

Darby and Harley Donnelly weren't able to have a child, as far as they could tell. It's not like they really needed one, the cattle farm had enough hands working already and the family business was secure, but the young couple wanted one anyway. They had plenty of land and a steady source of money, plus a large family to help raise them.

Rothbauer Farm belonged to Harley's father in southeast Vale, and it exported meat, calves, and organic fruits and vegetables. Everyone in the family was Faunus, save for some of the workers. Darby, who recently married the youngest daughter, a hare Faunus, was a Golden Retriever Faunus himself. It took the family some getting used to him, seeing that he was from the city, but Darby was a good man and was, to the family's delight, good with animal handling.

The two had been married for about five years and had no luck when it came to children. All three of Harley's sisters had had children by now, and the two were getting impatient. Instead of waiting for good luck to strike them, they decided to go through the adoption process and adopt Rosalind Jorunn-Donnelly, a young American Paint Horse Faunus. She was only five but easily found her place on the farm. She discovered a liking for plants very early on and spent most of her time in the greenhouses with her aunts, uncles, and older cousins, as well as the hired workers.

Only a year later, the Donnelly's had a stroke of good luck, and Harley discovered that she was pregnant with twins. The whole family rejoiced and congratulated the two.

Almost a year later later, the twins were born. It went fairly well in a trusted hospital, and both the daughters were healthy and beautiful. Well, together they were. One was extremely healthy, and the other was beautiful, but neither were both. The older one, named Chevrolet, was as healthy as they came, but couldn't be described as cute. Her eyes were small and glassy and clouded, with rectangular pupils. Her Faunus trait being goat eyes. The younger twin, Mercedes, was cute enough to charm anyone the second she arrived but lacked the strength that Chevrolet had and was much smaller.

As the children grew, it became apparent who was favored among the two. Mercedes was smart and beautiful, with her mother's dark silky hair and two small British White cow ears poking out. Her eyes, like her fathers, were dark as could be. Chevrolet, however, looked nothing like either of her parents. Darby reasoned that it was from his side of the family, that she resembled his mother more than anyone on Harley's side. If his mother heard that, he would have been in trouble. Her hair was coarse and wiry with large teeth and a square face. She wasn't as smart as her sister, and although she was able to walk and had much more cognition, it took extra time and effort for her to even learn her colors, shapes, and anything else a small child would need to know.

As she grew into a toddler, her eyes grew with her. By the time she was five, they were large and striking, and almost frightening. This was also around the age when she started to realize that people were uneasy around her, and wasn't the favorite out of her sisters. Her little brain couldn't reason why, nor could she really verbalize it, but she felt it in her tiny gut, and, in an attempt to escape, she ran off to the barns and fields and followed the stable hands and workers around.

They used this tiny, strong child to their advantage, and as she grew, she became closer with them and was able to pick up on their tasks and jobs, and quickly became their helper. She would tote around parts or do quick repairs when she found them, and by the time she was 10

was familiar with how the company worked and looked forward to being old enough to get paid for doing what she loved. Many of the employees tutored her and help her learn to read when her parents grew aggravated. Many of them had struggled with school themselves and thus relied on their physical abilities to get them through. They understood Chevrolet's struggles and after years of watching her grow, and wanted to see her succeed.

All members of the family, including employees who had worked at the farm for a while, were given a horse. It was mostly for entertainment and sport between them, and they'd go off riding on the trails and through the pastures when they felt like it. Chevrolet, working alongside the other workers as much as she did, got familiar with every horse in the stable, as well as becoming fond of riding on her own horse, a rose grey mustang affectionately named Poppy. Her father and uncles gave Rosalind, Mercedes, and Chevrolet lessons often enough, to the point where they were rather comfortable with riding, but Chevrolet wanted more. She would have some of the workers who were riders themselves teach here and there, and she would pass these lessons onto Mercedes. Her sister wasn't as comfortable riding as Chevrolet, but she would go out anyway, doing her best to keep up with the athletic girl.

It was also a tradition for the children to receive a rifle when they turned 10. Mercedes and Chevrolet, being the only cousins their age, got a small hunting rifle of their own to use for sport, and the occasional hunting trip if they were interested. Mercedes, being as soft and gentle as she was, didn't care for it all that much. She learned how to use it, got okay at aiming, and put it in the safe and forgot about it. Chevrolet, however, took to it quickly. Maybe the wind was in her favor, maybe it was just beginners luck, but perhaps she simply had a knack for it. She couldn't charm her way out of trouble with long eyelashes like her sister, but she sure could get out of it in her own way.

Now, not everything on the farm was perfect. Although they were kind, the Rothbauer family was never the brightest and could be considered quite petty at times. They were unforgiving and were quick to fire an employee if they bad-mouthed the company or screwed up. Chevrolet did her best to take the blame for many of these mistakes in the hopes that the workers, who had been nothing but kind to her, would be able to say. This, surprisingly enough, worked many times. While her favorite employees were able to keep the job, her family were led to believe that she screwed up an unimaginable amount of time.

Many times they would try and keep her inside, and try and make her wear dresses and be more feminine, but she would escape under their nose and run back out to the fields and hide with the cows until her mother and anyone else who was looking for her would give up. Often times, she would bring Mercedes with her, and the two would play together and have fun, like the children they were. Chevrolet and Mercedes were extremely different and argued, as sisters often do, but were close as could be and were each other's best friends.

