

# Feeders

Anita E. Viljoen



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Eloquent Books

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# DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this novel to my family and friends especially:

Martin, my loving husband; Brandon and Nicole my beautiful children – thank you for your patience and support.

To Marley and Joe, my parents being so far away – miss you.

Denise, my good friend that persuaded me to have this story published.

Love you all.



# ONE



THE RAIN BEAT down onto the windscreen with such force; the wipers were working frantically to keep it clear enough for Anne to see where the road was. Pushing the speed limit a little to get home, she sat leaning forward into the steering wheel of her car with such intense concentration that every muscle in her body started to ache.

“I should have left earlier,” she told herself through gritted teeth.

Just then, what she thought was a dog ran with incredible speed over the road. To avoid hitting it, Anne swerved and slammed on the brakes realizing too late, this was a mistake. The car spun out. Correcting the direction the car was taking and with pristine steering, Anne directed the car over branches of a fallen tree that lay on the side of the road. It was either over the tree and its branches or into a bog filled with muddy water. The tree would mean not getting stuck and having to get out into the rain, but unfortunately as the car sped over the branches, she heard one of the back tires burst — this meant she had to get out into the rain anyway.

“Shit, ahhhhhh shit,” she shouted hitting the steering wheel with her fist. “Can’t people look after their animals?” Grabbing her purse, she started muttering to herself looking for her cell phone. “Here I am on a dark deserted road” — finding her phone she flipped it open — “with no freaking cell coverage” she said throwing the phone back into the purse and back onto the passenger seat. Getting the flashlight out of the storage compartment between the seats, she realized she had to take a look at the damage and fix it herself.

Anne got out of the car, tucked up the hood of her rain jacket over her head as she slammed the car door closed and walked to take a look. She found the car’s wheels made it over some branches but the left tire was flat. At least she knew where everything was to repair it, but she had never actually done this before, so it was going to be a challenge.

As she turned and walked toward the trunk of the car to get out the tire spanner, jack, and spare, she heard something moving in the forest, where the stupid dog had disappeared. Anne shone the flashlight toward the trees, squinting through the rain to see if she could find it, and whistled a calling sound hoping the dog might come out, but no such luck.

“Well, I hope you’re as cold and miserable as I am, you stupid dog.”

Putting the flashlight in her mouth to free both hands, she took out the spare tire and tools she needed. She walked back and knelt down inspecting the tire. As she started to put the jack in place, she felt an ice-cold hand grip her neck and an arm grab her around her waist, squeezing her so tight the air in her lungs was forced out. Then she heard the scariest growl in her left ear. It lifted her up and held her at least a foot off the ground, taking her into the forest.

Anne’s body froze; she could not move, scream or think. Everything seized as she felt its cold breath against her skin. Anne

closed her eyes as a sharp pain jabbed her in the side of her throat. She had no air left in her lungs to gasp. All she could feel was her heart beating erratically in her chest and her blood leaving her body. Yet she was conscious; everything was happening in slow motion. She felt her warm blood run down from her throat over her cold skin down her breast and stomach, feeling her shirt sticking to her. It kept making a sucking noise that made her skin crawl, the hair on her head rise and her body quiver. Why was she not dying — why was she feeling all this? The pain was not unbearable; it was like someone taking blood from her but the needle was thicker and the draw was stronger. She could feel every ounce of blood leaving her from the wounds this thing had made. Then it stopped; it started licking her. It smelled sweet, a unique sweet smell that she knew she would never forget. It still held her but less tightly and the air finally was allowed to re-enter the lungs. With a deep breath, Anne tilted her head very slightly to take a look at what attacked her – it was not a dog.

It was human, but all she could see was its eyes glowing red, its face gaunt; it looked starved with its cheekbones white against its grey skin. Anne could not make out its features. All she could see was blood dripping from its mouth, her blood. It tilted its head and looked back at Anne with a satisfied but confusing look in its grey face. It suddenly looked around as if something startled it. It threw Anne backwards through the air, arms and legs folded forward like a rag doll. She slammed into the side of her car, the door crushing it like a pop tin under a fist. Her head snapped back and the pain ricocheted through her skull; she heard things in her crack and snap. She was not sure how but landed face up in between the tree branches. Anne lay there still, unable to move, sensing the creature was gone.

The rain stopped. The air around her seemed warm; then again she was ice cold, realizing she had no blood to warm her up. Her breathing was shallow; her ribs hurt terribly as she did. With her

head throbbing, she tried to assess the damages to her body. For one, she knew her leg and a few ribs must be broken. Anne thought she must be running on pure adrenalin, keeping her alive, instead of blood running through her veins.

