

Sarah With The Warm Gun

by humanaut

The north street was always a mean part of Port Neches. Too far up for oil company patrols, and too far down for highway cops. So Sarah went to Sammy Guns and made sure she was safe.

One day she was walking to work and the big dogs came down the edge of the street, ginger-stepping the coolest part of the dirt, growling and whining. She went to the middle of the road, and she was right: none of them were hungry enough to put their paws on summer asphalt. Got to work early that day, since Freddy was headed in and gave her a lift. She hung her white hoodie in the locker and stared at the holster she'd sewn in. Could have drawn at any time.

On Wednesday nights she walked across the flats to the North Church. The wind blew cold, but she lit a blaze of candles and eventually felt warm inside. The best part was dessert; somebody with money always brought cupcakes with tall frosting. The stars or moon usually lit the flats enough for her trip home; that was when she hand-carried with the safety off. Once she shot a tumbleweed that came up too fast behind her.

The loud guys up the street liked to squeal their tires past her mailbox. They howled like maniacs and swerved all over the street. She just got more iced tea from the fridge and wore her other holster with the snap open. It was leather, so it didn't add to the burning heat.

Sarah took to sleeping with the safety on and her finger lightly taped outside the trigger guard. She never had any break-ins, but who's to say the cause and the effect? Maybe they psychically knew. Anyway, after every smooth day rolled by, she spent her nights with a smile on her face. First was the TV, then the Internet, then sometimes a

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long cool soak in the tub. She used double ziplocs for waterproofing, and never had a leak.

Sarah was always sure of herself, and helped anybody who came and asked. It was the only way she knew to be. But she eventually became a bit of a known hazard. After a while, the north street tended to quiet down when she stepped out. After a while, everybody seemed to have moved away. Maybe caution is a slowly learned thing.

