

## 666, or, THE ANTI-TRANSCENDENTAL SIGNIFIED

She didn't start out thinking about being the son of Satan (first she thought she'd be the daughter but knew no one would take her seriously) and in fact she just started out trying to annoy her husband, especially after he tacked up that list: "The Wife's Place in the Home" which was fastened on the fridge with two magnets, a plastic Hershey's Kiss and a rubber Phillip's 66 logo. Somewhere between reading "My body is God's gift to my husband" and "My broken spirit is my gift to God" she got so annoyed she thought she'd play a harmless trick and tacked up little Zacharia's drawing of a fire engine with his plastic Playskool numbers, putting the orange six right up snug beside the rubber magnet. She had to smile to herself just a bit every time she went by, but not so he could notice, and when he didn't pay any attention she went ahead and bought black candles that she burned during dinner (he thought he was finally getting through to her and she was learning a man needs some pampering) but he never noticed they were on the points of a pentagram she'd traced lightly on the wood with a bar of soap. She did a little reading, she was feeling so frisky, and bought a little goat of porcelain (Zacharia thought it was just the cutest

thing) she put right above the fireplace mantle and finally she took to boiling the dog droppings she collected off the lawn but he didn't say a word about the smell of shit that permeated the house. The bastard just wouldn't acknowledge that she had a direct and personal relationship to the King of Lies, the Prince of Darkness, he couldn't see the blood ties, the family resemblance to save his life. Then she read that there wasn't any such thing as God anyway, it was just this whole transcendental load of crap perpetuated by men afraid of getting castrated if they didn't keep their women down, and she found that idea the least appealing of all, she thought she wanted a God, she wanted him big and omniscient and transcendental as all *get* out and she wanted him in her husband's corner and she thought she'd do just fine as the Son of Satan, castrated in the most beautiful way, and the sword she'd yield in the fight would be much more dangerous, yes, much more deadly, and sure as shooting a whole lot bigger than his.

*Betsy K. Ruppert*