

Carnal:

of the body or flesh; worldly; sensual; sexual

Instinct:

innate pattern of behavior - especially in animals

Michael Hawke...

a cop on the edge of disaster.

Dr. Desera Williams...

the psychologist determined to help him.

Together...

they must track down and capture the most gruesome serial killer in Rockport's history. But when the murders take a personal turn, Michael wonders if the killer is closer than anyone realized.

Books By Nicholas Dean

Carnal Instinct

CARNAL
INSTINCT

Nicholas Dean

Catch 22 Productions

A Catch 22 Productions Book

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For Terri

Special thanks to my parents for your
love, understanding, and patience.

CARNAL
INSTINCT

CHAPTER ONE

March

The stale, smoky air of the bar eddied around me as I walked out into the cool night air. The door slammed shut behind me, blocking out the blaring music and conversation that had left me with a dull headache.

I pulled out a cigarette and lit it. After a long drag, I watched the smoke drift off to pollute the air. I hated smokers, which often made me wonder why I had ever started in the first place. I guess bad habits die hard.

I saw myself in the window as I

stamped out the butt. Why was it that whenever I saw my own reflection I expected to see shimmering dark mist hovering around me? Was my dark persona noticeable to anyone but me?

I consider myself a fairly, good looking guy - 5'11", dark brown hair, hazel eyes, medium build, slightly softened but still fit - but in no way anyone that would stand out in a crowd. I was reasonably certain that my inherent inner turmoil continued to be adequately concealed from everyone else.

I strolled down Main St. toward Lincoln Park. The street was dark, enveloped in menacing shadows cast carelessly from the dim streetlights. It was refreshingly quiet except for the gentle breeze rustling an empty trash bag along the curb.

I turned the corner at East Avenue B and encountered three men hovering over a car. Two of them quickly turned around, the other leaned casually against the door.

Intuition told me that there was something wrong. This part of town was not known to have much crime, but it wasn't unheard of.

To my left stood a large black man. He was about my height but thick. I quickly estimated him at three hundred pounds, well over my own one-ninety. On my right was his exact opposite. Tall, lanky, and white; a thin pair of glasses sat precisely on his nose. He looked like he had just come from a weeklong computer convention and was grossly out of place. Sandwiched between them, still leaning gently against the car, stood a stocky Mexican who looked slightly familiar. His eyes were beady like those of a rat. He looked in desperate need of a bath.

“What’re you lookin’ at, honky?” the black man growled. If the word honky had offended his companion, he hid his anger well.

I shrugged. “You got a cigarette?”

The Mexican pulled out a Camel and lit it. He shook his head as he blew the smoke in my general direction.

There was no traffic. The silence now took on an almost unnatural quality. Time froze, leaving most of the street engulfed in shadows.

“B-b-beat it,” the white man

stammered, his voice not quite up to the obvious threat that was intended.

I smiled. "Michael Jackson."

Whitey looked dumbfounded at the black man who was obviously quicker than he appeared. He took a step closer, carefully balancing himself into a fighting stance.

"You're a real wiseass," he said.

"I try." I let myself relax and waited patiently for his first move.

He stared at me hard for a moment before his features softened slightly into a forced smile. Most of his front teeth were chipped or missing. The two left in front were both covered in gold, no doubt the only reason they were still there.

"Get outta here," he mumbled.

"Now that's the problem," I said. "You looked like you were about to break the law and I just can't allow that."

"W-w-who the hell are y-y-you, the fuckin' n-n-neighborhood w-w-watch?" Whitey demanded. The curse words sounded foreign coming out of his mouth.

Behind him, the Mexican sniggered. "More like Peter Pan." His voice was rough,

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