The younger doctor sat on the edge of the bed and shook sleep from him.

He had not a good night’s sleep in nearly three months.

The knocking on the door continued.

He stood up and stretched and slowly walked to the door.

He slightly opened it and peeped and saw

 it was Pat.

The younger doctor blinked with surprise and opened the door.

He saw Ronald, the front desk clerk looking.

He said to Pat, “Morning.”

Pat said, “Can I come inside?”

The younger doctor said, “No.”

Pat was surprised.

Two of the Pat’s Hot baths clients were approaching.

The two young women looked at the younger doctor and Pat, they said good morning.

The younger doctor smiled and said, “Good morning.”

Pat looked at the younger doctor because he did not greet her politely.

One of the women said to Pat, “We want to take our hot baths now.”

Pat pulled up her skirt so she could walk down the stairs with the women.

One of the women was smiling at the doctor and batting her eyes.

Pat was walking down the stairs and turned to the younger doctor and smiled and said, “I’ll be back to finish our conversation.”

The women looked back at the younger doctor and whispered and giggle.

The younger doctor said to Pat, “Don’t hurry.”

He back to bed and sleep for another hour and another knocking on his door.

Now he was irritated.

He sat on the bed and stood and stumped to the door.

He flung the door opened and it was the slim rowdy woman who began to cry and cover her mouth.

The younger doctor saw the two women exiting the hot baths and looking up at him and the slim rowdy woman.

He grabbed the slim rowdy woman’s hand and pulled her inside the room.

He said to her, “Get in here.”

He saw Pat and Ronald standing at the front desk watching him.

He looked at them and closed the door.

He turned to the slim rowdy woman and looked at her.

Younger doctor saw she looked nice and said to the crying woman, “What are you crying for?”

He sat in the chair and motioned for her to sit on the bed.

He sat so he could look at the bottom of the door to see if anybody would be standing outside the door.

He saw two shadows that slowed and figured the two women were outside trying to hear.

The younger doctor looked back at the slim rowdy woman. He saw the supply list in her hand.

He said,”Did you pay those merchants on the list?”

The slim rowdy woman continued to cry.

The younger doctor looked at the door’s threshold and leaned forward to the slim rowdy woman and said, “Did you pay the merchants for the supplies?”
The slim rowdy woman jumped up to run out the room he grabbed her and gently pushed her back in the bedroom and ran to the door and opened it, surprising the two women who did not know what to say. They peeped in the room at the crying slim rowdy woman and hurried to their rooms.

The younger doctor stepped out the room and watched the two women enter their rooms and he looked down stairs at Pat and Ronald and walked back in the room and sat on the edge of the bed.

He motioned for the slim rowdy woman to sit in the chair.

She would not sit.

The younger doctor did not yell at her, but very sternly said, “Sit.”

He pointed to the chair.

The slim rowdy woman sat in the chair sideway not to face the younger doctor.

The younger doctor said, “That’s fine you do not want to look at me. Did you pay the merchants?”

The slim rowdy woman reached him the supply list and then the receipts she had in her other hand.

He looked over the list and then at the pretty dress she had on and thought Betsy would look good in that color with her dark hair flowing.

He thought Betsy would kill him if he hurt this woman.

He shook himself out of that thought.

The younger doctor said, “Speak.”

The slim rowdy woman said,”The door”, and cried into her hands.

He looked at her and said, “What?”

She did not answer him.

He said, “I was annoyed at people knocking on the door disrupting my sleep. You remember I slept in the chair last night.”

He watched this woman and realized she was actually hurt. He believed because she was rowdy and stunk, she had no human feelings for nobody but the little girl. He thought about the little girl he looked around the room for her doll that Betsy wanted her to have. He smiled at the thought of Betsy.

The slim rowdy woman continued to cry.

The younger doctor was leaning on the bed so he could watch the door’s threshold.

He watched the slim rowdy woman and thought that’s the most water she had on her face.

He had a very strong feeling what he thought was very, very bad. He knew Betsy would not like him thinking bad about anyone.

Then he watched this pitiful woman in front of him and finally it dawn on him that she was crying because the hurt was done to heart not to her mind.

He frowned up and tried to recall the events of the past few days. He could not recall if he said anything or done anything against her.

He said, “Are you going to tell me what all of this is about? I thought you were so tough.”

The slim rowdy woman took her head out of her hands and tried to sit up and in between sniffles tried to catch her breath.

The younger doctor sat and watched her.

Then a thought came to him to give her a sip f water. He thought, “Na’ll she‘s tough. She’s not a lady.”

The younger doctor said to himself, “What? She’s right. I’m worst than Dr. Obersteen. I am selfish and uncaring. How can I be a physician, who suppose to care for people and I don’t care for this pitiful woman in front of me. I am not fit for Betsy.”

He stood up when he thought his heart was not good enough for country Betsy.

He thought about Joshua and how he protected Betsy from him.

He had to get out this room. He looked for his boots and grabbed them and began to put them on.

The slim woman had her eyes closed and was trying to gather her thoughts and words.

The younger doctor put on his jacket and hat and grabbed his wallet and counted his money.

The slim rowdy woman said, “You said you hate me.”

She heard the door closed and when she opened her eyes the younger doctor was gone.

She began to wail.

He walked out the hotel under the watchful eyes of Pat and Ronald.

The two women ran to the balcony and peeped.

They saw the younger doctor walked out the hotel and ran to his room and heard the slim rowdy woman crying.

They opened the door and rushed in.

Pat and Ronald looked around and then came from behind the front desk and peeped for the younger doctor.

Ronald ran to the door and looked up and down the street and he saw the younger doctor walking down the street.

Pat and Ronald ran up the stairs and joined the two women in the younger doctor’s room.

The two women looked at Pat and Ronald and beckoned for them to come in.

