

# Safe

by Christopher James

She left knives and hot pots with handles akimbo. Like a guardian angel, he turned them in. Like an ungrateful Eve, she turned them back out.

She partied out alone at night in short shorts.

“But you'll be attacked!” he said.

“Victim blaming,” she complained.

He didn't blame victims, he thought, only attackers. And attackers chased girls in short shorts. He wished he were eloquent.

She returned with bloodied knees and no explanations, and not knowing why gave him nightmares.

In lieu of omnipotence, he built her a cage, to protect her, fed her balanced, nutritious meals thrice daily, and made love wearing condoms.

She grew large in the cage, which he put down to wellbeing. Until she grew too big. He had to let her out, and she swallowed him whole.

“It's ok, baby,” he whispered. “Now I can keep you safe from within.”

