no indication.

"Do you know why?" He opened his mouth slowly and replied. "I thought you were someone you're not."

She ignored his acidic remark. "You trusted me. You knew I wouldn't hurt you without reason."

"I was wrong." His voice was empty, he wished his heart was.

"Those thorns bind you to me." Her expression gave away nothing of her true feelings for him. She had to concentrate hard to create this eye of calm in his anger.

He gazed at her doubtingly. "W-what?"

"Without them, you would be just another one of the drones, under the control of the

Greys." She allowed herself a small smile, he was beginning to understand.

"Why didn't you tell me?" He looked at her suspiciously, but at least he looked at her!

"I'm not supposed to. If they find out, they'll terminate us both." Her control failed but it didn't matter, he was calm and rational now.

He stood wavering, "Then why tell me?"

"Because I love you. They sent me to find a partner, another hunter. I found you and fell in love." She smiled tenderly "I told you because, I want you to trust me, again, to." Her voice dropped almost to a whisper. "Love me again."

He closed the gap between them, uncertain about what he should do. She moved her legs from under her and allowed him to examine her feet.

"Y-you have three thorns," he studied each foot. Two black thorn's, and a larger blue one embedded in her sole.

"I wasn't a natural dominant personality so I needed to be given two thorn's to change my nature." He remembered the pain from having one, and flinched. He sat next to her and reached for her hand, it was a simple gesture of comfort, and it was a start.

"... The blue one?" He asked. She looked up at him, as his gaze met hers

"It binds me to you. They were given to me by my trainer, he wanted me to be happy"

He frowned at her. "Your Trainer?" Cathy had never mentioned her own trainer... "Who put the blue thorns in?"

Their eyes locked. "I-I had to have them, or you would have been..."

He inched closer. "Who, Cathy?"

Their mouths were mere inches away from each other. She turned her head to the side. "Joseph." She said, a half second before her lips touched his.

He wanted to talk to her, about her trainer, to tell her how sorry he was, how much he loved her. But he could never break off that kiss. So like the first kiss they had shared all those months ago, tender, warm, and human. He pulled her closer, as they fell together onto the bed. He tangled one hand in her hair, the other roamed down her body in one long caress, he was unwilling to break contact even for a second.

Her hands moved across the muscled planes of his chest and continued down to his abdomen, her nails scratching scarlet trails like arrows to the waistband on his leather trousers.

His lips seared sweet kisses on her throat, concentrating on the hollow of her collar bone he breathed hot and hard there, hoping to distract her from his hand which had settled on her buttocks, pulling her flush to him.

She felt his hard length through the straining leather of his trousers. He moved her body

against him, alternating capture and release he knew that the feel of leather against her bare sex drove her mad!

"Use the thorn" She growled as she slipped her leg over his waist locking and guiding him in one sliding sensual movement along his leather clad leg.

"Spoilsport." He used the thorn, anyway. Grateful for the first time for having it, his remaining clothes disappeared instantly. He had to admit that was impressive, clothes summoned at a moment's notice from an inter-dimensional portal for their personal use. His partner explained that the Greys portal clothed them traditionally in leather.

He slid his hand between her thighs, preventing her from claiming his cock too soon. He teased her with his fingertip, stroking her folds. She bucked towards him, but his restraining hand kept her still. He flipped her over onto her back, "Not yet. " He said, as much for himself as to her.

He laced his fingers in hers as he lifted her arms above her head. He let go his eyes speaking of untold horrors should she move them, skimming his hands slowly down her arms, relishing the feel of her warm skin under his cool finger tips.

He alternated his kisses with soft bites as he travelled down her throat and across her collarbone. His mouth continued down her chest, reaching her breasts, as his hands met to caress the sweet flesh there. He flicked at her nipple with his tongue, nipping lightly making her gasp. Her breath quickened in anticipation, as his pace slowed. Finally and with agonising slowness, he reached the swell of her pubic bone, lingered a heartbeat then started to move back up.

Her growl of frustration made him grin as she forcefully pushed him in the right direction. He wet his lips, before using his tongue to wet hers. He slipped his tongue inside her, and followed her inner contours. He touched as much of her shivering flesh as he could, pulling away slightly he licked his lips, tasting her there.

He moved against her heat again, licking laborious trails with his tongue. He used the tip of his tongue to stimulate her clitoris, making her shudder. He swirled his tongue away, only to settle there a moment later, like a taciturn butterfly; his lips met and massaged it at last, scraping his teeth gently over the sensitive nub of flesh. The effect was magical.

"Dom, now!" He glided up caressing her legs before settling over her, impaling her, in one swift motion, he groaned at the feel of her around him. She arched forward grinding herself against him, her legs locking around his waist. His mouth found her breast he feasted eagerly while his hands roamed over her body.

He groaned and thrust deeper and wilder as his mistress demanded. They moved as one the sounds of their love filled not only the room, but possibly the hotel as well!

The moment of her release approached. His strokes seemed almost vicious to an outsider but these two demanded rage as well as lust. He felt her walls contract and he howled moving almost entirely out of her body to stab back in for one final fix of her tightness, their shouts of ecstasy mingling as they came as one entity.

He rolled onto his back whilst still inside her, as she shook from her release. He stroked her hair lightly, holding her close to him. He had

missed being together and being in love. "I love you," he murmured, kissing her forehead.

She smiled "I know." She looked at him, and sighed. "We need to finish the Watcher soon."

He smiled back at her wickedly. "Oh, but not yet." He asked sitting up and gripping her tight. She pushed him back, and returned his smile. "No, Not yet." Her scarlet talons flexed over his heart, he glanced at her nails and gave an imperceptible nod. A look of pride flitted over her imperial features.

"My slave!"

"My Dominatrix!" He sighed and shuddered

End of part 7

### Watcher Hunters 8/10

Summary Willow, Giles and Ethan leave Xander's and adjourn to Ethan's hotel. Giles and Willow protect it with magic and Ethan seems to improve under their benign influence.

