

JIM THOMPSON'S

THE KILLER INSIDE ME

INTRODUCTION by
STEPHEN KING





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STILL THE BEST DARN PIE IN CENTRAL CITY, MAX. WHAT DO I OWE YOU?

IT'S ON THE HOUSE, LOU.



ANYWAY, HE'S A DIFFERENT BOY NOW. STAYS IN NIGHTS, DOES GOOD IN SCHOOL.

I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING. JUST SHOWED A LITTLE INTEREST. ANYONE COULD DO AS MUCH.

PEOPLE ARE PEOPLE, EVEN WHEN THEY'RE A LITTLE MISGUIDED. THEY'LL LISTEN TO REASON.

ONLY YOU!



I liked the guy--as much as I like most people--but he was too good to let go.

WELL, I TELL YOU THE WAY I LOOK AT IT, A MAN DOESN'T GET ANY MORE OUT OF HIS LIFE THAN WHAT HE PUTS INTO IT.



Polite, intelligent: guys like that are my meat.

UMM... I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, LOU.



THE OTHER DAY I HAD THE DOGGONEST THOUGHT OUT OF THE CLEAR SKY--THE BOY IS THE FATHER TO THE MAN.

JUST LIKE THAT. THE BOY IS THE FATHER TO THE MAN.



If there's anything worse than a bore, it's a corny bore. But how can he brush off me? Friendly, dopey Lou Ford?

WELL, GOSH, LOU, I GUESS I GOTTA GET BACK TO THE KITCHEN...



I HAVE A LOT OF IDEAS. TAKE THE HEAT WAVE WE HAD LAST YEAR IN '51--A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK IT'S THE HEAT THAT MAKES IT HOT.

IT'S NOT THE HEAT BUT THE HUMIDITY. I'LL BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT, DID YOU?



I BETTER SHOVE OFF, GOT A LOT TO DO, AND I DON'T WANT TO RUSH. HASTE MAKES WASTE, I SAY. I LIKE TO LOOK BEFORE I LEAP.

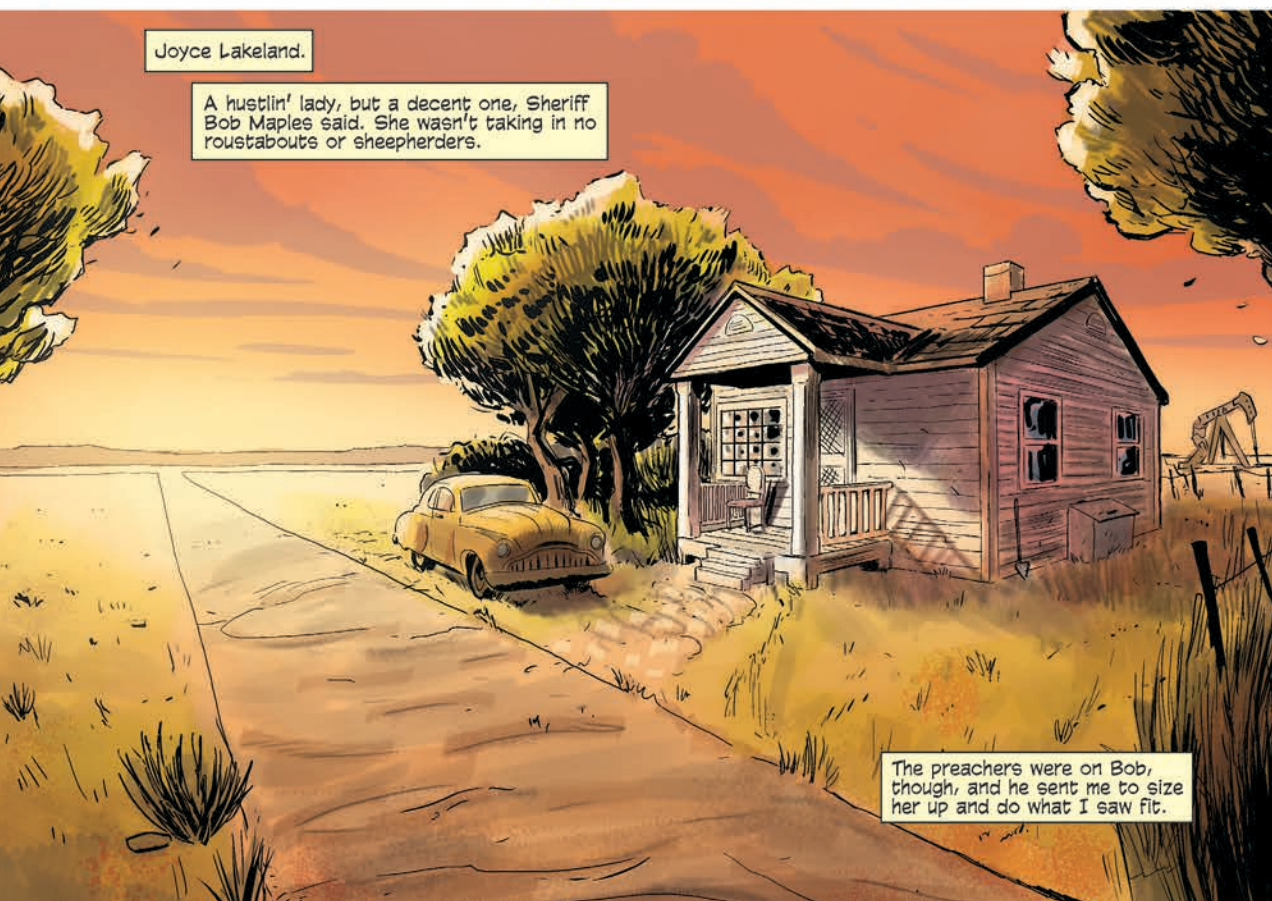
Striking at people this way is almost as good as the other way.