Neither were very close to Rosalind, seeing that she was older and always working in the greenhouses, but on hot summer days, she would bring the two to the garden and let them pick the ripe strawberries and cherry tomatoes and eat as many as they wanted once they had finished. If they were lucky, Rosalind would set away time to help them make homemade strawberry ice cream or lemonade.

But tensions between her family and Chevrolet weren't the only things that the farm struggled with, however, not by a long shot. Chevrolet's grandfather, the man who had started

the Rothbauer Farm, had a legal issue with another cattle supplier, not five miles away, back when his own sons were still teenagers. A few wolves had attacked a heard of cows, killing a few, and the family took their dogs and guns and chased them off the heard and away from the property.

And while they were able to get keep them from killing any more of their cattle, they ended up chasing them off to their neighbors, the Villaverde's. This wasn't their intent, and they didn't notice that it had happened at all until they got a knock on their door a few days later, and George Rothbauer came face to face with an angry Emil Villaverde. He told George that the wolves he and his family had chased off their land a few nights ago, had killed their best heifer and they wanted payment to cover it.

Now George was a poor man, he had money, sure, but none of it was for spending. Every cent they made went to repair's around the still small farm and taking care of their herd. They simply couldn't afford to repay the Villaverdes, nor could he offer a cow to replace it.

Emil wasn't happy with this and attempted to take them to court, but neither party could pay the fees. George was extremely upset over the incident, and so were the rest of the Rothbauers, but neither was going to try and hold it against them. Their neighbors were short on money as well, so it could be understood that they wanted to find a way to get some spare change.

Many of the Villaverdes tried to do the same and move on with their lives, but some of the rowdy teens did not. A week or so later, they managed to sneak over and steal a few heifers, using a trailer pulled by a tractor.

When this was discovered in the morning, George went over to confront them and get their cattle back. Emil denied this, and when he went out to prove it, the two discovered that a few cows in the herd had the Rothbauer branding. Emil reasoned that these two were some of the cows he had bought a few years back, he even had the papers to prove it.

Both of them knew this was a lie. The cows Emil had bought were butchered or sold a few months after purchase, and these were only a year and a half.

When George pointed this out to get the cows that were rightfully his back, Emil accused him of trying to steal cows that he bought with his own money. He had the receipts to prove it, did he want to see them?

George waved him off and went home, only to come back with some friends later that night and take them back and then some. Deep in his gut, he knew that it wouldn't end up good, but the Villaverde's had no right to steal their property because a pack of wild dogs and wolves took down a cow or two.

From there, Emil and his brothers and sons stole them back a few days longer. And, in return, George went to get the back. This time, however, Emil was there, guns drawn, waiting for him. A fight ensued. The Villaverde's technically won, but not before a Rothbauer was able to kill a bull. Who managed to shoot it is unknown, only that the bullet found in it wasn't the type Emil or his family used.

From that moment on, there would be high tensions between the two families. One would try and take a few cows, be confronted by the other family during the heist, and they either won or lost. It was a simple habit that they carried guns on them before, but it soon turned into a necessity.

If they would see each other in town, an argument would break out. Not about the cows, but about whatever foul play had been pulled at the last fight.

As time went on and both farms grew into respected local companies, it became less about stealing the cows, and more about lashing out and getting revenge for the last spar they lost.

Now, most of the time they consisted of punches, and the occasional gunshots, but it was rare that anyone got seriously injured, and the first one to die happened almost two years exactly after the initial conflict began. It was, ironically enough, George. A stray bullet had caught his foot, and while the injury itself was nothing serious, infection set in days later. And the Rothbauer family, still being short on money, struggled to pay for the proper medication. He died ten days later.

And that's when things became serious. George's sons and his brother-in-law would set out to get revenge on the Villaverde's. They did, in the form of emptying a barn and knocking down the stalls on the inside. It caused a lot of attention, but they were able to run back home before Emil and the others were able to catch up.

From then on, the Rothbauers and Villaverdes were at each other's necks, both in the middle of the night and when they saw the others in public. Not to mention, that as their farms grew, they both became known for supplying local high-class beef. Rothbauer Farms also invested in producing organic fruit and vegetables, while the Villaverdes went on to become well known for its dairy produce of both goats and cows.

As more work was needed on the farms, their spars and raids to cause havoc became fewer and farther between. This isn't to say that they didn't stop, however. Every few months, they would come on their horses and guns to scare each other and break things. Neither group wanted to get the law involved, for they knew that both sides would have hell to pay for their actions. George and one of his sons were the only two to die on the Rothbauer side, and Emil and his brother and nephew were the only ones on the Villaverdes to bite the dust, Emil's nephew losing his left leg at one point.

Call it brutal, call it vicious, but it carried on for thirty-two years before Chevrolet and Damaris were born and showed no signs of stopping. The workers never got involved, it was a mutual rule to not include the employees, but that never stopped the fights from happening.

The three children were sheltered from this as best as they could be. Of course, everyone knew about their rivalry with the other family, it wasn't something they could hide. However, they were able to keep the more violent side of it to themselves. Partly because it simply wasn't appropriate for young children to know about, but also in hope that the next generation would be able to sort out an agreement with the Villaverde's.