Ronald stood in the door so he could watch the front desk and the front door.

Pat and one of the women kneeled by the slim rowdy woman and patted her shoulders.

Pat said, “Honey what is wrong?”

Pat motioned for one water.

The woman sitting on the bed poured just enough water for the slim rowdy woman to sip so she could began to talk.

The slim rowdy woman know she had to tell somebody her story.

Her fat thief daddy was nervous and staying to himself more often since the slim rowdy woman was gone to buy supplies.

Frank noticed he was absent from their evening talks.

Shelia notice he was in the settlement more and not down at the cute house.

The slim rowdy woman said, “I’m Natalie and sit with dying people.”

Ronald looked back at her and saw a client walk to the front desk and he closed the door and ran downstairs to the front desk.

The younger doctor made it in time for a hot bath and shave.

He stopped by the clothier and got a pair of pants, another shirt and two pairs of socks and underwear.

He received a very cold welcome from the workers and knew it had to do with the slim rowdy woman.

One of the workers said, “This way Doctor.”

He stopped and looked at them.

He knew he had to come there for the next three days and he did not want any surprises with his services.

He stopped and looked at the worker in front of him and the three at the front desk and said, “How do you know I am a physcian?”

The workers spilled the beans.

They said the slim rowdy woman heard him say he hated her.

The younger doctor said, “That can’t be what all this crying is about. She stank and had not bathed in two months. She thought it was fine for her to stank and offend everyone else. I just can’t understand why she felt that way. And yes I was talking to myself and said I hated her for that.”

The workers aid, “Shame on you.”

He held up his hands to accept the ridicule.

He said, “I know I have to change my hard heart, for the woman I love to accept me.”

One of the workers was holding a towel in her hand and held the towel up and sighed with adoration.

The younger doctor said, “The purple dress she has on, do they have another one that’s larger?”

The worker in front of him hit him with the washcloth.

She pointed to his room and stepped away.

She went next door and found another purple dress and brought it back.

The younger doctor was shaving.

She knocked and showed him the purple dress she found.

He smiled.

He said, “How much?”

The worker said looked at the tag and said, “Five dollars.”

The younger doctor smiled and said, “That’s fine.”

The worker said, “You’re not totally bad.”

He looked at her.

She swallowed and closed the door and took the dress to the front desk and wrapped for him.

He walked to the front desk and got his package.

The worker who held the towel to her chest said, “How are we going to help her?”

The younger doctor said, “For someone to be that way has a deep hurt. And I don’t know if we can open that can of worms. Just treat her kind.”

The workers were cleaning up and closing the salon.

The three workers said, “You too.”

The younger doctor was at the door and stopped and looked at the workers and said, “Good evening.”

He walked slowly back to the hotel.

He stopped and went to Lydia and Bruce who was closed.

He saw a hot pretzel stand and got a hot pretzel and walked to the hotel and sit on the porch and ate.

He thought about the events of the day. He knew he was no psychiatrist and he could help the slim rowdy woman.

Pat and Ronald saw the younger doctor sitting on the porch in deep thought.

Ronald walked out to him and said,”Sir.”

The younger doctor was so caught away in his thoughts he did not hear Ronald.

Ronald stood and said, “Sir.”

The younger doctor turned and looked up at Ronald.

Ronald said, “We had a vacancy and I moved you to a room on the third floor,”

The younger doctor looked at Ronald and watched him disappear back in the hotel.

The younger doctor stood and walked to the door of the hotel and the two women were leaving the hotel to meet friends for dinner.

They tried to smile and speak to the younger doctor.

They could only nod their heads.

He looked at them and walked t the front desk.

One of the women said, “Did he speak” Looking back at the younger doctor.

The younger doctor said to himself, “Here we go again with this foolishness.”

He walked to the front desk under the watching eyes of Pat and Ronald.

He did not speak but held out his hand for the room key.

Ronald turned to the wall where the keys were located and reached the younger doctor a key for Room 312.

The younger doctor did not say anything but walked upstairs to his new room.

He settled into the room and kissed Betsy’s dress.

He sat and thought about what could make a woman or any person to hate their body that they want to punish it and make everyone else submit to their evil way of resolving their problem.

He leaned over in his chair and sat in darkness and thought about the new settlement and the people and whether he wanted Betsy to be near them.

He lit his lamp and stood in his window and looked down at the people on the street.

He saw two of the workers from the salon.

The younger doctor looked at his dresser and saw the supply list and receipts.

He went over the receipts and the list and realized the slim rowdy woman had selected for the supplies to leave the next day.

He wondered why.

He stood from the bed and walked out of his door with the receipts in his hand.

Ronald was watching him and he was watching Ronald.

He knocked on the slim rowdy woman’s door.

He could hear her sniffling.

He said, “I hear you crying. Why did you put on these receipts for the supply wagons to leave tomorrow when we don’t have all the stuff?”

The slim rowdy woman did not come to the door but said, “I’m leaving tomorrow with the supply wagons. You get the rest of the supplies. I’ll leave you the money.”

He said, “Fine.”

And went back to his room and undressed.

He fell asleep on top of the bed covers.

He slept throughout the night.

The cold air from the opened window caused him to quiver. He slid under the covers and continued to sleep.

Lydia and Bruce had a quiet walk home.

Pat and her son went home and ate left over meatloaf and mashed potatoes.

Ronald locked the front door.

He had a room next to the front door so he could hear people knocking on the door.

The slim rowdy woman finally fell asleep.

The two women passed the slim rowdy woman’s room going to their rooms.

Dr. Obersteen met the lady at the café for dinner and afterwards he walked her home.

Dr. Obersteen sat in his chair next to the window and looked out over the big city and it’s lights.

He thought his lady and his perfect career.

He fell asleep in the chair.