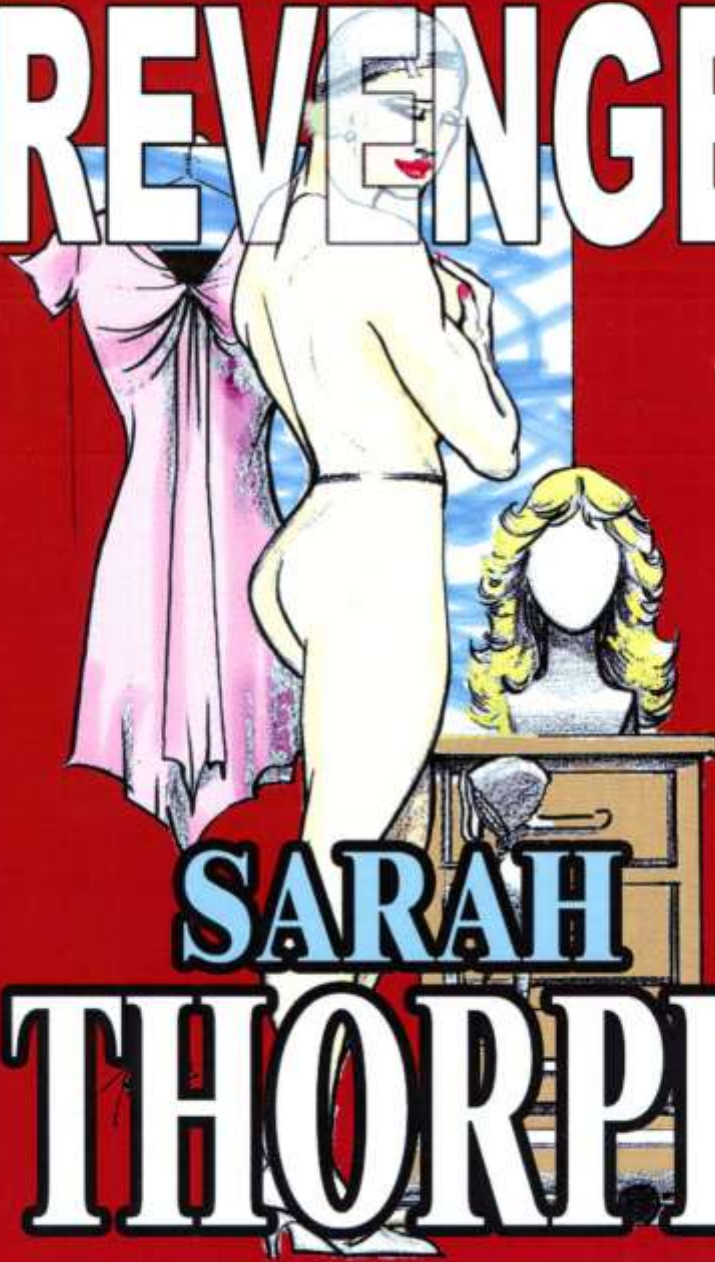


**A MOTHER'S
REVENGE**



**SARAH
THORPE**



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Mother's Revenge

by Sarah Thorpe

Chapter 1, A Crew Member Is Missing

It's an early morning at LAX. A flight crew is gathering, preparing for an early morning flight to JFK. Suddenly one of the Flight Attendants notices that one person is missing. "Hey, where's Jo-Ann?" she shouts, "it's almost time for the flight brief, and she's not here. She's never been late before."

"You're right," another said, "I'll call her up and see if something's wrong. I'll check her cell phone first."

She dialed Jo-Ann's cell phone number and waited. No answer. She dialed her home number and soon heard a faint voice say "Hello."

"This is Susan from the Air Crew. Is Jo-Ann at home?"

"No she's been kidnapped, and I am tied up and cannot move. I've been in this position since last night and this is the first time I've been able to activate the phone with my voice. Please help me! Call 911!"

"I'll do that," Susan said and hung up. To the others she shouted: "Jo-Ann won't be here. She's been kidnapped. Call in a reserve Flight Attendant. I'll call 911!"