Around the time they were twelve, Harley started to try and teach the twins how to cook. They were soon to be young ladies and needed to know how to make a meal. Mercedes took quickly to it and enjoyed every second of it. Chevrolet, however, had no culinary skill whatsoever. At one point, she put food into the oven that was on a cutting board. Needless to say, they needed a new oven afterward.

Because she was so used to being good at new skills, such as riflery and horseback, this proved to be frustrating and she soon simply gave up on trying and just did what her mother told her.

Rosalind and Mercedes, amused at how Chevrolet gave up so easily, took her aside and did their best to teach her. She let them but warned the girls that she was a lost cause. Rosalind, who was well into her teen years by now, took some of the strawberries from the garden and started small. She made Chevrolet make the homemade ice cream that they made in the summer without any help. It wasn't perfect, but it was a good place to start seeing that she was already familiar with the process.

Next came simple salads and fresh bread, then boiling pasta without burning the house down. Very slowly, the two sisters managed to get Chevrolet to a point where she could cook and not cause a disaster. The three of them grew rather close through this, and although they still fought, they had a much better relationship.

When the sisters were thirteen, they grew fond of building small forts in the woods and spending the night in them. Chevrolet, who was still much bigger than her sister, was the one who did most of the work, but Mercedes helped out and placed the blankets and pillows inside and picked the spot, and the two would lay in there and have fun.

It was a cool fall night, around 10:00 P.M. when they were in a small fort, eating sandwiches they had packed when they heard the sound of ATVs and a few horses in the distance. This was odd because there weren't any trails nearby, and who rode horses and ATV's together? Confused, both girls stuck their heads out, and watched them pass by, not fifty feet away.

Neither of the girls recognized the figures, not in the dark, at least. One managed to see them and called something out as they passed, but they were gone before the twins could understand a word they had said.

Chevrolet urged her sister to follow them with her, but Mercedes stayed put. Upset, but not willing to leave her alone in the middle of the woods, they both kept to themselves for now.

Although they were both considered well-behaved girls, the goat Faunus was well known for being stubborn, and, looking back, no one was surprised when she stumbled upon a small scuffle.

Mercedes was in a deep sleep by now, burrowed under her blankets, oblivious to her sister crawling out of the little wooden fort, small pocket knife in hand.

Although it was dark, she was able to get around well enough. The three houses the family owned were on a hill in the center of the land. Just climb a tree or find a clearing with a good view, and anyone could find their way around. Not to mention the fact that she, along with the rest of the family, knew the area quite well.

It was, in fact, the Villaverde's. They had come the back way, from the north, which was quite odd for them, in hopes to steal a cow. The A.T.V's were parked about fifty feet from the forest edge, as well as a horse or two. As she approached the edge of the woods, her foot caught under a root, and she stumbled. She managed to catch herself, but as she continued on, trying to get a good look at what was going on.

However, the young girl managed to kick something heavy enough to hurt, and when she looked down, she could see the flash of the moonlight on something silver and shiny. Chevrolet had stumbled upon a Villaverde gun. She didn't know much about them, only that she was good at shooting them, and that this wasn't an old revolver like her fathers or a rifle like her

own. It was a pistol. She had watched her uncles and cousins use them, but she had only ever used one once.

She put the knife in her pocket and checked the gun. The safety was on, but it was in fact loaded. What idiot had left it on the ground? Had they dropped it? She took out the magazine and put it back on the ground before continuing to watch from the shadows.

She could see the figures gently waking up a young heifer, but not much else. Then again, not much was needed to figure out what was going on. Chevrolet wasn't sure what to do. Confront them? As willing, as she was to lay into them, she was a 13-year-old girl against a group of adults. It simply wouldn't work, and by the time she had run to get her father, they would have left already.

There was only one thing she could really do, and it might not even work. Silently, Chevrolet retrieved the gun from the ground and loaded it, praying that she was doing it right. She had seen others do it constantly, she was sure to be able to figure it out. She turned off the safety and aimed to the far right of the group, praying that she didn't hit anyone, and shot.

The recoil sent her tumbling into the ground. No one had told her such small things could have a kick like that. She rolled over and began to run deep into the woods and away from their A.T.V's and horses. She could hear them yelling in the background, and multiple cows had been spooked, not to mention the Villaverde's horses tied to the trees.

Chevrolet came to the pasture at another angle. She was sure they had heard her running, but it didn't matter much to her. The girl took another shot, careful not to aim anywhere that would hurt someone. She was more prepared for the kick this time, and only stumbled back a bit.

Another gun went off that wasn't hers, and Chevrolet, realizing what she had gotten herself into, ran towards the house. There was more yelling in the distance, but there was another noise as well, and it was coming from the house. Her family had woken up, the headlights of their trucks casting long shadows and blinding the young girl.

Her father and uncles, surprised to see her in the middle of the woods, almost crying with a gun, let her into the bed of the truck and they rode down to the pasture as she explained the situation, talking through the open back window. They were able to catch the Villaverdes as they were securing the cow into the trailer. When the Rothbauers got out, Chevrolet crawled into the backseat through the rear window and watched everything unfold.

