Angela Callaway sat alone in the empty kitchen, slumped over in her rotting wooden chair. She rubbed her eyelids as the sun peeked above the windowsill and pierced her eyes.

“Fuck off,” she muttered, taking a swig of her beer. She licked her lips and gently placed the bottle back onto the table. Once a ball of light and hope, Angela now radiated sadness, despair and hatred. Her former healthy, thick brown hair was thinning, gray and balding. Her skin and eyes yellow and dry, with multiple bags hanging below her eyelids. She hadn’t changed out of here nightgown in weeks. It’s beautiful purple and white fabrics darkened to black and gray. The mixture of Angela’s lack of hygiene, stale beer and the odor from her unkempt house, used to make her gag, nearly vomiting on multiple occasions. The constant complaints from neighbors and Homeowner’s Association annoyed her to no end, but thankfully they wouldn’t have to deal with her much longer.

Angela looked behind her and stared at the clock hanging next to the big iron stove with a fat black pipe rising through the ceiling and reaching for the sky. Whenever she cooked, which was rare nowadays, the pipe would cough up huge black clouds that disappeared amongst its high and mighty white cousins in the sky. She wasn’t sure why she bothered checking the clock anymore; it hadn’t worked since he passed.

‘How poetic,’ she thought. She took a deep gulp of old brown beer, draining its last remnants. Angela looked around at her once beautiful kitchen. A once pristine sink, now gone yellow around the drain. When the faucet worked, dirty, brown, murky water escaped the faucet, with an occasional appearance of black sludge accompanying it. The fridge door stood ajar. It’s shelves and doors empty, an orange and yellow Jackson Pollock painting residing along the inside walls, but two six-packs of Bud Light sat in the forefront of the fridge and her mind. Angela stood, staggering a few times, and shuffled her feet across the cracked tiled kitchen floor littered with specks of dust and dirt. Minuscule skeletons of deceased insects laid on their backs; their empty eye-sockets staring at the dim yellow kitchen lights flickering sporadically, increasing Angela’s splitting migraine. She opened the fridge and rubbed her temple, attempting to resolve the pain but it was no use; this migraine hadn’t eased for months. Perhaps it was a hangover that never passed. Nevertheless, she learned to live with the pain, because she couldn’t live without the beer. She banged it open against the dull countertop and drained the bottle in four gulps.

Angela groaned and blew the stray strands of hair dangling in front of her nose and sighed. She pushed herself up and moseyed into the main room, her eyes falling onto the fireplace. Her husband would often stare into the fire or look at the rafters and mutter to God, scorning him for planting evil voices in his son’s head and stealing him from this world. Now, it was the place where her husband and son shared the same noose. She shook her head, holding the tears back, and walked back into the kitchen, noticing the wooden cabinets ajar. There was a time when her son pulled each pot and pan out of the cupboards and conceal himself inside during their numerous games of hide and seek. She’d creep on her tiptoes, listening to her sweet boy try to suppress his giggles. Angela wiped the tears trying to break free again, and stumbled back into the main room, knocking three picture frames off the mantel, and used the fireplace to stabilize herself. She longed to light the fireplace and reminisce about the tales her husband regaled her with by the fire during their first months of marriage, their son’s many tumbles and first steps lit by firelit and the excitement spreading across his face when he received his acceptance letter from the army. Her house was once warm, but no longer. Once her son and husband left, nothing was the same. Angela’s eyes fell onto the three broken frames at her feet. She bent over and gathered the frames in her arms, brushing the broken glass away. Joyous tears streamed down her face; a crescent smile spread across her face. She saw her handsome husband hoisting her son up, a small family photo taken at the Grand Canyon and her son’s service photo. She chuckled and looked up into the rafters.

“My boys,” she whispered. “I’m coming home.”

Angela seized the small revolver from her gown’s pocket, pointed it to her temple and pulled the trigger.