Giles and Willow shared a sleeping bag on Xander's floor. Lying so close reminded them of what Ethan had interrupted at the house. When Rupert's hand drifted down Willow's lithe body, she wriggled until she had his hand exactly where she wanted it. He began to stroke her. Soon his fingers were slick with her juices. She whimpered, trying so hard not to make any noise, but it was difficult especially when he did that thing with his thumb ... She moaned into his chest. He was very warm and very aroused! If she could just get her leg.... round. Yesssss! Contact! It was Rupert's turn to groan. Willow so close to him, her perfume surrounding him, spurring him on; he couldn't ignore her! Who knew when or if he would have another opportunity to love her?

Their movements were subtle at first but soon they got more insistent, the confines of the sleeping bag could no longer control them. With a growl, Rupert ripped the Zip of the bag down and Willow unfurled upwards like a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis. Her fingers laced with his as Rupert moaned encouragement in stage whispers mindful of his inconvenient audience. Willow rode Rupert bathed in moonlight from the high window of Xander's basement. Rupert's face reflected in the same light and showed the effect that Willow was having on him.

Xander and Ethan had woken when the zip opened. Ethan watched Ripper and Xander watched them both. Willow's back arched in a graceful curve as her climax swept over her. Rupert not far behind arching from the floor reaching round her body pulling her down harder onto his body showering hot kisses on her throat and breasts. They sank back down to the floor, sharing a tender kiss goodnight, tangled together in a lovers' knot. The last thing Xander heard before sleep finally claimed him was the sleeping bag being re-zipped.

##

At dawn Willow, Giles and Ethan had to leave Xander's. Giles carried the air tank from Xander's scuba gear under his arm.

"Why do you need that?" Xander asked. In reply the ex-Watcher just tapped his nose, smiling. He hesitated at the door as Xander handed him a pocket penknife and answered Giles' questioning look.

"I'm pretty sure this has a tool for un-jamming zippers.." He grinned at the ex-Watcher's embarrassment.

With one last hug of thanks, they made their hasty exit from Xander's basement and adjourned to Ethan's hotel room. Ethan collapsed on his bed once inside the room. Willow made them tea whilst Rupert first prepared a circle to capture their pursuers and hid the scuba tank. They would need for the purging spell he had taught Willow on the way to the hotel. Then he strengthened the wards that Ethan had placed about his room.

"Ripper, you should go...Take your witch and go. I'll take this out by myself" He gestured to his chest. "I don't want you around." He tried a devil-may-care smile but couldn't quite pull it off.

"No, I'm not leaving, and you're not taking that out by yourself. I'll find a way..." Rupert was desperate. Willow regarded the two men, knowing something was about to happen.

"You know as well as I, Ripper old chum, that the world would be a better place without me in it." Ethan sighed, rolling into a sitting position. "But if you won't leave, then I will. They can't find you if I'm not here..." He stood up shakily and Ripper caught him. Ripper turned his head and said her name, hoping that she respected his need for a private moment with Ethan. Ripper heard the door close.

"She's gone Ethan, just us now. Like old times..."Rupert murmured by his lover's ear and Ethan smiled. His mouth covered Ethan's as he gently eased his friend back down on the bed. The kiss was tender and warm, a proclamation of his continuing affection. Ethan captured him in a warm embrace, bringing him closer as the kiss evolved into something more demanding. Ripper smiled at Ethan's eagerness, and then his eyes stung with unexpected tears as he realised this might be the last time he loved his friend.

Ethan sensed Rupert's change of mood. Glancing at his tear stained face, he put a jaunty grin on his face and Ripper smiled remembering the last time that grin had been used to devastating effect on a police constable in Brighton "Let me, Ripper. Unless you'd like to share..."

Rupert sniffed. This is for Ethan. You fool! "Share." He rumbled. "Like old times."

He led Ethan through dark, secret, seldom trod paths to ecstasy. Ethan loved every moment he and Ripper shared. It was so sweet to have him again, his touch so light and sure. Eliciting the most pleasure from the least effort, he lay on his bed as a drained Ripper spooned on his side behind him. They dozed until he sensed a familiar body in the room with them.

"Willow," Ethan whispered. "Take care of him, I give him to you. There's a hot tub in the bathroom..." He shared the smile that broke on her face. She kissed him and he noticed her tears as well. Gods, this would never do! He was evil, nasty and a trickster of the highest order! He couldn't have people weeping over him. It just wasn't cricket!

Rupert stirred and moved closer to Ethan, and then he froze as he saw Willow and his

expression darkened. He panicked and felt for Ethan's pulse.

"Oi, watch where you're grabbin'." Ethan protested. "Willow wants to have her wicked way with you in the hot tub, don't you love?"

"Well, yes ... Would you like to..." She smiled that sensuous coy smile of hers and Rupert hardened. Ethan hissed, as the erection thumped up his back.

"I think he'd like to, Willow, a hell of a lot!" Ethan smirked.

Rupert got up and stood by Willow, head bent, he towered over her. She looked up. Ethan smiled at the picture they made, then his eyes closed; he needed to sleep. He hiked up the covers absently.

"Go on, before I change my mind and join you..."

##

Willow slid into the warm water next to Rupert and switched on the jets. He gazed on Willow, her creamy shoulders and graceful neck bobbed just above the bubbling water, his desire re-ignited by the wanton lust on her face. She seemed so much sexier than usual. Then she knifed through the water and clambered aboard. His hands clasped her close to his body as she impaled herself gasping as she did so.

"Eager, little one?" Rupert smiled moving his hips so that her breasts bobbed out of the bubbles. He captured her nipple and sucked the sweet flesh. Her fingers laced round his neck locking his mouth on her breast. She moaned as her head slid back and her eyes closed in bliss.

##

Dominic dreamt.

A nightmare of monotone grey remembrance and nothingness. his life, memories, and existence gone. All faded into the grey. Then suddenly, there was light! He was born again! He jerked upright, gasping for breath. Hands appeared from nowhere pulling him down. He felt leather straps bite deeply into his chest and arms. He... He had been dead. Was this hell? It certainly could be. And then came the most sickening memory. His death and betrayal his final unanswered question at the very moment his heart gave-way. He bit back his tears as he thought of Cathy. Why had she done this to him?

He stared at the light overhead, the glow filling him with nausea. He heard a familiar rhythmic click, and spun his head catching but a glimpse of her, his love, his betrayer, before his unseen attendants pushed the trolley he laid on through a set of doors, removing her from his sight.

