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There is Something About Sarah

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I find something deeply disturbing about "that woman." It's interesting how many have taken to using that when referring to Sarah Palin.

It's not eerie inflections straight out of the movie, *Fargo*. It's not when she dropped her first nuc-u-lar, and my mind screamed "sweet lord, please, not four more years of mispronunciation of a force that could turn us all into cosmic lint."

It's not the odorous political flotsam that trails behind her -- the librarian incident, the trooper incident, the bridge to nowhere incident or anything else that might be discovered by the industrious dumpster-divers from the *National Enquirer*.

It's not just the fact that we have seen all this for eight torturous years.

Go down the line to your far right on every issue: gay rights, reproductive rights, stem-cell research, guns, Russia, Iran. She rewards her friends (without regard to qualification) and punishes her enemies (political or personal.) She insulates herself with a fleecy layer of friends, family and true believers who make sure that dissenting opinion and inconvenient reality do not intrude on her frontier certainty.

Know the difference between George Bush and Sarah Palin? Lipstick.

I can deal with all that.

What scared me as I listened to her tightly choreographed presentations -- and that includes the "Charlie" interviews -- is the sense of a cold and calculating soullessness, an inability to project the person beneath the politician because the person has been tossed overboard long ago.

I look in her eyes and get a feeling that, if you cross her, she would drop you as easily as she would a wolf from a helicopter.

What scares me even more is that she is all part of the plan. Maybe it's true that John McCain picked her in one of his maverick moments. It's more likely that they went out to find a gun toting, God-fearing woman who could get the conservative crazies off their backs and, with a little buffing and polishing, might even bring some wandering Hillary women into camp.

They found a narrative, subtracted and added as needed, wound her up and sent her straight at us -- political baggage, obvious inexperience and all -- saying: "Go ahead. Try to stop her."

Credit due, she has played the part beautifully -- hot chick and tough cookie. Even *Real Time* host Bill Maher seems thrown off his usually reliable game. He admitted that he was so unnerved by Palin's convention speech that, even though he doesn't make political donations, he cut a check for Obama that night. Said Maher: "She is scary."

At the Convention, she let her newborn be passed around like a bong at Snoop Dog's House. She allowed the very private act of sending her oldest son off to war into a photo op. She will continue to say she killed the bridge -- like Bush said Saddam and Bin Laden were racquetball buddies -- until enough people believe it.

She is tough, calculating, photogenic and female. Unless we want to see her a septuagenarian heartbeat away from the presidency, we best take her seriously.