She dialed 911 and told the operator what she had just heard. She gave him Jo-Ann's address and they promised to send someone over there at once. Susan gave the dispatcher her name and cell phone number and told him how and where she could be reached. She said she would be back in LA on Thursday evening.

The reserve crewmember arrived a few minutes later, and the crew was ready to go to the plane.

When Annie Wolfe, Detective with the LAPD, went to bed on Sunday night, she had a feeling that something would come up during the night. She was on call for anything that might come up during the night.

She was right of course, at 0612 her telephone rang and she was called to a specific address ASAP. A squad car was already there when she arrived. They had come to a locked door, but one of the officers had

peeked through one of the windows and seen a woman tied and wrapped to a chair. Annie had the Police Officers break through the door and she rushed to the room where the woman was. She saw that the woman was alive and called for an ambulance and a CSI team right away.

A closer look at the woman told Annie that she had bitten through a gag in order to be able to speak. She loosened her blindfold and told the woman that an ambulance was on its way. One of the officers took pictures of the woman to use for future evidence.

The ambulance arrived a few minutes later. They loosened her from the chair and took her straight to the hospital. They would unwrap her there. Ten minutes later the CSI team arrived, Annie gave them what she had and told them to go through the house with a fine comb. A second person was missing, and any clue that might help to find her would be appreciated.

At that time Annie had another call. A body had been found bound in duct tape amongst some garbage bins downtown. A police officer had checked the wrapped body and noticed that the nostrils had been clear of tape. A check with a mirror showed him that the body was breathing and it was therefore rushed to a hospital.

Anne arrived at the scene just in time to interview the people who had found the body and the Police Officers that had been first on the scene. When the site was cleared, Annie drove back to her office to get things straight. It was no doubt in her mind that the body found amongst the garbage was the missing person from the house she had been to earlier that morning.

15 minutes later Annie was on her way to the hospital. She soon got in contact with a doctor who had been treating the woman she had found on the house that morning. "How is she?" she asked.

"She's OK- She conscious and you can talk to her," the doctor replied.

"Has she been checked for rape?"

"Yes, and I'll have results in a few minutes. We have also scraped her fingernails to if they contain some foreign skin residue."

"Do you know anything about the other person that was brought in wrapped this morning?"

"Yes, I do. The person is a man, identity unknown. He's about 5'8" tall and skinny. He is in coma at the moment."

Annie was surprised when she heard it was a man, but didn't say anything. She had expected another woman. "Thank you, doctor," was all she said.

A nurse came by and took Annie to the woman she had rescued. She stepped into the room and saw right away that the woman was in a very

good shape considering what she's been through. "Hello," she said, "I am Police Detective Annie Wolfe. Remember me?"

The woman smiled. "Of course I do. You rescued me this morning. My name is Yvonne Kaplan. I'm a schoolteacher. My live-in partner is Jo-Ann Curtis. I don't know where she is."

"We can talk about that later. Now, please tell me what happened."

"Jo-Ann and I had been on the town Saturday night. We didn't drink much, but we had a great time on the town. We came home around 1:45. We talked for a short while and just when we were ready for bed, the doorbell rang. We were a little surprised to hear someone at the door at that hour, but I went to open the door. As soon as I peeked through the opening, someone pushed hard at the door and the security chain snapped. Three men wearing skim asks burst into the room. One of them grabbed me and dragged me to the living room. There I was knocked down and the man raped me. I was paralyzed. I don't know how long I lay there, but I'm sure the other two raped me as well. I know I scratched the first one somewhere on the thigh. I might have scratched the other two as well.

"From another room I could hear Jo-Ann scream. I don't know what they did to her, but it must have been horrible. How long it went on, I have no idea. Finally one of the guys came back to me and wrapped me in duct tape. Then he tied me to a kitchen chair and placed the chair close to the phone. At that moment I noticed that the other two carried Jo-Ann out of the house, wrapped the same way I was. Before he left, the man blindfolded and gagged me. Before he left he said that I could sit there and hear the phone without being able to do anything about it. It took me quite some time to bite through the gag and I could activate the phone by my voice when somebody was calling in. The rest you know."

"Yes, I do. Have your family been notified? And what about your school?"

"As far as I know nobody knows anything."

"I will take care of that. Just give me names and numbers."