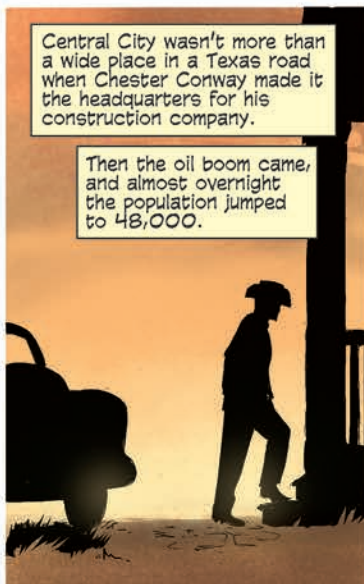
The real way. The way I'd fought to forget--that I had almost forgotten--until I met her.

Joyce Lakeland.

A hustlin' lady, but a decent one, Sheriff Bob Maples said. She wasn't taking in no roustabouts or shearers.



The preachers were on Bob, though, and he sent me to size her up and do what I saw fit.



Central City wasn't more than a wide place in a Texas road when Chester Conway made it the headquarters for his construction company.

Then the oil boom came, and almost overnight the population jumped to 48,000.



Central City may have got bigger, but our standards of conduct never changed.

Here you say yes ma'am and no ma'am to anything with a skirt--anything white, that is.



Here, if you catch a man with his pants down you apologize, even if you're arresting him.

Here you're a man and a gentleman, or you aren't anything.



And God help you if you're not.

YES?



I SAID, "YES?"

Remember, I hadn't had the sickness in almost fifteen years. Not since I was fourteen.



OH... I DON'T
USUALLY MAKE
A PRACTICE
OF IT THIS
EARLY IN THE
MORNING...

I'LL
MAKE SOME
COFFEE. YOU
GO INTO THE
BEDROOM.



At first I thought I would
let her ride.

But then...



Hustlin' ladies
was one thing.



Hustlin' ladies
with guns was
something else.



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
WITH
THAT?



SHERIFF'S
OFFICE, MA'AM.
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING WITH IT?



SATISFIED,
COPPER?

I RECKON IT'S
ALL RIGHT, MISS,
EVEN IF IT WAS
REGISTERED IN
FORT WORTH.

AND
MY NAME'S
FORD, NOT
COPPER.



JESUS!
NICEST LOOKING
GUY I EVER SAW
AND HE'S A LOUSY
COPPER. I DON'T
JAZZ COPS.



I had to get out of
there. I felt the
sickness coming back.

YOU LOUSY
SON-OF-A--

I JUST
CAME OUT FOR
A TALK, I WANT
YOU OUT OF TOWN
BY SUNDOWN, OR
I'LL HAVE TO
RUN YOU IN FOR
PROSTITUTION.

DON'T
YOU SAY IT,
MA'AM...

