

The Good Wife of Cellblock D

By Ginger Mayerson

Uncle Lou had to rethink his plan. He'd expected Dale Genet to be tougher-looking, but the emaciated ex-junkie looked like he was barely on his feet. "Boy, you is some sorry sight," he drawled.

"Yessir."

"Word is you did right," Uncle Lou continued, wondering who he owed a favor and how that could help him, mainly, and this skinny kid, secondly. "Not your fault that kid got under your wheels. I hear you'da got 'em away otherwise."

"Yessir, that was my intention."

"Uh huh." Uncle Lou hauled himself to his feet and circled the younger man. At six feet four inches and over two hundred pounds, Uncle Lou had fought his way to the top of the food chain and used his brains to stay there. He had a trusted ring of tough guys around him; his bitch, Aunt Fred, was as bad as they came, but knew a good deal when he saw one. For all of them watching Uncle Lou's back was about the same as watching their own.

And there was a lot to watch your back for. The Alderdale Correctional Facility, Inc. was now a private business, and to make a profit, it was overcrowded and understaffed. This meant the inmates could police themselves (if they were good) or get wiped out by the other inmates. Uncle Lou was good, he was real good, and through a crude mix of diplomacy and terror, he kept peace with the niggers, the spics, the guards, and, very carefully, with the crazy-ass white supremacists on the other side of the yard. Out of everyone, they made Uncle Lou the most nervous because, hell, he could deal with a mean man, but no telling what a crazy man might do. Of course, being a crazy bunch, they spent so much time squabbling amongst themselves, they pretty much left the other inmates alone. About a year ago there'd been a change in leadership over there, when Al Maddox walked around that end of the yard with his shirt off so all of them could see his tattoos, which were said to be huge, many, and mainly of swastikas and eagles and suchlike. Anyway, Uncle Lou didn't care what all they did over there as long as they left him and his community of upstanding armed robbers, thieves, and all-purpose thugs more or less alone.

One of the ways Uncle Lou kept his ranks in order was by keeping them happy. There was a bank robber, Ethan Divers, who'd been loosely associated with the Uncle Lou's organization for a year or two. It was Lou's opinion, seconded by Aunt Fred, that it was high time Divers settled down with a nice,