And, surprisingly enough, it wasn't that eventful. The Rothbauer men told them to get the hell out, and Darby even began to lay into one of them about shooting at his daughter. Of course, he knew there was no way they could have known a thirteen-year-old was the one who fired the first shots, but he did it anyway. They opened the trailer and sent the heifer back with the rest of the herd, who had now calmed down.

They got back into the truck, and Chevrolet returned to the truck bed. Darby went out to find Mercedes, who was standing outside the fort, spooked and wrapped up in blankets. She was set in the back of the truck with her sister and the family rode back to the house.

There, Chevrolet got yelled at by nearly everyone in the household. But she dismissed all of it and argued that if it wasn't for her, they would have lost a cow.

That argument didn't go well. They had multiple herds and hundreds of cows, it wasn't worth the risk. Chevrolet yelled back, still arguing her point that she couldn't just watch it happen. She was sent to bed and told that they'd figure it out in the morning.

The girl was grounded for a week. For any other kid, it wouldn't be the worst, but to Chev? It was hell. She wasn't allowed to go near the barns, or really too far from the house at all. No helping out the stable hands or tagging along to move the cows. She could still run down the hill and into the edge of the forest and get dirty in the mud, but it wasn't the same.

A few days into her punishment, her father took the Villaverdes gun and Chevrolet and they got in the car. At first, she had assumed it was an apology, but she was soon told that he wanted her to return it herself. Drive up to their house, knock on their door, and give it back. And so that's exactly what she did.

When the door was opened, she handed them the pistol and told them to either "get better at stealing my cows or just give up already" before promptly leaving without another word. Her dad said she did a good job.

At the end of that slow week, Darby took his daughter out to the shooting range and let her try out the pistols and revolvers the family owned. He, as well as her uncles and grandfather, only thought it was fair. She already enjoyed the rifles and was good at it, too. While young and stubborn, Chevrolet had been as responsible as she could be. Sure, she messed up when helping out, but at least she took the blame for it and didn't blame it on someone else.

Chevrolet had to stifle a laugh when they told her that reasoning.

She wasn't the best at it, but it was more fun than her hunting rifle. The kick is what got her, the way it went through her arms instead of straight into her shoulder. She loved it.

There were a few complicated weapons that they had, such as fancy snipers or some that turned into a sword, but she never paid too much attention to them. They were too complicated and took too long to get the hang of. That and the fact that if she so much as breathed on one then they'd freak out. They were pretty expensive, apparently.

Over time, Chev's skill with the handguns grew, and she even convinced her parents to let Damaris try. It wasn't her thing, but she gave it a try and went back inside.

Months passed and Rosalind, who was now nineteen, went off to have a formal education at a local college a few hours away. She was going to come back to Rothbauer Farms when she was finished but wanted some more life experience outside of the ranch and the small farming town they lived in.

She'd be gone for a whole four years, and return with a bachelor's in plant science. She wanted to have the qualifications for a job if needed and to help their greenhouses and gardens produce more food and stay healthier.

Rosalind leaving also sparked something in Mercedes. There was a high school in the town, but Harley and Darby intended to continue on with homeschooling. It was quite a commute and they found it easier to teach them from home. But the cow Faunus had other ideas.

It took a good deal of convincing, and she even got Chevrolet to back her up. Darby and Harley agreed, but only if Chevrolet either had a job in the city or went to school as well, they were going to get their fair share out of having to drive an hour into town.

Going to high school was one of the last things Chev was interested in. She was totally fine staying on the ranch, her mom as her teacher, and the hired workers as her tutors. But she also loved her sister and didn't want to throw all this work she had done to waste. Chev easily chose to get a job over going to school.

They still had the rest of spring and summer to get through, but they needed to prepare. Chevrolet's part was easy, she'd find a job somewhere. Her father helped put in applications to local supermarkets, but she refused to work as a cashier all day. If she was going to have to stop doing entertaining work on the ranch, then she was going to do entertaining work elsewhere.

This was to no avail, and Darby secured her a spot as a boring cashier. Chevrolet annoyed that she was going to be spending most of her time indoors and behind a counter, ranted and vented to some of the stable hands. And not twenty minutes later, it had paid off.

One of the worker's father owned a mechanics shop in the town, and they had promised to do their best to get Chevrolet a job. It may be a cashier again, but it might also be a job where she could actually work.

As the spring turned into summer, Mercedes had to catch up on her schoolwork and prepare for a real classroom. She had always been the smarter of the two, taking in all the information she could and keeping it, but even this proved to be a challenge, and it was really frustrating for the gentle girl.

Mercedes told all of this to Chev one night in a fort they had made, and the goat Faunus had told her sister not to worry, she knew how to help.

Chevrolet was not the scholarly type. Even though she was young, it was obvious that if she ever ended up in a formal school, it'd probably be a trade school. It wasn't something that the family looked down on, hell, most of them had gone to a trade school. But compared to her sisters, Chevrolet's lack of bookmarks made her stick out like a sore thumb.

But that came with its perks. Throughout trying to get through middle school, she had relied on the workers and stable hands to tutor her and give her ways to help keep it in her head. And now it was Mercedes' turn.

She would work on her homework and talk with Chev's favorite employees, reciting her work and developing new study habits. Even Chevrolet was able to lend a hand and created acronyms and mnemonics, which had always worked for her.

