

how she looked when she won the beauty contest back in high school. Actually, she was even prettier. I cut this picture out of the annual."

"Your girlfriend?"

"I never even met her," Farley sighed. "She only dated Jocks. The football team, the basketball team, the track team, guys like that. And, of course, the substitutes."

"Promiscuous, eh?"

"I prefer to think of her as democratic," Farley said. "Though that's just a wild guess. Like I say, I didn't know her."

But you had a schoolboy crush on her, right?"

"Wrong. A man doesn't carry a picture of a girl in his wallet for twenty years just because of an adolescent hangup. I've looked at it night and day, and it still drives me up the wall."

"I see," said Dr. Horner. "So that's why you came to me. You want to get rid of those erotic fantasies."

"No. I want you to make them come true." Dr. Horner stared at Farley for a long moment.

"Then you really did see Astaroth?"

"That's right. And he said you were the boss."

"Astaroth has a leaky mouth," Dr. Horner frowned. "But suppose I could help. Are you prepared to pay the price?"

"Anything you ask. Just get me Linda Duvall."

"What do you intend to do with her?" Farley explained in detail.

"My, my," said Dr. Horner. "I hope you're up to it! That's a pretty heavy schedule for just one night."

"One night?" Farley scowled. "But I was thinking more along the lines of seven years. Dr. Horner shrugged.

"Sorry, that's the old contract. We don't use it anymore. In the old days, with only a few clients people like Faust, you know we could afford to give them personal attention. But now there's just too many details to keep track of. I'm afraid one night is all I can offer."

Farley picked up the picture of the red-haired girl and studied it. The sound of heavy breathing filled the room.

"I've got to have her," he said. "Got to."

Dr. Horner smiled. "I understand."

"Do you?"

"Of course. They don't call me Old Horny for nothing." He reached into a desk drawer and produced a parchment covered with crabbed handwriting.

"Sign here," he said.

Farley's eyes narrowed as he scanned the document.

"I can't read Latin."

"Too bad. It's really the only civilized language," Dr. Horner shook his head.

"You needn't worry though, it's a standard contract. Covers everything except acts of God. We have the services of some pretty big attorneys."

"That figures," said Farley.

"What's bugging you then? If it's the sight of blood, don't worry. We can dispense with that formality." Dr. Horner held out a pen. "Here. All I want is a legal signature."

Farley took the pen, then hesitated once more.

"Now what?" Said Dr. Horner.

"I'll level. You have a reputation for

cheating on your bargains."

"That's a damnable lie!" Dr. Horner said. "I'm not a crook."

"Seems to me I've heard that before," Farley told him.

Dr. Horner shook his head.

You're getting a fair deal. One night with the girl in the picture, Linda Duvall. How could I cheat you?"

"Lots of ways," Farley said. "I tried to locate her myself, you know, but I came up with zilch. And then I realized 20 years must have changed Linda as much as they've changed me. Suppose you find her and I end up with a fat, middle-aged klutz?"

"She won't be, I promise you."

"For all I know she might even be dead. I don't want a revived corpse, either."

Dr. Horner chuckled.

"Don't worry. She won't be dead, and she won't be a day older or younger than she is in the picture. And to anticipate your other objections, I also guarantee that she won't be mentally or physically ill, she won't be frigid, and she won't be a lez. Tell you what I'll do, just to sweeten the deal, I'll make her a virgin."

"Yeah," Farley licked his lips, then frowned again. "But suppose she hates me?"

"I'll take care of that too. I give you my word she'll be just as eager as you are."

"You won't make me impotent?"

"What a suspicious mind you have!"

Dr. Horner beamed at Farley appreciatively. "I promise you'll be able to perform indefinitely. And definitely, too."

"Then what happens?"

"I'll come for you at dawn."

"But we'll have the night together?"

"Assuredly."

"Just as she is here?" Farley pointed at the picture.

"Exactly."

Farley gripped the pen and signed. Dr. Horner smiled.

"Linda is waiting for you now, in your apartment." Leo Farley smiled then too, for the first time.

"I hate to eat and run," he said. "Or vice versa. But if you'll excuse me."

"By all means," Dr. Horner waved Farley to the door. "Drive carefully," he said.

Farley drove very carefully. One thing he had to say for himself: He was always careful. That's why he'd taken such pains to make sure about the contract, he had no intention of being out-witted. As a matter of fact, he was a little surprised that the Devil didn't have more smarts. The truth was that Farley had cheated him.

Now driving home, it was his turn to chuckle when he thought of how his life story had gone down so easily. Because it hadn't really been such a bummer after all. His childhood was never unhappy, his parents spoiled him rotten, and he was always the biggest bully in the neighborhood. The only reason he didn't do well in school was because he preferred goofing off to studying. He could have been on the football team if he wanted, but he used his time to set up a betting pool instead and made a bundle from his fellow students. His service in Nam was a crock; he'd spent all his time in Saigon as a company clerk by day and

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