\*NO\* His mind screamed as he looked around desperately. More masked grey men. He turned his head frantically, seeing a large mechanical arm occupying the centre of the room; a tray full of surgical instruments lay alongside it. He caught a glimpse of it's "hand" into which was set a suction tube encircling a needle-pointed black thorn, easily four inches long.



He thrashed violently against his bonds, an attendant approached. He struggled against the strap on his left hand, feeling it weaken and begin to buckle. Without warning a third attendant struck from his blind side and he screamed in pain as a hypodermic needle bit into his hip. He tried to kick his assailant, but his leg would not move. The metal hand hissed and his fear-filled eyes followed its hypnotic movement closely, his heart threatening to rip free from his chest, as he lived his worst nightmare.

The "hand" settled over his heel. For a second he felt nothing, as the tube created a vacuum. Then sudden searing pain, as the thorn ripped through his heel, propelled by inhuman force. He tried to scream, but the drug that filled his veins would not even allow him that. The tube settled over his right heel, he turned pleading eyes to Cathy. Why was she letting them do this?

For a second time, he felt a thorn rip into his foot. It seemed to amplify the pain of the first, to join with it in a sickening loop of anguish. A thousand minds entered his and his sense of self began to fade, and he raged against it. The pain and power the thorns brought, slowly made his body stir. He roared in anger and strained against his bonds the drug wearing off under the thorns' influence.

A human hand gripped his foot and placed a thorn against his flesh, it rooted... He shook his head; the feeling of so many threatened to destroy him. He looked down and saw Cathy there. Confusion reigned, he realised her plan a split second before the mallet she wielded drove the thorn into his foot. He moved and stopped the thorn going in cleanly. She took a second swing and it sunk in deeply. He howled in fury and pain, but he could feel the bonds with his masters waning.

She moved to the other foot. He felt the thorn root in his skin. With a wrenching creak, his hands were finally, free. He grasped her throat, the minds' inside his head urged him to kill, to stop the pain.

The attendants moved away as his grip tightened. She regarded him calmly, unresisting, searching his eyes. He studied her, as the minds' inside his head screamed for him to snap Cathy's neck. He remembered her eyes from times past, before now. There was a before now? His mind slowly stretched back, remembering when there had been only one voice in his head. He would not let them decide for him.

Staring at her his grip softened. Who was his enemy her or them? He made his decision and let her go. He fell back against the bed, an icy calm filling him. At last he understood that this was her gift to him resistance to the rage of the thorns. His hands caught the edge of the metal frame, as she hammered the thorn into his foot.

He heard a door hiss open, and she fell back, subserviently. He glanced as best he could to the door. A tall pale humanoid stood there, its body covered in silver skin, a wide toothless mouth opening to whisper a greeting.

"Ah, the new recruit. We are most pleased with you. We have long awaited the arrival of the second Watcher–Hunter."

##

Dominic woke first bathed in sweat; he'd had the nightmare again. Cathy looked at him, her eyes full of concern. He shook his head and breathed the painful memories away.



They both became quiet and focused; their quarry had flown.

In the blink of an eye, they were dressed. The same unisex garb they always wore had a few personal touches now, courtesy of the colour thorns. She wore a silver blouse and bangles; he wore a blue shirt and heavy slave bracelet. The masters would not approve.

##

Cathy led the way because she was more attuned to the thorn in the Watchers' friend. They arrived outside a hotel and found that one room was radiating magic. The Watcher was in there. This was too easy! Cathy had her suspicions about what lay on the other side of the door but Dominic's rush of power and aggression at the thought of a kill, blocked all thought of a trap from her mind. She wanted him!

They opened the door and gasped at the presence of unbridled magic. Breathing its heady scent, they came across the wounded man. Cathy leapt to Ethan's side, forced him awake with a slap, and then dragged him upright with his arms caught up behind his back bound by a length of her whip. "Where's the Watcher?" She whispered in Ethan's ear, as she pressed the thorn deeper into his flesh. Ethan didn't answer, but his eyes flickered to the bathroom door. "Thank you..." Cathy smiled giving him a peck on the cheek. She dragged him off his bed, with the handle of the whip hard against his windpipe. She was breathing heavily, her eyes glittering with excitement.

##

Willow and Giles exited the bathroom murmuring together. Dominic appraised the Watcher. Cathy exchanged glances with her partner. Then she held out her hand and he took it, returning her light grip.

Rupert glared at the woman who had Ethan in a strangle hold. She looked ruthless. The man looked dangerous, much younger, a little taller, and probably faster than he. This was going to hurt...

The man shifted to the side easily, dodging Giles' first blow. He caught Giles' arm as it went past, wrenching the elbow. He backhanded Giles in the face, feeling his victim's nose cave in. He whirled around facing Giles; his feral grin told how much he was enjoying the fight. Giles came at him again, but his blow was blocked again and his arm was twisted away, leaving him open for a straight palm into his chest. Giles recoiled, in pain and anger.

That smile was really starting to annoy him! Practically pouncing forwards, Giles' fist connected with his assailant's chin, knocking his head back. He continued to smile, in spite of a trickle of blood escaping from his lip. Giles aimed for the smile, hitting him hard with a straight right. His head went back and Giles aimed one low for his stomach. But his opponent's hand gripped his fist painfully. Giles looked up, in time for a head butt to connect with his already damaged nose, he staggered back and the man was on him again gripping his head whilst firing hard lefts to his stomach.

Giles drew his arm back, fingers extended and jabbed them into the Hunter's eye. He released Giles with a snarl and they faced each other, breathing hard.

Giles attacked first, as he feared he would not have the stamina for a longer fight, they traded equally matched blows, until a feint set up a savage heel to Giles' throat, and he

crashed to the floor, the wind taken out of him, wrenching his back and grimacing with pain. He had no time to recover because a moment later he was airborne, as that bloody grinning bastard had him by the throat. The hunter half turned glancing at his partner whilst holding Giles. She unclipped a holster on her leg, and handed him a gun. Ethan twitched against her, recognising it. She glared at him and he stilled. Her partner took the gun from her and flicked a switch. The thorn turned red, the prescribed colour for instant death. He pushed the muzzle hard into Giles' chest over his heart. He looked into the ex-Watcher's eyes, his smile widening, as his finger tightened on the trigger.