All was quiet around her, and then she heard it — a car. Closing her eyes she prayed someone would see her car and come and investigate. She had not put her hazard lights on, so the chances that the driver of the other vehicle would stop were doubtful. They would think it's just an abandoned vehicle on the side of the road. Anne then realized she was behind the car away from the road and it was unlikely for someone to actually see her lying there. Panic set in.

Slowly everything started to fade; the cold, the pain and the car drifted into the distance. It must have driven past.



COMING DOWN THE dark road, they spotted a white on red, Shelby GT 500. It had driven over a large tree lying on the side of the road and was tangled up in its branches.

“Nice wheels. Do you think the driver got some help?” Roman speculated with a worried look on his face.

“Well, I hope so, with that bloody rogue running around killing whatever it lays its hands on.” Luc leaned forward. “Stop the car; we should take a look.”

“What? We’re hot on its trail. If we stop now, it may get further ahead of us.” Roman was not going to jeopardize a week’s work getting closer to that monster just to investigate a car abandoned on the side of the road.

“Stop the car!! Something’s not quite right here,” Luc insisted.

Roman looked over to his friend, shaking his head in disapproval. “Your curiosity is getting in the way of our tracking,” Roman said sarcastically.

“Roman, it’s been here,” said Luc, noticing a fresh trail into the forest.

“What?”

“Look closely behind the car. I’m sure you’ll smell it once you stop and get out.”

Slamming on the brakes, their car skidded to a stop just behind the Shelby. Doors opening simultaneously, both men climbed out. Roman, closing his eyes, sniffed the air and true enough, he smelled the scent; the rogue was here. Luc walked toward the Shelby. Spotting the flat tire, he knelt down to inspect the damage. He found the jack put in place but not raised and a flashlight lying next to a wheel spanner. Looking down the side of the vehicle, he noticed a large dent in the front door. Standing up again changing his attention to the forest behind him, he moved to where he noticed some of the bushes leading into the trees were damaged and disturbed. Roman, walking toward Luc, spotted a human lying awkwardly in some tree branches; the body was facing up and with its leg twisted the wrong way indicating it was broken. He walked closer and noticed it was a woman dressed in a black raincoat and black leather pants, so it would have been very difficult for Luc to have seen her. Roman, who had night and thermal vision, could see very little heat coming from her body, which meant the rogue must have fed on her very recently.

Roman leaped over some large branches and debris to take a closer look at the rogue’s latest victim. Damn, she was beautiful, he thought. She was petite, about five feet tall, with fine features. He could not make out her hairstyle or color, as her raincoat hooded it. Her body temperature was showing a violet glow, but as Roman got closer to her, he noticed her heart and inner core of her body had a yellow to orange glow. “Impossible.” Just as his words were spoken, Anne opened her eyes.

With a growl, Roman leapt a few feet back, landing in a crouching position hissing in the direction of the woman, startling Luc.

“What the hell?” Luc tried to focus on what Roman was staring at. “What is it?” Luc cautiously walked toward the black thing lying in between the branches. The closer he got, the better he could make it out. It was a body — a young man — no, a woman. Hastening his pace, breaking branches trying to get to her, he heard Roman say: “She’s alive.” Luc stopped and turned to face Roman. “What?”

“She’s alive. I don’t know how — she lost a lot of blood — but she opened her eyes,” Roman said stunned.

Luc bent down over the broken body of the woman and looked into her eyes. Sure enough, there was life there, not focusing, but alive.

“Roman, phone Doc and let him know what we have here. Shit, I can’t see as well as you; get back here.”

“No,” Roman said nervously, “too much blood.”

“Roman, damn it, then get Doc on the phone and get that flashlight, the one by the back tire of the vehicle,” Luc pointed.

Roman, with one hand phoning Dr. Ian Anderson, picked up the flashlight with the other and threw it toward Luc, hitting him in the gut. “Thanks,” Luc grunted sarcastically.

Turning it on and shining it over the woman’s body, he noticed she had a broken leg. He moved her raincoat aside and found her formerly white shirt was soaked in blood. Lifting her shirt to see where the blood was coming from, he noticed a broken rib jutting out of her skin, which only explained some of the blood. He gently put his hand over her heart and her blood soaked bra. He sensed she was trying her best to stay alive.

Anne, feeling the heat under her left breast, tried to focus. Seeing a large man leaning over her, she tried to say something or move, but nothing happened. All she could do was look at him and hear him shout something to someone.

*God*, Anne’s mind was racing, *he was handsome*. She also smelled a strong scent of leather and spice on him. He was close, very close

to her; she felt safe with him there. Why did she? She didn't know this man and what was he doing with his hand so close to her breast? She felt her skin tingle where he touched. "Goodness, have I died and gone to heaven," she managed to whisper.

