

Wilderness House Literary Review 12/2

Michael Keith
Cold Girl

I've never been crazy. I'm a very good girl, to be honest. I don't do anything to hurt anybody.
— Leighton Meester

So I'm heading home after running a few errands and I come to a red light. In front of me is this shiny white Mercedes. Looks brand new to me. I see the back of the driver's head and notice she has a cellphone pressed against the blond locks that hang over her left ear. Damn, what is it with women and phones? Strikes me that every other female driver is on her cellphone. What's so important that they have to jeopardize everyone's life when they're behind the wheel?

So the light changes to green, but she doesn't move. Just keeps yapping away like she's sitting in her living room. "C'mon," I grumble, and then hit my horn. Bitch still doesn't move. Finally, as I'm about to flip her the bird, she hits the gas and speeds off, taking a wider turn than she should at the intersection.

I notice that her window is wide open, which strikes me as pretty nuts since it's in the freakin' 20s outside. I expect her to close it, but she doesn't. My eyes catch her license plate as she pulls away from me: "CLDGRL." *Vanity plates are common on luxury cars*, I think, trying to decipher the letters. "Call Girl?" Nope. "Calendar Girl?" Maybe.

Ahead of us is another red light, and I catch up to her car. She's still on her frigging cell. "Dumb, rich broad," I growl. And then the light changes. This time she doesn't play zombie and takes a left right away after it turns green. That happens to be in the direction I'm heading. *Is she a neighbor?* I wonder, and figure no way driving that \$100K beauty. She still has her window open. *Jesus, she must be some cold blooded girl*, I think, and then the meaning of the license plate's letters dawns on me: *Cold Girl!* That's it, and boy is that on the money.

Suddenly she slows to a near crawl. *What the hell is that about?* I ask myself. *Goddamn it, she's still flapping on her cell. Totally fucking oblivious to me behind her.* I can't pass her because there's a solid line between the lanes on the two-way and cars keep coming from the opposite direction anyway.

Now she's totally stopped and there's no light or stop sign. I'm on her bumper. *What is going on with her?* I wonder and hit my horn several times, finally just lying on the sucker. She looks in her rearview mirror for the very first time, and I catch her dark eyes peering back at me. They have this real mean look in them.

"So move, you douche bag!" I blurt, hoping she can read my lips. Then I open my window and give her the bird, moving my hand up and down to make it even more obscene. She still doesn't move, and I've had it. "Son of a bitch!" I shout at the top of my lungs and get out of my car.

As I approach her hotsy-totsy vehicle, she jumps from it and comes at me with a tire iron in her right hand. Next thing I know, I'm on the ground and everything goes black. When I wake up at a hospital, the cop who's

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been questioning me says he checked at the motor registry and there's no plate that matches the one I gave him.

Now what the hell am I suppose to think? *I know what I saw, and that was some ice lady back there, all right.* When I'm released from the ER, the cops give me a ride to my car that's parked near the spot where I was attacked. They ask again if I'm up to driving home, and I say I'm fine. "Go slow," they say, and I thank them.

My head is still throbbing when I pull out of the Walgreen's parking lot, but I'm thankful I didn't have a severe concussion. The ER doc was surprised I only ended up with a big lump on the side of my noggin. He says I should have had a cracked skull. Guess I'm as hard headed as they say.

Now I'm only a block away from the intersection where that crazy broad was stopped at the light and who pulls in front of me? *Jesus H. Christ!* No, really, it's the fucking white Mercedes with the "CLDGRL" license plate! I have no idea what to do as we stop for a red light. So I just let her drive away after the light has gone through two changes.

I'll be damned if I'll get on Cold Girl's case again, I tell myself and wait until her car is out of sight. But when I get to the next intersection, she is waiting for me. This time she stays her ground refusing to move despite the light changing a dozen times. I wonder why the cars behind me aren't freaking out and then see that the one to my rear is the same as the one in front of me. In fact, all the cars behind it are exactly the same as far as my eyes can see.

Panic overtakes me, and I can't move. Then I start screaming uncontrollably as the crazy driver in front of me leaves her car and walks in my direction. I shut my eyes and ready myself for another attack but none occurs. There's a muffled voice coming from outside my car window asking what's the matter, and when I dare to look, it turns out to be the cop who took me to my car just a short while ago. He says my head injury must be worse than thought and instructs me to get out and come with him.

We don't get far, however, because the girl in the white Mercedes with the CLDGRL license plate comes up behind the cop like a phantom and hits him with her tire iron. Then she looks at me and howls like a banshee.

"Stop following me, asshole!"