"WILLOW!" Rupert shouted. He wrestled the gun away from his chest so that the thorn fired harmlessly into the air. Willow muttered the spell and performed a closing gesture round the room. She watched anxiously as the air left the circle where Cathy and Dominic stood. Both hunters dropped after a few seconds. Rupert shared the air from the hidden tank with Ethan, then scrambled out of the circle his lungs bursting, struggling with Ethan's weight on his back.

Willow muttered the reversing spell. The air seeped back into the circle slowly. Once out of the circle Rupert untied the whip and threw it aside. Willow looked over at the circle to find that the hunters were getting to their feet. They looked disoriented. They held hand instinctively and turned to face their captors.

Rupert wiped himself down then hugged Willow. Without her help they would never have been able to capture the hunters. Ethan looked up at Rupert from his bed, looking disoriented. Rupert passed his hand in front of his friend's face.

"He can't see, Willow..." He muttered. His face set in rage. Willow took care of Ethan when Rupert charged at the circle.

He paced slowly past the hunters. "You'd better tell me how to remove the thorn, because believe me, I can conjure things that you've not met even in your worst nightmares! Oh, and another thing, you twits! I'm not a Watcher anymore!" He shouted. "Bastards fired me! So why are you here? Someone fucked up in another dimension, have they?" He stopped and stared at the hunters. He'd hit a nerve.

"They have, haven't they? Let me guess, you're not typical hunters are you?"

"Giles!" Willow's stricken voice from the corner brought him to Ethan's side in a moment. His friend had ripped the bandage from his chest and clawed at the thorn. It moved nearly to the surface.

##

The hunters exchanged worried glances; they wouldn't survive the blast. They had to act and trust this ex-watcher. Their masters had obviously abandoned them to their fate. His eyes begged for her permission Cathy nodded and gave it.

"Wait!" Willow, Giles and Ethan whirled round and stared at Dominic.

"The thorn has to be extracted underwater by one of us, after that your friend will recover rapidly. It will be as if he never sustained an injury in two or three hours." Cathy said.

"If you try to get it out yourself..." Dom Pantomimed a big explosion with his hands then

smirked. "Kaboom!"

"Dominic. Hush. I'll take it out. Release me." She stepped closer to the circle's edge. Her partner grabbed her hand. "If something goes wrong, I want to be with you ... Go out with a bang!" He grinned, his eyes betraying his true feelings.

##

"Rupert, they're rogues. They love each other. The masters can't control them because they control each other..." Willow scrutinised the two hunters clinging to each other in the circle. Rupert looked at Willow then at the hunters. She was right of course. He released them with a sweeping gesture of his hand and they approached Ethan's bed, lifted him up and took him to the bathroom.

"Leave the hotel." Dominic ordered. Willow dragged Rupert out.

End of Part 8

### Watcher Hunters 9 /10

Summary Watcher Hunters came to Sunnydale in search of Giles. They beat up Ethan and plant a homer-killer thorn in his chest, as they had hoped, Ethan led them to Giles. They don't know that Giles is an Ex-Watcher and that his Slayer no longer needs a Watcher. Giles Convinces them that they have been set-up by the "Greys" their mysterious masters because they are unorthodox Hunters, just as Giles was an unorthodox Watcher. Cathy and Dominic (The Watcher Hunters) defect and in return for Giles' help; they try to save Ethan.

Dominic and Cathy dragged Ethan between them into the bathroom. Cathy turned the faucet on and Dominic dropped Ethan into the water, none too gently.

"Ahh! This water is bloody cold! I'm not dead yet, woman!" Ethan nearly jumped out of the bath, even in his weakened state. Cathy scowled at him as she turned the hot water on. Ethan sighed in gratitude as the tub warmed.

"Thaaat's better. The water is wonderful now, my dear," the ever ready Ethan coyly intoned. "Join me?"

"What do I have to do?" Dominic asked, staring at Ethan with somewhat less than love in his eyes.

"Hold him steady, and find something I can put the thorn in when I remove it." Cathy answered.

"You are not going in there with him." Dominic said. "Tell me what needs to be done, I'll do it."

"Now, now. Don't bicker. Plenty of room for both of you, if we all squeeze up close." Ethan sighed leaning his head back. He could feel the icy fingers of death on his shoulders but couldn't resist leaving without a quip on his lips.

They both shot him a look.

"Dom, I don't have time to explain it to you. We have to remove the Thorn, or he is going to die. I know what I'm doing! I've done it before." *Once*

"Cathy, I . . . I don't want you to get hurt."

She had forgotten that he would have heard her thoughts instantly via their link.

Sensing the depth of his emotion, Cathy took his hands in hers. "I don't want to get hurt either. Dom, if we can save his friend, maybe the Watcher will." She fell silent, looking deep into her lover's eyes; they shared their thoughts through their link. One thought above all was paramount.

*I don't want to do this anymore.*

Dominic reached out for Cathy; she stepped into his arms and they held each other for a long time.

"Hello, excuse me? Spare a second, love birds. In the bath? Dying?"

They ignored Ethan.

She looked up into Dom's eyes. When he spoke, his voice was serious. "You'd best get a container of some kind. I'll get him ready." Cathy nodded and with a half smile, she turned and left the bathroom.

##

"Well, how is he? Have you finished? Have you started? What's going on?" Giles pounced upon Cathy, the moment she entered the room, bombarding her with questions.

"You were told to leave the hotel, Watcher..." Cathy looked past the anxious man towards Willow; she was silent, but her eyes betrayed just as much concern.

"He's getting worse." She locked eyes with the Ex-Watcher once more. "No we can't start the removal yet. We need a container." She answered in an even tone.

"A container?" Giles look at her, confused.

"If the thorn is removed it's rigged to explode, we need somewhere to store it..."

"Oh, I know!" Willow turned, and scurried off.

"Is he going to? I mean." Giles asked haltingly.

"I'm not sure." At Giles' put out expression, she reiterated. "I can't tell, until I get a chance to look at the wound. We are both doing everything we can to make sure he is OK. Dom is trying to make him comfortable."