Luc's face was inches from hers and he was able to hear her try to say something. "Roman, get over here now." Luc jerked back a little to focus on the woman's face. She was fragile and in a very unstable condition. He hadn't seen so much blood coming from one person before, yet she was looking at him and trying to say something. "Ro-maaaaaan." Luc was now getting anxious.

"What?" Roman grunted standing right next to Luc now.

"We need to get her help and fast. What does the doc suggest?" He looked up at Roman. "What do you see?"

Roman took a few seconds to study her. Talking into the cell phone and to Luc, Roman started doing a full scan of the woman's body injuries.

"Broken leg, cracked pelvis, two broken, five cracked ribs, a bite or what's left of a bite in the carotid artery and lacerations all over her body"

"What do you mean, what's left of a bite?" Luc asked, moving the raincoat hood off the woman's head to check with the flashlight.

As he did so, he saw the raw bite marks in her neck "It looks like it's healing, but how?" he asked, looking up at Roman.

"It must have licked her clean to seal it," Roman said staring down at Luc as if he was in pain. Luc knew how much power it was taking Roman not to feed on her, too.

"Focus, Roman, what does Doc recommend we do?" Roman nodded and hearing Ian say something to Roman that must have been upsetting to him, Luc took the cell phone from him and asked, "Doc, what did you suggest we do?"

"Well, you can't move her, not until Roman gives her some of his blood to heal some or all of those injuries, and because of the

circumstances being attacked by one of us. We can't take her to the hospital; it won't be safe and too many unanswered questions. Once her ribs are healed, get her to my place, quickly. She will be anemic and will go into shock, and due to no blood in her limbs, she may lose them, not to mention she may be hypothermic. Do you understand what I have just said?" Dr. Ian Anderson asked. Slowly Luc looked up to Roman and replied, "Yes, we understand," snapping the phone shut and handed it back to Roman.

Roman shook his head. "This is not good," he said bending down.

"I know, but we need to do this. I think she may be a *feeder*," Luc said putting his other hand on Roman's shoulder.

"Why do you think she's a feeder?" Roman looked surprised.

"Because look at what she's been through and she's still alive." Luc, looking back down, saw the woman looking right back at them in complete surrender, with no fear in her eyes. Luc noticed his hand was still on her heart and could feel a tingle under it.

"Roman, you need to do this before it's too late. She will die here if we don't get Doc to help her."

Roman looked back at Luc and then to the woman, shaking his head. "I know."

Anne, not comprehending the conversation completely, knew she was in trouble. Unless this Roman character was going to feed her something or she was a feeder — it made no damn sense — she would die.

Then all of a sudden Roman's facial features changed and with a gnarl, his eye teeth grew longer — like fangs — glistening white against his lower lip; he bit into his own wrist.

Anne's eyes grew larger and out of focus. She could not breathe; she was choking. *No, no what was going on, was she going mad?*

Roman bent over her and let a few drops of blood drip from his wrist into her mouth. Anne tried not to swallow. The taste of the

blood was surprisingly good; it had a hint of metal but yet it had a little bit of sweetness to it. It also smelled like that thing that bit her, but not as strong and deadly.

The aroma of the blood filled her mouth; it nauseated her and she wanted to gag. She heard one of them say, "It will help you; swallow it. Come on, lady, it's not that bad." Luc gave her a reassuring smile.

Anne was not too sure of this — *it's blood for God sake*. Suddenly, she realized she'd gone to hell not heaven; Angels wouldn't have her drink blood, would they?

She tried to focus on the men bending over her. They both looked like angels, with their dark hair, one long and straight and the other wavy to his shoulders; one with light eyes and the other dark, though she could not make out the colors. The man feeding her blood had a beautiful voice. The man with his hand on her heart was rough and deep, similar to his features. He was a well built man, with a seductive smile.

Anne melted into his smile and swallowed. As she did so, she closed her eyes. With every swallow, Anne felt her ribs begin the painful process of knitting themselves back together. She started to shudder as her bones straightened and fused and torn flesh mended. The man who held her heart moved over her to hold her down. It was agony. It was a miracle, and after a minute, she drifted off into darkness again.

"Well, is it working?" Luc asked holding the woman down as she shook and jolted.

"Yes," Roman said licking his wound closed.

"We've got to get her out of here; can we move her yet?" Luc asked looking at the woman's leg.

Checking the woman's vitals, Roman said, "Yes, let me carry her."

"No, I've got her."

Looking at each other for awhile, Roman nodded and led the

way back to Luc's car. Roman opened the back door for Luc, then slipped into the driver's side, started the car, and waited for Luc to get the woman settled on his lap and took off as fast as he could to the Doc's house.

Back in the woods, the rogue watched them speed off and started running a safe distance behind them to see where they were taking its sustenance.

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