By the time fall had come, Mercedes had caught up and Chevrolet had secured a job at the mechanics. She was, to her despair, a cashier. And the supermarket job paid more. Both her parents wouldn't be happy. But they didn't need to know just yet.

On Mercedes's first day to a real school, she put in all the stops. Makeup, a dress, new shoes, everything. Chevrolet had to be forced into a shirt that wasn't stained with oil and hiking boots that weren't covered in mud. Which meant buying her new clothing, because everything the goat Faunus owned got stained somehow.

Once her sister was at school, she was dropped off at her new job at the supermarket that her parents thought she would be working at. The second they were gone she told her new boss that she was quitting and promptly ran off to the mechanic's shop.

The owner set her behind the counter and showed her how things worked before letting her loose. It was incredibly boring. She had expected to learn something, to work with her hands. To maybe learn a little more than how to change the oil in her dad's truck.

When her time was over, Chev ran back to the supermarket and met her parents, who had gone inside to see where she was. When Darby had come back out, it was obvious he knew she was up to something.

She explained it all, and needless to say, they weren't amused. They were going to let her keep the job, but if she wanted to find her own jobs then her parents decided that she could drive her own way.

Learning to drive wasn't too hard for her or Mercedes. After always being surrounded by tractors and messing around with the old cars that the family owned, it was nothing.

As the semester went on, Chevrolet continued to work at the mechanic's shop and Mercedes continued to go to school. She kept up with her work and her grades were amazing, but she lacked friends. Oftentimes her parents would get onto her about being more social, and every time Chev would step in and argue for her sister. She was shy and quiet, and as long as she was happy it was all right. Mercedes oddly became more clingy to Chevrolet after this and tended to flee to her when she was upset.

Chevrolet didn't really understand it, but it's not like she was going to refuse a crying girl a hug.

Towards the end of the semester, around November, the girls were given scrolls. They enjoyed them and quickly joined all the social media they could, only to drop them a month later because the connection on the ranch sucked and neither of them knew enough people for it to be any fun.

The new year came and Mercedes was sleeping and taking naps every day she could. The girl seemed paler than she usually was, and Chevrolet was extremely worried.

She slept constantly herself, all teenagers did, but something seemed off about Mercedes. She asked her sister about it, but the cow Faunus simply stuck to the excuse that she was just tired.

Chev didn't pressure her and left it at that.

She still worked at the shop and had gained the owner's trust. She took a bit to count the money, but could easily answer most of the customers' questions. She wouldn't be able to actually work on anything until someone new was hired, but she didn't mind. When the shop was empty, the owner would take Chev into the garage and guide her through fixing the cars.

She loved it and began to mess around with the old cars at her home. Nothing ambitious, but she familiarized herself with it and became confident in her abilities.

At the beginning of the next spring, the family fired a girl for making multiple errors. It was the shop owner's daughter.

Chev knew that if she was still up there, she could have taken the blame and they wouldn't have lost their job, but now there was a new employee at the shop and she was getting her hopes up.

And it happened to work out. The owner's daughter agreed to split their shifts in half. Chev would work in the garage when things were slow, then move to the front desk in the afternoon. She was extremely thankful for the two and was eager to get a change of scenery.

As summer approached, Chevrolet became more concerned about Mercedes. While the two were in the barn one day, Mercedes doing her work and Chev cleaning saddles, the goat finally pressed into her sister.

Their town didn't have a Faunus majority, but it was more than many other places. It wasn't incredibly far from Vacuo, so the idea of being welcome as long as you can carry your weight resonated with most who lived there. That being said, where there is little education, there is prejudice.

Mercedes had been berated at school. Kids would tug at her ears or refuse to touch her at all, talking about how she belonged in the stables. To them, her growing up in a barn wasn't a simple joke, they had just assumed it as a fact.

But she never spoke up about it. Mercedes was a shy girl, she didn't have the courage to speak up for herself and was scared of being pulled out if her parents found out.

Chevrolet was upset at both Mercedes and the kids who had upset her sister and was determined to do something about it. Mercedes begged her not to get into trouble, but that obviously wasn't going to happen.

By now the school year was almost over, and Chev was going to make her move. She had to leave work early and find her way through the town to the school, but that was easy enough. Mercedes had managed to get out of class early as well, hoping to try and stop her sister from doing something stupid. However, when she saw Chevrolet on campus and angry, she decided to just let it happen. She had defended her in almost every situation, and Damaris wanted to put an end to the bullying.

Mercedes pointed the main two out to Chev, and she got to work.

Chev made a scene as she walked towards them. She was already pretty shocking, tall and messy and with two bulging bright goat eyes, her wiry hair in a ponytail, and a halo of frizz around her head.

The punches she threw didn't help.

The two boys ended up with a bloody nose and Chev had managed to get herself a black eye. She had also yelled at them a good bit during it, and threatened anyone else who dared to even think about looking at Mercedes the wrong way.

The twins ran to their parent's car, which had just driven up and tried to be as casual as possible. That being said, the two boys bleeding in the schoolyard gave everything away.

Mercedes tried to explain first, downplaying the situation as much as she could, but Chevrolet wasn't having it and interrupted her with a blunt "they were being racist ass hats all year so I punched them"

She was grounded, and both had to sit through Harley and Darby talking about Faunus racism.