##

Dom paused mid-pace to stare at the smirking Ethan. He stalked across the room to him.

"So, I'll be having the pleasure of your girlfriend's company in the tub, then?" He drawled.

"You don't have to be conscious for us to remove the thorn." Dom warned, in a level voice. Sitting behind the tub, he pulled Ethan up, causing him to wince in pain. Dom's arm held Ethan securely tucked under his arm and around his chest, leaving the wound area open and fully submerged, but easier to get to.

"You know, I love this rough treatment." Ethan purred.

Dom froze, and stared straight ahead. "I hate you."

Cathy returned, holding an empty jar in her hands. She put it to one side and turned away, starting to undress.

Dom looked at her in surprise "Not using the thorn?"

"I can't" Cathy replied. "Every time we use the thorns, the overlords have a greater chance of finding us." She continued to undress.

"Shut your eyes." Dom growled at Ethan, not taking his eyes away from Cathy.

"Why should I?" The equally enraptured sorcerer replied.

"Because if you don't, I'll remove them."

"Oh, very masterful..." Ethan wriggled at Dom's incredible discomfort even Cathy giggled. Dom glared at her, and she stifled it "Remind me again why we have to keep this one alive?"

"So that after we save his friend, maybe the former Watcher will help us find a way to be free from the Greys. A way we can be together and not have to live this life."

"That's a good reason." Dom looked down at Ethan. He was weakening, but still managed to annoy him with the smug look on his face. "Damn."

Cathy allowed herself one last giggle, before announcing, she was ready.

Dominic and Cathy exchanged a look, and she carefully stepped in to the bath. For all his bravado, Ethan had fallen silent, and his eyes were starting to close. She examined his wound.

The thorn had dug in deeply, and it was barely visible amongst the bruised pink of the wound. She touched it as lightly as she could with her fingers, and still he jumped in pain. Dom held Ethan steady, as Cathy probed the wound, trying to coax the thorns edge loose so she could pull it free. As she worked, the steady trickle of crimson became a flood, till the water turned red.

"Cathy." Dom warned. He could feel Ethan weakening. He wasn't going to last much longer, with the thorn working its malignant magic inside his flesh.

"I know!" She growled. The thorn was refusing to come free, not even enough for the slightest purchase. There was only one chance left. She looked at Dom. "I need a knife."

"What?" Even Ethan offered a weak surprised murmur.

"Just give me your knife!" She raised her voice.

"I don't have a knife." He answered. "Should I use the thorn?"

She looked at him, stunned. Damn! "No!" She supported Ethan in the water. "I have him, just get a knife. Quickly!"

##

Dom pushed the door open and marched out. Giles was on him in a second.

"Well, how is he? What's taking so... Where are you going?"

"We need a knife" He addressed the room and began searching, he went behind the bar opening the small fridge-freezer. Not even an ice pick!

"WHAT?" Giles barked. He started towards the bathroom but Willow stopped him. "You can't get the thorn out can you? So you're going to kill him and run! That it?"

"The thorn is stuck inside your friend. We're going to have to cut it out."

Giles glared at the hunter and spoke in a low, intimidating voice. "You are not going to carve him up!"

Dom replied, in an equally pitched voice. "Your friend is dying. If we don't remove the thorn, he will die. If we do, he has a chance to live. To remove the thorn, I need a knife. Your choice Watcher." He folded his arms his eyes flickered to the bathroom door.

They stared at each other for a few seconds, while Willow looked on. She cried "Giles, please!"

"Alright!" Giles produced the small knife that Xander had given him and threw it at the Hunter.

"Thank you." Dom caught it and winked at Willow, which further annoyed Giles. He smirked at the Ex-Watcher as he hurried back to the room.

"Oh some great Watcher-Hunter you are!" Giles yelled after him "You don't even have a knife!". Willow took his hand to calm him.

Dom opened the door and shot a look at Giles over his shoulder, his smirk pushed several levels past critical. "I was fighting you. I didn't need one." He shut the door behind him.

##

"You took your time!" Cathy snapped. Ethan was slipping into the water, so Dom ran



across the room, placed the knife by her hand, and took hold of him.

"Sorry. Ex-Watcher problems."

She picked up the knife, and tried to focus on the wound. The water was so full of blood; she could no longer distinguish the thorn or the wound accurately. Thinking quickly, she sank into the bloody water, her eyes slowly adjusting. She saw the black line that was the thorn, and cut into the wound, hastily, twice. Ethan was so weak he didn't even twitch.

The thorn slowly slipped free of Ethan's chest, and started to float to the surface. With a desperate grab, she caught the thorn, but not without pricking her finger. She gasped in pain, and the water filled her lungs. She flew the surface, coughing, but held her hands under the water.

She looked into Dom's concerned, loving eyes; he was beside her in a second. He gave her the jar, which she completely filled with water before dropping the thorn inside and tightening the lid.

Dom lifted her out of the water, while she coughed and spluttered. "Are you okay?" She coughed, pointed, and tried to speak. "What?"

"Ethan" She managed, between coughs.

He spun around. Ethan had sunk into the water, unconscious from blood loss and was slowly drowning. Dom wrenched him free from the water and laid him on the floor.

"Quick, get the Watcher!"

##

Giles crashed through the door. He couldn't wait any longer. His eyes raked over the Hunters. They had removed the thorn and were looking at a still and sullen Ethan.

"Don't just bloody stand there," Giles bellowed at them. Willow came in and knelt by Ethan's body on the wet floor. He was cold and pale, his lips blue and his eyes staring coldly at the wet tiles. His chest was still. He was dead. Willow looked up at Giles with tears in her eyes and the Ex-Watcher sank to his knees beside her, his own hot tears streaming down his face. His tormentor and mentor finally gone, the last link with his past severed forever...

Ethan's body jerked and his chest heaved in the effort to draw a breath. The bloody water erupted from his mouth, barely missing Willow. He supported himself on one elbow leaning over to one side.

"Ethan?" Giles queried softly, not daring to hope. Ethan took a few more desperate breaths before answering.

"Present . . ." He fell back onto the bathroom floor and hid his eyes with his forearm, swallowing hard. Willow touched his chest hesitantly where the thorn had been; there was nothing there but a pink dent.