"My parents moved to Carmel two years ago. I have two brothers, one in San Diego and one in Houston. Here are their names and numbers." She wrote everything down on a piece of paper that Annie had given her. She also wrote down the name of her school and a contact person there.

At this moment the doctor came in. "The other patient is now unwrapped and you can see him," he said to Annie.

"May Yvonne come along?" She might be able to recognize the person."

The doctor frowned, "I'll have a nurse bring in a wheelchair," he said.

Annie followed the doctor down the hall. They stepped into a room a little further down the hall and they walked in. Annie took a look at the person

lying there. The man was in coma, all right, and lots of various instruments were connected to him to keep him alive. The person was clinging to life by a thread.

Soon Yvonne arrived. She took a look at the person and gasped. "This is Jo-Ann," she said.

"How come a man can be called Jo-Ann?" the doctor asked.

"She's Jo-Ann when she's a woman and John Arnold when he's a man. We went to town as two women and she was supposed to be at work as a woman today. That's why I call her Jo-Ann. How is she?"

"She's in a very bad condition. At this moment I have little hope for him."

Yvonne stood up from the wheelchair and walked over to the person on the bed. She bent over and whispered in his ear: "Hang on in darling. We will get these bastards."

A faint smile seemed to come over the man's face.

"Do you know his next of kin?" Annie asked.

"Jo-Ann's mother is Chris Curtis, a former top international model and now high on the fashion scene here in LA. She has a second daughter named Darlene. She is 15. I don't know her phone number and address by heart."

"That's OK, I'll find her."

"And I will write down the patient's name as John Arnold Curtis," the doctor said. "No one else will learn about his dual identity."

"And how long do you intend to keep Yvonne?" Annie asked.

"She's a strong girl and could probably go home right away. Bit just in case I will keep her here until Friday. She might get a reaction, so it's better to be safe than sorry."

"Then I'll come back tomorrow," Annie said and left the hospital. On her way out she received the preliminary reports on Yvonne and Jo-Ann's injuries. Reading them was not a pleasant thing to do.

Back at her office she sent an SMS to Susan, the woman who called 911, and told her to call back as soon as she could. Next she called Yvonne's parents and brothers. They all knew about her relationship with John Arnold and what kind of person he was. Yvonne's brother in San Diego would come to the hospital right away, while her parents would drive down the next day.

Next she called John's mother, Chris Curtis on her cell phone. The phone rang several times before she finally answered. "Chris Curtis," she answered, "I'm in a meeting right now. Can you call me back in an hour?"

"No I can't," Annie replied, "my name is Annie Wolfe and I'm a Police Detective at LAPD. Your son was found this morning severely battered. He's in hospital with life threatening injuries. In fact he's in coma right now."

"I'll be there right away," she replied with tears on her voice.

People who were with Chris in the meeting could see in her face that something very serious had come up. They could see the tears running down her cheeks as she hung up the phone. "I have to leave you now," she said, "something very serious has come up. I trust you all to come up with a very good solution to our problem. I will keep you informed."

Out in the hallway she freshened up her face and drove to the hospital.

Annie had anticipated her move and was already there when she and her other daughter Darlene arrived. Annie introduced herself to mother and daughter, and the three women went to John's room. A doctor was present when they arrived.

When Chris and Darlene saw John they screamed in horror. John was almost unrecognizable. Several machines were connected to his body, taking measurements and providing him with the nourishment he needed. Chris ran up to her son and kissed him. A faint smile came over John's lips. Chris saw it and wanted to try something. "Blink twice with your eyes if you can hear me," she said.

John blinked twice.

"John, blink once if your answer to my next question is no, and twice if it's yes. Dou you understand what I say?"

John blinked twice,

"Can you see me?"

One blink.

"Can you see anything at all?"

Two blinks.

At this moment the doctor butted in. "I think you should stop now. I appreciate very much what you've done. This tells me that his brain is responding and we will work it from there. This gives me hope that John one time might recover. I also believe that your presence is very important for your son's development."

"I'll be here every day."

"That's good. You're welcome whenever you have time."

At this moment Darlene went up to John and whispered in his ear: "John, it's me Darlene. Hang on in there, we have a lot of catching up to do."