



Violet Leighton's first career choice was to become a nun. Not surprising, as most Catholic girls have reported wanting to join up with the nuns at one time or another. Some say it is because of a closeness to God. For others it has to do with the Maria Von Trapp fantasy, the Cinderella complex for Catholic girls.

Violet didn't see "The Sound of Music" until she was well into her twenties. In fact, she was never really all that Catholic. She spent her early years on a commune outside of Bull Head City, AZ called "The People's Farm." It wanted to be a Utopian style society in which everyone would take turns harvesting the crops, arranging bake sales in front of the supermarket and other various chores. The commune would have liked to have been a self-contained world. In the summertime it was over 107 degrees everyday, so surviving off of most of the crops was unreasonable. So they would cook baked goods at a 100% profit. The main cash crop was marijuana so occasionally that was incorporated into the baked goods, along with agave. Not enough pot to blow anyone's mind, just enough to make them feel a little happier and keep them coming back for more. The People's Farm cookies soon had a loyal following, especially in the nearby town of Laughlin, NV. However the summertime was a bitch, green houses were built but still the heat would often kill the plants, let alone the ceramic homemade pots that they had been planted in.

There were daily community meetings led by The People's Farm leader, Grand Matt. Grand Matt was an old man, at least in Violet's eyes. She didn't quite know how old, older than her parents but not by much. Grand Matt was old enough to have amassed a large buddah-esque belly and his skin was beginning to get leathery from years of sunworship and self abuse. He wore a white robe of prime leadership on Sundays. During the week he would wear XXL Hawaiian style shirts they sell in the gift shops in Downtown Vegas. Collages of cartoonish Pinup models and royal flushes spackled each one.

"2 for \$7," his throat would scratch out over his More Menthol cigarette. "Good deal.. and I can't make these. With so many buttons if I go up or down on weight I can just adjust them,"

He never went down in weight.

The commune itself wasn't your typical desolation in the middle nowhere. It was a Motor Home park. Some people had more the coveted airstream type trailers while there were some with just a camper on the back. There was a community room near the office and an above ground pool just out back. The above ground pool was the equalizer. Probably bought at an OSH type store, the baby blue exterior had more than 20 years of rust on it. A few of the "airstream" folks had pitched in together and gotten a cooler for it. It was expensive to run but worth it. Since only about a third of the commune could fit in it at one time, there was a strict schedule set up for who could use it when. A demerit system was set up with non-conformists being banned for the summer months. Also, no one was allowed to leave the commune except on official The People's Farm business.

Violet, like the other children, had only one toy. It was a Malibu Barbie. While the adults spoke she would quietly play with the other kids with their Batman, Tonka and Transformer. Each day there was a new adventure. As the time went by each plaything developed some kind of specific superhero trait. Barbie fancied herself a bit of an escape artist. Dick Julien's Batman usually set her trap with Marty Hallahan's Tonka would act as the flying escape vehicle. She was always getting out of tree rope traps, VCRs and narrowly escaped "Microwave Cavern" with some divine intervention from Grand Matt. She never liked that the boys seemed to control the rate of play. She also hated playing the victim. She always escaped but never faced her Batman nemesis. Soon, the games evolved into role playing. Violet as the only girl was usually in some kind of peril, tied to a tree, trailer or chopper. Always some lame trap that she would be able cut her way out of eventually. After learning the hard way she rarely left her home without some kind of cutting instrument.

One night while sleeping, Violet felt a quivering underneath her top bunk bed. Through the skylight she could see the stars move and fade and promptly went back to sleep.

She awoke fifteen minutes before dawn in the parking lot of a Las Vegas McDonalds, just down the street from the 4 Queens on Fremont Street. It was early morning but the incandescents still burnt bright fueled by god knows what but they never stopped. Her folks returned with a Egg McMuffins and cokes, still way too hot for coffee.

"Morning Sunshine" her parents said.

"Where are we ?"

"Your Dad and I have made a decision. We live here now."

"Oh, okay. Why?"

Mom twisted her ceramic wedding ring that hung loose around her finger.

"We were just over it." She watched her Father trim his two year old beard, wisps falling down outside. When he cleaned up he a tight cleft in his chin. That afternoon they sold their airstream for just enough to get into a small apartment, buy some furniture and safe reliable AUDI. Mom cut her hair short and died it from blonde to a mousy brown.

Within a week both managed to get jobs off of the strip. Mom worked as a croupier and Dad as a valet. Near the end of the summer they both found better paying jobs in the middle of the strip. With some research and their new cleaned up performance they got Violet into Catholic Elementary. This is where she found the nuns with their creased uniforms, temperments and no bullshit smirk and condescending attitude.

Violet

Written by Dve Howard

The nuns had in previous years had abandoned actually hitting children with rulers or yardsticks. They just needed to carry them now. Like most cops, the site of of the ruler was enough of a reminder. And like the cops the nuns rarely drew their weapon and never fired them.

This is why she wanted to be a Nun. Not because of spirituality or a Maria Von Tropp fantasy. It was because of the power. They ran the kids, they ran the priests, they ran the asylum. That's what Violet wanted. She wanted to walk down a hall and see people avoid her stare. She wanted to run the system, dictate policy and humiliate the men who thought they were in charge.

Four years later, on the trip to Los Angeles her parents explained what had happened in Bull City.

This made her want to become a nun even more.

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