Cathy and Dominic held hands as they surveyed the tender scene. Cathy dressed using

the thorn then looked down at herself in horror. The killer thorn was out of Ethan's body with no harm caused. Now it would transmit a signal to the overlords to terminate the defectors.

##

Ethan was smiling at Giles. He remembered how tender Ripper was earlier in the day when they had had their little "head to head." Giles' look spat daggers at Ethan.

Dom was leaning against the wall deep in thought. Cathy was talking to Willow.

"Willow, we were sent here to kill the Watcher. The Greys, our masters didn't tell us that he was no longer a Watcher. Now we know that this was a test to see if Dom and I could work together without our love for each other getting in the way. We failed the test. They will terminate the experiment now, do you understand? It's dangerous for all of you. We should have let Ethan die. Willow...I've been killing for forty years I don't want to do kill anymore... The greys will track us down with the thorn we removed from Ethan. The thorns don't only explode in air..."

Cathy looked back at Dom, knowing that he had heard every word. He stared at the floor his expression unreadable. Cathy had promised him long life and freedom from old age and disease. He only had to kill and kill and kill. He shook his head trying to fight the Greys oppressive mind control.

"Rupert, we have to leave," Willow looked back at the Hunters; they paced uneasily like caged animals. "Cathy says someone will be coming to pick them up soon. They know that they've failed. The thorn they took out of Ethan has some sort of homing device. They will be terminated..."

Giles looked at the two Hunters. They resembled the engraving in his book but there was something different about them. They had an undeniable humanity. Saving Ethan was clearly against the rules. Why would they do that?

##

Willow went to the bar with the thorn jar and slipped it into the freezer with the ice cubes. She came back to the conversation and saw that Dom and Cathy were barefoot. She'd missed something.

"And you say these..." Giles touched the black thorns gingerly. "Control your aggression, channelling it into your ability to fight more efficiently?" He asked Cathy because Dom's feet still looked tender.

"They do, before I had my colour I was proud of my record of slaughter. My trainer couldn't stand to see my suffering so he made me the colour thorns. He knew the penalty for their manufacture was death but he wanted me to be happy. I chose Dominic as my partner. He didn't know what was in store for him. Without the colours, we're killers; with them we could be of great help to you. Will you help us?"

Ethan stared as Giles actually looked like he was coming round to the woman's point of view.

"Ripper, don't. They nearly killed me. Let them fend for themselves. The bitch is manipulating you..." Ethan never finished his sentence. He flew across the room, propelled by Dom's backhanded blow across his face. The hunter strode after him with fierce dark eyes.

"DOM!" Cathy screeched. He halted in his advance and dropped to the floor, seeming to switch off briefly before coming back "on-line" again in Cathy's embrace.

"We can't go on. We're not human anymore. They changed us and we don't like it. We have to extract the thorns from each other. Leaving the colours intact." Dom spoke to the Watcher without insult, for the first time since meeting him. "If it were Willow in Cathy's place, you'd help her..." He looked at the close proximity of the red-headed Witch and the Watcher. "We only want the chance to have a life..." He stopped and looked at Cathy... she looked as though she was listening. "The Greys... the overlords should have been here by now."

Willow smiled. "I froze the thorn, it can't transmit. We have some time for you to get away."

##

Ethan grabbed his things and stuffed them into a bag, He was the first packed. Willow had her laptop and Giles carried the weapons bag containing the books. Willow had explained about the ice cubes and how they could perhaps convince the Greys that Cathy and Dom hadn't failed after all and had killed their chosen victim. Giles agreed that it would buy them time to take flight and had volunteered to phone about the bomb in the hotel. Soon, they were leaving for Willow's house.

The jar shaped ice cube set on the bar began to slowly melt.

##

Willow looked anxiously back at the hotel. She saw a maid walking in front of the rooms. She hadn't heard about the bomb scare. Willow dropped her case and raced across the road, screaming "Bomb!" at the top of her lungs.

"Willow!" Giles shouted. But before he could act, a black blur swept past him and flew at Willow's body like a panther taking down a gazelle. The thorn exploded in that same instant and Dom rolled with her on the ground. His hands held her safely between his body and a low wall. Debris showered over them, he winced and bowed his head over her face, their lips almost touching.

When all was silent, Dom opened his eyes to see Willow pale and shaken beneath him. He had covered her small body completely. "Are you all right?"

Willow nodded. Her eyes were large and dark in response to his continued presence on her body.

"I think I can get up now...." She squeaked. Dom suddenly realised and lifted off her immediately. "Sorry...uhm. Sorry." He looked embarrassed.

Giles and Cathy scowled at him. Arms folded. "Don't you have a leash for him?" Giles asked acidly.

"Yes, but I left it behind..." Her eyes glittered dangerously at Dom and he shuddered. He was in for some punishment later...

##

"Thank you..." Willow murmured, Dom looked down at her and smoothed the hair from her eyes. "My pleasure, love."

Willow and Cathy walked past each other like a spy exchange in an old cold war film. Dom flashed a smile for his lover, but she wasn't interested and grabbed him in a steamy clench. Ethan looked from one kissing couple to the other and shuddered. All this kissing going on and no one invited him, he pouted.

Willow broke her kiss with Rupert reluctantly. He held her in a bone-crushing embrace. She looked up at him tearfully, asking a silent question...

"The maid's alright Willow," he smiled weakly at her removing a fragment of hotel from her hair. "Someone flattened her, too." He brought her close to his chest once more taking a shuddering breath he closed his eyes, mouthing a thank you to the Gods.

##

Willow pattered about her parents' kitchen making tea. Ethan leant against the door frame his eyes shining taking in every lithe inch of Willow's young body.

"Lech..." Giles muttered to him as he pushed past him.

"Pot rather calling the kettle black, eh, Ripper?" Ethan patted him on his rump as he passed enjoying the sight of his startled eyes... Yes and a little turned on, perhaps. He sighed happily and stretched. It was good to be alive! Oh to be in England, now that April's there, hmmm nice girl April... and June wasn't bad either. He grinned at the memory.

"Where are the leather terrorists? Aren't they having tea?" Willow set the tray down before him. He smiled at her and taking her hand he kissed her palm. Giles bristled.