Neither was that phased by it. Everyone knew it was a thing, and Mercedes had lived with it for a year. It left a bad taste in Chev's mouth, though.

Chevrolet's appearance seemed to get them to knock it off for a while, long enough for the school year to end, at least.

As summer started, the twins' parents had come to a decision. If Mercedes couldn't be trusted to let someone know when there was a problem, they'd have to rely on Chevrolet instead. She'd be attending the high school with her sister come fall.

To put it simply, she was not amused. Instead of working at the shop or on the ranch, Chev was stuck inside, trying to catch up with her schoolwork.

She still did the work that Harley assigned her, but it was subpar at best. She had fallen behind and retained very of what she was supposed to learn.

Mercedes helped her sister best she could, but both got frustrated easily. But by some stroke of luck, she was able to meet the minimum requirements and get into normal classes.

She hated it. With a passion. People strayed away from here, partly because of her Faunus trait, but also because whoever hadn't seen her throw hands heard about it. She also tended to have a sour attitude which drove people away.

But alas, her simply being there wasn't enough to keep them from staring at Mercedes, and she ended up either threatening someone or simply getting into a fight with them. She had tried to help her sister stand up for herself, but it was to no avail.

By the end of the first semester, Chevrolet had become the troublemaker and was grounded at home constantly. Mercedes tried her best to stand up for her sister, who had done the same countless times but to say the girl lacked a backbone would be giving her too much credit.

Over winter break, while Mercedes and Chevrolet were out messing around at the back of the property, they were attacked by two boys. One held Chev down while the other took an ear tagger to Mercedes and put a cow tag on her.

Chev put up a good fight, managing to break his nose before they began to run off. So Chevrolet, who had a bloody nose of her own, chased him down. Both were fast, and they ran for a while until he got caught on a fence lining the property and the two rammed into it.

They both were able to hit hard, and in the end, when she gave up the chase and let them both leave, she had a bloodied, broken nose and a black eye. Not to mention countless scratches and bruises.

She found Mercedes only a few yards away, a bright yellow cow tag on her left ear and tears streaming down her face.

Both angry and upset, they trudged home to get themselves cleaned up.

Darby and some of her uncles identified the boys as Villaverde's kids, a year or so older than the twins. Going out of their way to hurt each other had never been an issue in the thirty-something years, only petty fistfights and aimless gunshots only meant to scare.

Once again, Darby found himself driving to their neighbor's house and trying to sort things out. Mercedes and Chev came along, the tag still in the cow Faunus' ear.

When they got to the door, instead of letting her father deal with it, Chevrolet began to yell at them the second they opened the door. It got to the point where Darby had to force her back into the truck. And there she sat for the two hours they were in there, still angry as she was when it first happened.

The two boys had been influenced by the bullying Mercedes had faced her first year of high school and decided to try and keep it up. But, despite the families' mutual hate for each other, both agreed that they had to be punished.

At home, Darby took off Mercedes' tag. Chevrolet took it and put it in the drawer next to her bed.

The two returned to school next year, and all returned to normal.

That is until Mercedes started feeling bad. It wasn't a simple bug or virus, it was constant. She was achy and in pain, and became dizzy easily. They assumed it was dehydration at first, but after a week with no luck, they took her to the doctor.

A few blood tests later, and Mercedes was diagnosed with sickle cell disease. Her red blood cells were anemic and clotted easily, leaving her in pain and with too little blood.

She was given a host of medications and kept out of school for a while until they figured out what worked for her. While she saw improvement, it was very little and the girl was still in pain.

Her doctor prescribed her a very small dose of narcotics, but when it became apparent that she'd need higher doses, they took her off.

That didn't leave many options. Although she had only been diagnosed a few months ago, it was clear that she was in severe pain. That really only left them with one choice, a bone marrow transplant.

Chevrolet and Mercedes were sent to live with Rosalind, who was at the very end of her second year in college. She lived about four hours away in an apartment. It wasn't much, but it was only a twenty-minute drive to the hospital where the surgery would happen and there was enough room for both girls to recover.

The process was long and unpleasant for them both but was by far worse for Mercedes. To remove the bone marrow that was producing unhealthy cells, she needed to go through chemotherapy.

Chevrolet, who had already done her part was sent back home with her father while her mother stayed in town with Rosalind and Mercedes. Chev understood that Mercedes needed to be near the hospital, but it was weird not having her sister at home.

Because both sisters had a distaste for school, Harley and Darby didn't make them go back. So Chev spent a lot of her time either alone messing around with the old cars in the field. It was never anything dramatic, but she used what she had learned at the mechanic shop to get many of them back up and running.

Summer finally approached, and Chev was finally able to drive legally. This opened up more possibilities than Darby had planned for. Not only did Chev want to go back to work and get off the farm, but she also ended up driving down to visits Mercedes in the weeks she was up there. The whole transplant process lasted no more than a few weeks, but the side effects of radiation could last up to a few months and her doctors wanted to keep an eye on her.

While she was down there, Chev discovered just how upset and out of it Mercedes was. This didn't sit well with her at all. Rosalind was too busy with her studies to help out, and while Harley did her best, she was rather emotionally absent. This wasn't that much of a surprise. Their mother had never really put in much effort to have a real relationship with the girls.

