

# Book Killer

*by* Phoebe Wilcox

Sometimes after bookbinding for a few hours at the hand-sewing table, Jillie would, after scraping her knife too roughly over the glue of an old book's spine, feel not like a resurrector of literature, as she should, but a killer. Not a calculating or skillful killer either. Just a clumsy, sleep-deprived one. One whose fingers after a few hours at work, and fewer hours of sleep, were committing involuntary manslaughter of countless innocent old books. It wasn't time to make the donuts. It was time to kill the books. Serial killing. Sitting there smelling the smoke from last night's bar in her hair. Scraping and knicking and drilling and killing.

That was the joke that kept them going and got recycled day after day.

And what if she could do it all over again?

What would she do differently?

Move to New York and try her luck there? Hey, how about becoming famous for something? Nah . . .

If she could do it all over again, what would she do differently?

Well, for one thing, she wouldn't be so cheap and pathetic as to not even buy a Walkman for God's sake. The music they played in that place sucked to hell.