"Thank you my dear, I didn't have time earlier to thank you for looking after me. If there's anything I can ever do to you..." He paused, catching the murderous glint in Rippers eyes, "or for you, please don't hesitate to ask..."

She smiled and offered him a plate of biscuits. "Cathy and Dom are having a shower." Willow mentioned innocently.

"Oh?" Ethan took a sip of tea. "I wondered what the noise was."

Giles spluttered his tea, swiftly catching the drips in his palm to save the carpet.

##

Cathy and Dom came downstairs holding hands. Rupert shuddered, but Willow smiled; she thought it was sweet. She had forgotten what the Hunters could do whilst holding

hands.

Giles still mourned the loss of his books. Never mind that they now nestled encased in a plastic and steel binding hugged by his precious Willow. He missed them. He was angry. He stood up and went to the window. He looked out; the street was silent and dark except for a few pools of light provided by the street lamps.

Dom sat and lounged. Cathy perched beside him more attuned to the whisperings of the Greys. They were near. She looked up at Ethan and then at Giles, her anger flashed through the link. Her partner shot up from his seat; his demeanour changing in an instant.

"How have you contacted them?" She screamed. Her whip hand extended and the weapon appeared. Giles froze he didn't think he'd ever fear a dominatrix but this one he did. Ethan sat transfixed in the corner. If he hadn't have been so damn weak in that tub...

"That's none of your business. You're a menace! You've killed and maimed hundreds of people and now you've betrayed your masters because you love each other!" He grimaced. "You deserve to be put down, both of you and good riddance!"

Ethan's mouth gaped in shock. Willow was also upset and was about to protest when she was silenced by a look from Ripper.

"You fancy Dominic don't you?" He glared at Willow and she rushed from the room. Ripper's eyes followed her flight and died a little.

Dom stared at Giles, cold hatred in his eyes. No longer constrained, he materialised a long fencing foil. And took a step towards the Ex-Watcher.

"Dominic" Cathy cried a split second before the door caved in, a tide of grey humanoids swept in. Her whip flickered once then twice, and one fell clutching its eye, blood pouring from it.

Dominic hit the front row of their assailants like a cannonball, dropping the first two in seconds. Cathy stood by his side replacing her whip with a short blade more suitable for close quarters combat.

The Watcher Hunters fought with desperation and skill, but eventually sheer numbers overwhelmed them.

##

The silent grey men held Dom and Cathy still. Ethan palmed his handcuffs to Ripper. He stepped forward.

"Gentlemen, may I?" Giles smiled his most charming smile and the Greys parted. They held the struggling couple's wrists together as Giles snapped the cuffs on. Dom shot him a venomous look. "Can't tell you how that scares me..." He grinned up at the scowling man. "Good luck!" He said evenly. The Greys dragged them out of the house.

##

Giles waited a beat before stepping to the window. "C'mon.... C'mon... A child could work it

out..." Ethan joined him at the window. "Did he get out?" Giles looked back through the window then smiled "Oh, yessss!"

##

Dominic stared at Cathy; a mixture of black anger and blacker despair filled his link with her. He flexed the cuffs experimentally. No give. He glared angrily at the bastard Watcher. He even gave them the cuffs! Dominic flexed back in his jailers' arms, pivoting to give Giles the finger. Then he stared at the cuffs. He looked again. He looked back up to the Watcher's disappearing form. He thought/sent his discovery to Cathy and they both smiled.

Cathy glanced around the area, and spotted an unattended motorbike. She thought the location to Dom and a desperate plan formed. As they approached the van, Cathy dropped to the ground. Her guards stared at her, and one kicked her sharply, drawing Dom forward, but he stopped when he felt his guards tense. Mentally, he counted down.

3...

2..

1.

They both slammed their hands together, jarring the weak point on each cuff that Dom had seen. Hands free, Dom grabbed the heads of two of his assailants and slammed them together, hard. He threw one guard to the floor, nose broken, and tossed the other at a group of Greys running towards him to reclaim him. He ran for the bike, with the slightest of nods to Cathy ensuring she was handling her guards.

She dropped two to the ground with a kick to the chest, and a knife edged chop to the throat. She sought out the Grey that had kicked her and kicked him savagely in the groin. He fell to the ground as she ran for the bike.

Dom reached it first; Cathy slid in behind him. He hot-wired it, with practised skill, before revving the bike into gear, just as some Greys drew close. They roared away, with a parting kick, for Cathy's stricken attacker.

##

Cathy's hair streamed out behind her, the ride was exhilarating. The Greys followed in a car, but they were able to bob and weave in and out of the traffic to the coast with hardly any bother. Then she sensed something to their left and right. Two more cars had joined the chase. They were going to die. The link jumped and Dom increased their speed heading for the open sea...

The salty tang of the sea at early dawn sharpened Cathy's senses. They raced over the wooden boards there was only room for one car on the loose boards. She hugged Dom closer as she saw the boards' edge close upon them.

Their speed didn't waver as the front wheel left the last plank. They were airborne and falling. One sentence echoed through her head as they fell. "Breathe deep and hold it-- love you." Then they were in the water and sinking. Dom kicked away from the bike and took his boots off; Cathy did the same and they swam together.

They curled round each other underwater. Cathy writhed silently while Dom dug out the thorns with the knife. He held them tight in his fist. Cathy levered out the thorns from Dom's feet and held them in her hand. She dropped the knife and swept up to him. Her lungs burned but she had such a sense of freedom and she knew Dom felt it too. They swam for the surface and took a quick breath under the board walk.

Cathy listened to the whispering Greys her ability to understand them fading rapidly with the removal of the controlling thorns. Her eyes grew wide and Dom looked at the thorns and nodded.

He dove under the surface and swam a little way off. Cathy watched as Grey One got out of the car and held a small device. He pressed the button shortly after she had instructed Dom to throw the thorns out of the water.

The blast was orange, ripped with white and red. It lit up the sky like a false sun. The force of the blast threw Dom back beneath the surface and he sank fast. Cathy dived after him; she had been sheltered from the blast under the board walk. The last thing she "heard" the Greys say was "next time we'll send robots."

