

# Harvesting

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## Sample

“Where is she?”

The figure on the floor gave a bubbling groan, red tinged spittle oozing down the side of his mouth. He tried to sit up; pressing both hands against the floor but Geoffrey was quicker. He grabbed the robed figure by the collar and heaved him upright, swinging him round into the bank of monitors arranged in the left wall.

Several screens cracked and hissed; a spire of smoke curling free

“I don’t have time for this!” He roared. “Your friends will catch up to me any second; where have you hidden my daughter?”

The man laughed, though his pale face with its blood red markings was twisted in an expression of pain. “Give up, human!” He hissed. “It’s over. You and the rest of this stinking town are nothing more than food to the Old One and his children. We’ll use your life fluids to lubricate the coming of our Master.” He twisted his neck towards the bank of screens. “It’s only a matter of time.”

Geoffrey dropped him, ignoring his slide to the ground in a barely conscious heap. Instead he stared at the wall of security monitors and the centre most image on the largest screen.

A space lit by flickering tapers, arranged a perfect ring around a flat, stone altar. The sides and face of the altar were carved in the likeness of a disgusting, otherworldly beast; face crawling with the many suckered arms of a huge, corrupted octopus.

Atop the altar, bound and naked was a woman.

“Isabelle!” Geoffrey touched the flickering screen, fighting the threat of tears.

The injured man moaned and tried to crawl towards the door, but Geoffrey stepped smoothly into his path. He bent down, pawing through the robes.

Finding the knife made him feel much better. Long, tapered down to a needle sharp point. The blade was made of a dull black material; smooth to the touch, and cruelly sharp.

Geoffrey slashed the air to get a feel for the weight.

When satisfied, he used the keen edge to cut strips from the robes, long enough to bind the man hand and foot.

On the monitors a cluster of red robed figures bunched around the altar. Each held a candle and took turns in dripping wax on the body of the struggling girl. Her silent screams struck Geoffrey like a spur.

He tucked the odd dagger into his belt loops, studiously ignoring the hilt which was fashioned to resemble that same octopus creature from the altar.

So armed, he crept to the main door and peered out from the reinforced glass. The office beyond appeared dark and empty, though it was impossible to guess for how long.

Having been caught out once, Geoffrey had no desire to remain caught in a room with only one door. Grim experience had already proven these people had no problem with killing and maiming.

He slipped through, ducking low and hugging the shadow of a line of cabinets to reach the main door.

Beyond, the hallway was barely lit; low cost emergency lighting for night time use. Though dim, it was enough to rob Geoffrey of any shadows to hide in.

With a deep breath, he opened the door and ducked immediately to the left; scampering through the semi darkness towards a set of double doors. He pushed through and let them swing shut behind him, stopping when he realised that the corridor ahead stopped in a blank wall.

He turned at once, but the motion died half way through when he spotted a shadow passing swiftly over the walls beyond the double doors.

Geoffrey stepped back. His hand groped along the wall, feeling out the handle of a room which might offer him somewhere to hide.

He almost sobbed in relief as the door opened inwards and quickly backed into it. Never once did his eyes leave the ominous shadow outside.

Darkness closed around him; emergency lighting replaced by moonlight through the bare windows in the opposite wall.

A low growl spilled out of the shadows.