

## Brotherly Something

John was thinking about his older brother Tim again. Tim was a predatory brute with buns of steel and thunder thighs. Despite having sworn never to tell Tim the truth about his origins, John felt the time had come to reveal the family secret. Not for himself, but for the square circle of friends and relatives that made up their world. People were scared of Tim. Not because he was aggressive although he had been as a child. It was something else. Something they could sense but not explain.

John walked over to the window and reflected on his stifling surroundings. He had always felt out of place in transient Montgomery village with its interminable, stagnant suburban sprawl. It was a place that encouraged his tendency to feel ants in his pants. "Living the Good Life" was the village's motto. People used it as a greeting. Villager's that is. Like in a cult, they would greet their neighbours with a eerily chipper, "Living the good life, Bob!" And the reply? Well. What else? "Living the good life, Steve!"

John wondered if he would have the strength to leave the village. Then, suddenly, he saw something in the distance, or rather someone. It was the a formidable figure of Tim 'the Garbling Gargantua' Dennis. "Something evil this way comes," John whispered.

Gulping, John glanced at his own reflection. He was a dreamy, pacified milk drinker with a genuine flare for charming pensioners. His friends described him as a francophile and an annoying eurofag. John saw himself, erroneously, as a fallen angel. Once, he had helped an irate Tim solve a basic mathematical equation. John's patience with the feeble minded was admirable but hardly angelic. But not even the stoical younger brother was sure that he was prepared to tell Tim the truth but he was going to try.

The sun shone like trembling torch in the relatively clear, Maryland sky, making John sleepy. He grabbed the 8-track player that had been abandoned for a cassette player some years ago. He caressed it with his fingers and thought of the silliness of its changing tracks mid song.

Those were simpler times, he reflected.

As John stepped outside and Tim came closer, he could see the numb glint in his eye. Tim gazed with the affection of an abandoned commando.

He said, in hushed tones, "I demand of you nutrition and I want unreasonable respect."

John looked back, even more sleepy, still fingering the plastic 8-track player and said, "Tim, you were made in a lab like a modern Frankenstein's monster".

John was surprised that the words had come out so easily. And now that the secret was out, he held his breath to see how Tim would take the revelation.

They looked at each other with something similar to feelings. They were like two twisted, thoughtful turkey vultures preparing a overspiced crab feast. Suddenly, the 8-track began playing a Glen Campbell song and Tim started doing lunges to the sound of boogity beat.

John regarded Tim's solid legs and rudy face. "I feel the same way. You do demand unreasonable respect," revealed John with a staggering grin.

Tim looked queasy, his emotions turning to hunger.

Then Tim came inside for a nice glass of milk, two servings of ziti, three thighs of Maryland fried chicken, biscuits and gravy, some more ziti, deer jerky, potatoes au gratin, peas and carrots, corn bread, a jar of red beats and some more ziti.

John watched the monster eat with relief. The secret was out and the beast was fed.

THE END

By, J.M. Dennis