She found Dom suspended in the water on the way up again. The explosion had charred his hand. They broke the surface of the water so that just their faces showed. He didn't breathe. She raged at him but still he would not stir. Her thoughts blazed in her head and she chucked her thorns at the slowly retreating car. Her thorns exploded and she knew the same peace as her lover.

##

Willow stared in horror at the newscast. The marina had been bombed, the reporter said that it was the same kind that had destroyed a motel down town that afternoon.

"Rupert!" She screeched. He was there in a moment, stake in hand. "Look! They killed them! You let them go and now they're dead!" She accused.

"No, no." He muttered, shaking his head as he sat down to watch the reported devastation. "I thought they'd make it. I used trick cuffs, Willow. I thought they would be fine."

The reporter said that clothing had been found floating in the water after the explosion.

##

The tide lapped over their feet, Cathy cradled Dom in her arms. She rested a while before dragging him further under the board walk. She gasped in pain from her bleeding feet but the pain didn't matter, they were free; they had survived!

"Cathy?" He woke to find her lying next to him smiling. He returned her smile and stroked her cheek. He kissed her fingertips. "We're free?" he asked.

"In heaven..." She moaned and kissed him.

End of part 9



## Watcher Hunters 10

Summary Giles et al find themselves in a tight spot.

Warning There are new players in the Slaying Game.

The night was dark and moonless. Giles walked beside Buffy while she chatted excitedly about her latest beau. He was happy for her; it was so rare for any Slayer to find happiness. He should have known it was not to last.

Willow and Xander came into the cemetery from the East gate and heard the sounds of the battle. They raced to aid the Slayer and Willow's lover. The vampires were legion; it was as if each particle of the last slain had multiplied and bore progeny.

Their numbers were so great, that the Scooby's soon found themselves overwhelmed. Giles was fighting back to back with Buffy, shielding Willow as best as he could; but he was tiring fast. The air was thick with vampire dust that hovered and choked them.

They fought to a standstill and found themselves backed against an ancient mausoleum wall in a desperate last stand. For some unknown reason there was a break in the violent mêlée and all four exchanged their farewells, convinced they would not survive their Ragnorak.

Dark, menacing shapes rushed at them, but they had little strength to battle on, sheer willpower the only thing powering their muscles for the past hour.

Suddenly, the first four vamps in the ranks exploded into dust, then the next two ranks did likewise. It was like a chain reaction. Giles looked toward the heavens to thank the Gods and noticed the flight of arrows silently piercing the night sky. There were two dark clad warriors standing atop the mausoleum's roof. They abandoned their post as soon as the vampires attacked them and flipped from the roof to land in front of the startled Scooby's

"Run!" All took off at speed. The two newcomers lagged behind to take care of any foolhardy fledglings. Buffy was concerned for her friends and guarded their retreat, deciding that discretion was the better part of valour in this instance.

##

They ran without pause till they arrived at Willow's house then flew up the steps and inside. Ethan had opened the door for them, he waited for Buffy then started to close the door. "No!" Willow's strangled shout stopped him as the two warriors leapt over the threshold a vamp hot on their heels.

The vampire rebounded with such force from the invisible barrier that he tumbled backwards, impaled himself on the fence, and exploded into dust.

Ethan tutted and shut the door. He grinned at the assembled throng. They were mostly in a state of collapse; even the Slayer looked breathless. The two in black stood by the door quietly their faces still masked.

"Come now, you're making the place look untidy... Tea anyone?" Buffy rolled her eyes...

Tea, the universal panacea for any crisis! What's more, the mere mention of the beverage had everyone moving into the living room. Buffy halted the progress of the Warriors.

"Just one second! You don't get in here till you can prove you're good guys..." She stared up at the black clad figures and was sure that they were smiling behind those masks.

Giles, Willow and Xander halted and looked back to where the Slayer confronted their saviours. Giles held his breath as the two reached out to grasp the others hand. Willow's hand tightened round his as they watched the couple change...

Cathy and Dominic regarded the shocked Scooby's with quiet resignation.

Xander straightened and became wary, Ethan was at once en garde and Willow shrieked in surprise. Giles had a satisfied smile on his face.

"You got away..." He stated simply. He glanced at Buffy who still looked ready to stake the couple, they were neither human nor demons ... She looked to her Watcher for an explanation.

"Buffy, allow me to introduce Cathy and Dominic. They're Watcher Hunters, or rather they were... They hunted me while you were on your vacation."

"Were hunters?" She asked suspiciously. "I want the full story over "tea"."

She backed away and Cathy led Dominic into the room with the others. Giles finished his second cup before starting on the story he glanced at the hunters as if checking on certain points; they volunteered no information till the end.

"How did you survive the explosion at the marina?" Willow asked anxiously, she was perhaps the only one in the room that bore them the least animosity, after all Dom had saved her from being blown up!

"We had to remove the thorns before the Greys could order them to destruct. We did that underwater and held them till Cathy sensed the signal then I threw them but was caught in the blast..." Dom looked adoringly into Cathy's eyes letting her finish their story.

"I thought Dom..." She halted as tears welled up in her eyes. "I threw my thorns at the retreating car and watched it explode. I don't remember how I got to the shore, I dragged Dom with me and we hid under the board walk all night." She took a shuddering breath and gazed at Dom he hugged her close giving her a reassuring kiss.

"We're free. The Greys think they destroyed us..." They smiled and Dominic looked directly at Giles. "We're unemployed, d'you know anyone who needs help?"

Giles exchanged glances with the others. If tonight was anything to go by, they did need extra help... If Cathy and Dom had inside information about the history of the Greys and their links to vampires and demons, they could be of invaluable help. After all they must have learned something during their enforced servitude...

With one last quick look at Buffy, Giles took a breath and offered them a place on the Slaying team. Cathy and Dom smiled at all present and got up to leave...

"Where are you going? It's dangerous at night in Sunnydale." Willow warned.

"We have to uhm, well, we don't eat and we need to..." They looked at each other with a strange enigmatic gaze... All this was completely lost on Willow. Giles twigged first...

"Oh, yes. Of course...Uhm, see you in the morning." Cathy and Dom stood quietly in the centre of the room, embraced tenderly and vanished.

"Good trick..." Ethan whistled.

"Who were those masked people?" Xander and Buffy piped up together...

END.