Both her father and mother refused to let her live in town. They didn't want strong-willed Chev to cause trouble. That, of course, only made it worse.

She went there any way out of spite. The only one openly pleased about this was Mercedes, and secretly Rosalind, although their parents would kill her if they found out.

To make life a little easier for her, Chev promised that she would get a job. It would keep her out of the house and she'd give part of her money to Rosalind as a thank-you of sorts. This

compromise calmed down Harley to a manageable degree and let Chevrolet be there for her sister.

The place she worked at was very similar to her old job. A repair shop with a small shop on the inside for whatever parts you may need. The owners of her old job had put in a good word, making it easy for her to be hired. Many days, Chev would bring Mercedes, just to get her out of the house and make the day not as boring. The staff took quickly to kind little Mercedes and ended up liking her more than they did Chevrolet.

One slow afternoon, Mercedes pulled out some cards and began to deal them out. Although she had a reputation of being kind and gentle, the cow Faunus was brutal when it came to betting. She wasn't competitive but could pull one hell of a bluff in poker.

Her sister, on the other hand, felt like she had to win everything. But she could never seem to win against Mercedes, which made her want to do it even more.

It wasn't a long game, but Chev was trying hard, wishing for some better cards. She had tried to find a few ways to cheat, but she couldn't seem to find a way. Her sister knew her tricks.

Grumbling, Chev folded. As Mercedes took the cards to reshuffle, she picked one out from the deck. A two of spades, brown and shimmering. Confused, Chev grabbed for it, but the second she touched it, it shattered.

They sat in silence for a while, thinking, before Mercedes looked to her sister. "Were you trying to cheat so hard that you unlocked your semblance?"

The answer was yes.

A few weeks passed by and Mercedes was free of most symptoms, including sickle cell disease, and was allowed to head home. It was now early fall, and for a long time, everything seemed to be normal. Chevrolet worked on messing around with her semblance and doing work around the ranch, and Mercedes was back to being herself again. Sweet and calm in front of their parents, but a constant annoyance to Chev.

Harley got them both back into homeschooling, and while her sister did well, Chevrolet put in little effort. She could read and write good enough and she knew a good bit of algebra, what more could she need to know?

Winter came and left, and she and Darby had gone on multiple hunting trips. Not only did they have good bonding time, but it also provided Chev with good target practice.

That spring, however, wasn't as smooth. The Rothabaur-Villaverdes feud still existed. Mercedes and Chev had stayed out of it, Chevrolet getting into only a few tussles when she went into town. Their fathers and uncles, however, were still full of spite.

It was almost three am when Chevrolet woke up to yelling from downstairs. She came down only to find that Darby had caught a stray bullet. A warning shot that was supposed to be nothing more than that. She was furious. She dragged Mercedes out of bed despite Harley wanting them to stay at home, and together they drove the forty-five minutes into town to get him to the ER.

Darby was dead by noon.

Chevrolet wanted them to do something about it. To charge them or sue. Something more severe than empty threats. The family refused, seeing that anything against the Villaverdes would bring to light the whole affair, and both families would be ruined.

The next morning, a Villaverde's barn was found destroyed, two cows killed, and Chevrolet missing. She drove to Rosalind's apartment, found the spare key, and let herself in. Her older sister had driven up the morning of their father's death, so Chev was alone in the apartment trying to figure out what to do. She refused to be around her mother and family unless they acted and tried to get proper justice.

Mercedes had known where Chev had gone and filled her parents in. They returned to the apartment with Rosalind, trying to bring her home, but she refused. Rosalind sided by her and allowed Chevrolet to stay. She'd be done with the semester in a month, anyway. Let Chev deal with it however she needs.

During that month, Chevrolet took her anger and disbelief out on work. She wasn't paid, and only showed up to her old job when she felt like it. Once Rosalind was finished with college, for the year, she returned home. Chev, however, was still furious with her family and refused to go with her. She was dependent enough to get around and had a small bit of savings ready to spend, enough for a summer at least, so Rosalind let her stay. Harley wasn't very happy with this decision, but there was little to no debating it. Rosalind, while very proper and polite, had just as much determination as Chevrolet.

Not two weeks later, Mercedes drove down to join Chevrolet. She didn't have any real reason to do it, but it would be a nice change of scenery.

And so, the two Donelly sisters spend their summer at Rosalind's place until she returned for school, and the twins went back home. Her family fussed over Chev and tried to make her feel better, but it didn't work, and the girl grew distant from most everyone, aside from Mercedes and Rosalind when she was home.

She spent that fall and winter working on the ranch, finally able to receive a paycheck for it. She took every penny she got from this, and what little savings she had and stored it away. And when her eighteenth birthday arrived, she took her father's old revolvers from the safe, her old truck, and left.

She loved the Rothabaur Farm and planned on coming back, but she was bored and still trying to get over her father's death. No one seemed to care about it. They just went on with their everyday life as if this was a normal thing. Maybe it was simply how they coped, but it didn't help Chevrolet feel better in the slightest. Not to mention, she had become bored and restless at home. She didn't have much of a high school experience, so her friend pool ended with her old co-workers and the staff at the ranch.

