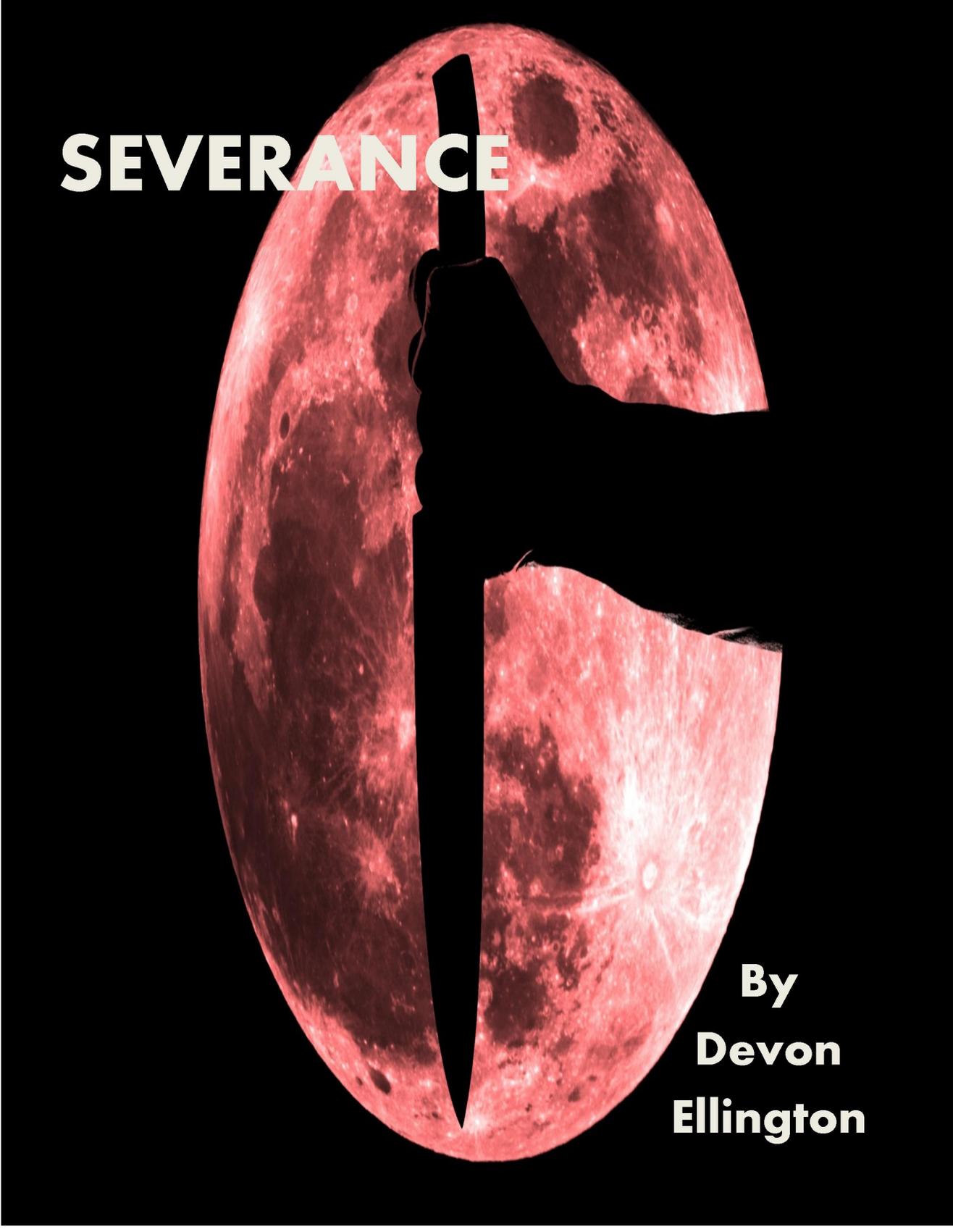


# SEVERANCE

A large, glowing red moon dominates the center of the image. A black silhouette of a hand holding a knife is positioned vertically, with the knife's blade pointing downwards and passing through the center of the moon. The background is solid black.

By  
Devon  
Ellington

## **“Severance”**

**By Devon Ellington**

When Riker Cain walks into Linn Shek’s bar, he kills the man sent to assassinate Linn by her enemy Tarank. At that moment, Linn knows Riker’s past as Eidolinn Sheekagh, the Annym Roosteyr (dispatcher of souls), has come back to haunt her.

A science fiction/western/short story available from Smashwords for 99 cents at <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/637885>

Excerpt:

I knew he was trouble the minute he walked into my bar. He came in with a quiet confidence, not an arrogant swagger, but there was something about him that warned me I was in for a rough night. My fault for not making sure the door was locked after I’d escorted a drunken group of Yurkins out. They weren’t bad guys, just out for night of reverie and not good at holding their liquor. I didn’t expect any new customers at this late hour. The town was quiet; no rumors reached us of approaching trouble.

I had a single customer left at a corner table, nursing a tankard of summer ale. He’d purchased enough over the course of the evening that I didn’t mind letting him take his time while Corwin, Raisa, and I cleaned up. Corwin wiped down tables and placed the stools and benches on top of them; when he completed that task, he’d mop the floors. Raisa washed glasses and took inventory in the bar. We’d restock before we opened the next afternoon.

I had the ledger out, balancing the books, frowning as I worked. It wasn’t that I couldn’t do it; I simply didn’t like it. However, the bar made a solid profit. Even in lean times, people need to come out and have a drink to forget their troubles for a few hours. And I liked the life. Raisa, Corwin, and the staff could deal with the customers. I could stay in the background or come out and be sociable, as I chose. I’d been here long enough people treated me as though I belonged.

Until he came in to my bar, and everything went to hell.

## About the Author:

Devon Ellington publishes under a half a dozen names in fiction and non-fiction, and is an internationally-produced playwright and radio writer. She writes the Jain Lazarus urban fantasies published by Solstice Publishing, and the Gwen Finnegan paranormal archaeological mysteries, previously published by Amber Quill Press. She is in anthologies including PERFECTLY PLUM, ARDEUR, SIMPLE PLEASURES OF THE KITCHEN, DEATH SPARKLES, GHOST STORIES OF THE MOGOLLON RIM, and FULL CIRCLE. She has published dozens of short stories and hundreds of articles. She teaches writing both online and in person all over the world. Her website is <http://www.devonellingtonwork.com> and her blog, Ink in My Coffee is <http://devonellington.wordpress.com>.

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