

Synopsis: Tom and Lovey – Under the Moon Into the Wood
G. R. Jerry

Tom and Lovey – Under the Moon Into the Wood is the first of a prospective series of horror stories of which the development of their relationship is a backdrop to the story themes. This first work describes how this duo comes together in a common goal. An evil entity has killed her man and is intent on creating a perfect man-beast from victims he has taken down over the course of ten years. The climax occurs when the three converge during the manifestation of Lovey's duplicate entity that yields surprising results.

The story Prologue opens with Lovey reminiscing over the horror of the past ten years as well as the state of her recent current affairs. She decides to confront the evil Sheriff Harrigut, known as Stargut, who has created a legion of mutants over the past years, and is now planning to use her new neighbor, Tom, as his next test specimen.

The story continues with historical descriptions of how Stargut acquires his victims and disposes of them through rituals undertaken which include burning them at the stake. Lovey's man Bill was one such victim. The nature of his demise as described by the sheriff was a lie dismissed by Lovey and she had vowed revenge. With the appearance of Tom... a preacher of sorts, Lovey finds hope. Her dead husband, who began communicating with her several years after the appearance of Stargut and his own disappearance, develops mistrust in Tom.

Meanwhile, Lovey's longtime neighbor, Patty, has fallen under the spell of Stargut and she has become a pawn in his rituals which always take place under the full moon, into the wood and down by the river. She seems to live day by day, each day, over and over again, and fails to recall her distant or recent past.

Tom and Lovey set out one dark night under a full moon to witness first hand Stargut's ritual which begins at a large firepit located behind Richie's Tavern, a building connected to the city hall, both places in the Village of Wrong which itself is an abomination of natural creation put in place by the demon sheriff. They discover Patty's part in the evil schemes.

As a development to Tom's character the story takes us back in time to 1876 when he was a boy aged fifteen years living on a farm. It is there that he absorbs the power preserved in an ancient silver crucifix mounted above a mantle under which he has prayed with his parents all his young life. The cross imparts immortality upon Tom when he uses it as a weapon to destroy a devil monster that had just mutilated his family. He burns down

the farmhouse, sleeps for several days and awakes having aged about twenty years.

After spending time with a local reverend Tom is drawn away by an acrid scent of evil which he is innately compelled to seek out and destroy. At intervals in the story the reader is taken back in time to experience Tom's early journeys in discovering his purpose in life, his immortality and his maturation. He eventually meets an old Navajo Indian who will become Tom's dear friend and mentor. Red Deer will teach him the ways of tracking and the hunt. Ill fortune falls upon Red Deer and Tom plans one day to return to the four corners region of New Mexico and follow clues left behind one hundred years in the past.

Tom learns the law of the land in Wrong upon consulting with Stargut about the coyote that has been prowling the grounds behind Lovey's pasture near the woods. Tom is well aware that there is more to the wild animal than meets the eye. After a confrontation with the coyote in which Patty's poodle is injured, Tom is put in jail by Stargut and there awaits his fate in the firepit behind Richie's Tavern.

Lovey has other ideas and sets in motion her own plan to rid the world of Stargut, employing Bill's gift of cologne and Tom's crucifix in the process. The three thereafter converge under the presence of Patty and Stargut's legion of mutants, all of them under the moon into the wood, down by the river. Tom and Lovey meet their fate in the depths of the river, now a creek which leads them to the doorsteps of Stargut's evolution, hell itself.

Strange events occur down below and above the surface of Bill's crick, which will lead us to *Tom and Lovey – Pursuit of the Thunderbird*.

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