She ended up back at the Vale-Vacuo border, trying to find a job. The old shop didn't have an opening, but he wrote her a reference for one of the owner's friends. So, Chev crossed the border and went into Vacuo. There, she was hired by an old man, who upon discovering that she only had a car to sleep in, let her stay in the upstairs part of the shop. It was, by no means, anything fancy, but there was a bed, bathroom, and air conditioning ready.

She worked at that shop for years slowly working up her savings and trying to figure out how to get her own place. The man was kind enough to let her stay in the shop for free, as long as she paid for anything she broke and didn't drive up the water bill.

It had been three years since she moved in when the old man died. Although they hadn't known each other for very long, most, if not all of the man's possessions had been left in Chev's care, including the shop. Only twenty-one, Chevrolet took control of the small mechanic shop.

She kept the few others who worked with her, and most everything stayed the same, except for the fact that now she could tell others off when they were slacking without getting in trouble for it.

While she was sad to see the old man go, it didn't affect her too much. She was mostly over her father by now and had it not been for the shop, she probably would have gone home. But now she had a responsibility and needed to stick with it.

While she was rummaging through the attic one day, trying to clean it out, she came across a rifle. It was old and worn, but it still worked and had a taser at the end, which she thought was pretty cool. She set it aside for later.

During this time, she also began to make modifications to her old truck, and, after a few years, it was essentially a whole new vehicle. Able to use different types of dust, her truck wasn't gigantic, but it could pull more weight than she'd ever need it too.

She also fiddled around with the rifle in her free time. It was old, so parts were hard to find, but after a few years of tinkering, she managed to get it in good shape. Both her truck and the gun were nothing more than side projects she did in her free time, and she didn't have much use for them outside of that.

When Chevrolet was twenty-five, Mercedes came down to live with her for a bit. Her twin had taken up a job as a teachers aid at the local school and wanted to get away and have a little fun for the summer. So, she came to her sister.

She let her live in the old owner's house. It had been mostly vacant for years but served as an address for things to be shipped and for a meeting place if someone ever needed it. Life was all right for the two, and they went to bars and had fun. Chev's friend group was much rowdier than Mercedes, but they were good people and she found it fun to watch them do stupid things.

One of these nights, Mercedes met a man named Myron, and the two hit it off. Chevrolet was suspicious of him, but she had always been suspicious of people being around her sister. She wasn't the most assertive person out there and had a hard time saying no.

However, he seemed to be nice enough, and Mercedes decided to stay in the small Vacuo town and started dating Myron. Chev was fine with this, seeing that he seemed all right. They didn't dislike each other, per se, but they didn't have much in common.

What they didn't know, however, was that he had a gambling problem. After a few months of dating, he fell on hard times and needed a job and a place to stay. Mercedes opened up her home and Chev allowed him to take a job at her shop, and he began to work and try to get back up on his feet.

This took longer than expected. Although he was making money, it didn't seem to be helping him at all. Mercedes simply reasoned that he was saving it up, but Chevrolet wasn't entirely sure. She didn't meddle in it much, though. It wasn't her money, nor was it her relationship.

Months passed, and while he was making money, it seemed that much less was coming in from the customers. Now, almost everyone who worked there had been friends with Chevrolet for years. Some of them had a shaky past, sure, but they were a good group. She'd trust them with her life if she needed to.

So Chev, her suspicions up, took a good long look at their stock and how much money they were making. She wasn't good with math, but she knew enough to know that things weren't adding up.

Myron had been taking small amounts of cash from the register on his shifts. Because the shop didn't have set prices, and most of their work was haggling, it was barely noticeable, but the camera's told otherwise. It was well over ten thousand lein, enough to

Furious, she marched over to where Mercedes was staying and dragged him out on the street. They fought, and he eventually ran off, two warning shots ringing out behind him.

Her sister was furious, and it eventually led to her going back home, which was a weight off Chev's shoulders if she was being honest. She had disliked Myron from the start, and it had led to her small shop being robbed of money, money that they needed. They weren't some big cooperation, they were a small shop in Vacuo that needed every lien that came it.

It took a year or so, but eventually, they regained what money they had lost. Chev was worn out, at this point. She enjoyed her job, but she felt trapped. It demanded most of her attention, and it simply wasn't the life she wanted to live. Sure, working with her hands and with machines was what she enjoyed, but after a while, it was repetitive and, to put it simply, boring.

So, at the age of twenty-seven Chevrolet got up and left. The shop was still in her name, and if they needed something, they could call, but for the most part, it was in her co-workers' hands. Besides, many had been working there longer than she had. If anyone was able to take care of the place, it was them. The goat Faunus took her guns and her truck, bought a camper, and headed out.

Over the next three years, she would not only gain a trailer and a large ATV, but a very nice horse trailer as well, and a young buckskin quarter horse named Saturn. He'd be in the air-conditioned trailer while she traveled, and she'd ride him for sport around the desert. She spoils the horse as best she can and has put more money into him than she has herself.

She became known among many of the Vacuo nomads for being a reliable worker and earns extra money by helping with repairs and construction work. She and Mercedes have since gotten over their fight, and it's not uncommon for her sister to come along and spend a month or two in the desert with Chev. While she'll come back to check up on her shop every month or so and visit the ranch at least twice a year, she is much happier roaming the desert than she is anywhere else and doesn't plan on leaving any time soon.