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Hoes and Heroin

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It was late afternoon, around 2:00 and Eugene was still asleep. The room he slept in was filthy. The secluded window had an old blue sheet covering it and the place reeked of mildew and cigarette smoke. The lack of adequate lighting created a dungeon like atmosphere. The walls were barren except for the cracking wallpaper and the infamous melting clocks painting by Salvador Dali. The carpet had turned a dingy tan-brown color from all the empty beer cans and food scraps lying around. Three of his six-toed cats ran across the room and leapt on his bed.

Yawning, he gradually awoke from his slumber on the lone frameless and sheet less mattress tucked in the corner of the room. He sat up and slid to the edge of the bed, accidentally knocking off the framed photograph of his ex-wife. Leaning over, he grabbed the dope and syringe from under the bed and snatched the rusty old spoon. Pushing his long dark brown hair away from eyes he sprinkled the powder on it; cooking it down until it was thick liquid. He then removed his belt, pulling it tighter and tighter around his left arm. He sucked the liquid into the syringe, thumped the cylinder, and tapped his vein. Poking the needle in his arm he pushed the plunger down and fell back onto the bed-- eyes dilated with needle nestled in arm. In state of euphoria he cried.
out words to his ex-wife, “Baby I'll be with you soon, I'll never forget ya, I swear.”

Minutes later he regained some composure and took out the guitar he played religiously every day. He meticulously checked every string making sure it was in pristine tuning. Flipping through his notebook of songs, He decided that emulating some jazzy/blues chords into his new songs would be a great idea. While practicing a new song he wrote his roommate barged in the room. Adrien noticed the drug paraphernalia lying on the floor and shouted. “You fucking cheapskate. Get your own shit, man! This is the last time you shoot up my stuff without pitching in.”

High and preoccupied with his guitar Eugene paid little mind to Adrien’s outburst.

“Dude,” Eugene uttered, “I just re-upped last night so quit yer bitching and take a bump.”

Adrien noticed the bag was larger, “Sorry man. I thought you’d used it all up.”

He sat next to Eugene and prepped up for his turn. As he cut the powder into a pencil thick line he thought for a moment and exclaimed, “Wait a minute, where’d you get the money for it? We’ve got to somehow pay next month’s rent or else get evicted.”

“No worries man, I slept with that slutty girl from the gig the other night.”

“Candy? “

Laughing Eugene replied, “Yeah.”

What does she got ta do with the money you spent?”

“Well, if you’d let me finish dude, I was going to tell
you she’d a batch last night. While she was sleeping I took us a cut. She was folded hard last night; no way she’ll remember.”

Eugene went back to plucking on the guitar. Adrien meanwhile snorted his line and melted back onto the bed.

Eugene woke up on Tuesday and found his stash dwindled down to nothing. So instead he reached for the pot. Carefully picking out all the seeds and stems, he rolled an exceptionally well crafted joint. The smell reminded him of the first time he met Candy. It was about two months ago backstage at Joe’s Bar before one of his shows. She was dressed extremely slutty that night with red high heels, fishnet stockings, and a black leather one piece outfit. She confronted him first asking him to join her for a joint. They went to the bathroom, smoked, and consummated with dirty bar bathroom sex.

“Damn, I gotta go back to that dirty bitch’s house.” Eugene put the joint out in an old Papst Blue Ribbon can on the floor and left for Candy’s apartment. The library was on the way, so he decided to stop and check out a book he wanted entitled *In the Penal Colony* by Franz Kafka. He recently purchased Frank Zappa’s, “Lumpy Gravy”, and noticed reading the lyrics, a short instructional passage linking the book’s importance to the album. If he wasn’t getting high or playing his guitar he was reading. He would go to the library and spend hours reading poetry and stories. On several occasions the library would close and the security guard would have to ask him to leave. He arrived at Candy’s apartment, rang the doorbell, and
knocked twice to no avail. Deciding to wait in the hallway until she returned, he slumped down next to the weathered door and lit a cigarette. Smoke filled the hallway as he puffed cigarette after cigarette. Moments later disturbing images raced through his mind, a daydream of dead baby fetuses. Anger filled his heart.

“God, you're a sick man you know that? You're probably a fucking sick and twisted little boy with a magnifying glass. How about you quit hiding and show yourself, huh. Speak to me or leave me be, quit toying with my life you bastard puppet master.”

One of his favorite poems was *The Chimney Sweeper*, and calming himself down he started reciting the first verse.

“When my mother died I was very young,  
And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry ‘Weep! weep! weep! weep!’  
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.”

High school is where he first learned of Mr. Blake and now facilitated thoughts of his teenage years crept in his head. He recalled his time in high school, which was spent mostly in the writing center and art department. Reminiscing on how he strayed away from the normal educational curriculum, seeking out instead writers and artist that intrigued him.

About an hour passed and Candy finally returned. “Eugene, I’m surprised to see you so soon.” She had a gleaming smile on her face as she put the keys in the doorknob and unlocked the door. “Come on in, I
was disappointed to find you gone Sunday morning, I was hoping I'd see you again.”

Eugene gently scratch his scraggily beard and gazed about the room,

“Well I'm out of smack and my roommate is low on cash, so I thought I’d come over and see if you’d front me a couple of G’s. I'll hit you back with the cash on Friday after the show.”

Candy knew all along why he had came to her but didn’t want him to know she knew.“Why should I front it to you, what's in it for me?”

Not at all surprised by her request Eugene replied, “Look, girl you’ll never understand the stress and pain I've been through. I ain’t gonna lie there’s nothing really in it for you.”

Candy looked at him confused, “How’s your life more stressful or painful than anybody else's? Huh? You sit around in your apartment all day and do nothing. You know what, to be honest I’m actually quite dry right now, but my bedroom could serve as a stress reliever. What’d ya say?”

She began to remove her shirt but Eugene stopped her.

“No that’s not what I came here for, I came for the smack. You don’t understand what it’s like to be me. I'm having an extremely difficult time dealing with some shit right now.”

She stopped unbuttoning her shirt, “Alright, alright, jeez calm down there haus. Now, just tell me what's on your mind.”

Looking down at the floor Eugene reluctantly
confided in her, “Well last year my wife had a miscarriage and lost her life.”

Candy’s eyes were reminiscent of a deer in the head lights, “I’m so sorry that happened to you, tell you what, have sex with me again and I’ll give you what’s left of my stash. Sound good?”

Eugene stood up from the chair he was sitting in and shouted, “No you nymph whore, I’m tired of having of my recent sex escapades with women, just front me some fucking heroin.”

She unbuttoned her shirt and exposed her breasts, “Come on Eugene you know you want it.”

Slowly grasping both breasts, she squeezed and flopped them together and about, “Heroin lies at the end of this rainbow, baby.”

“Fuck, why is everything about sex with you?” Fighting off his sexual urges, he clutched Candy by both arms and spat in her face. He stormed out the apartment emptied handed.

It was midnight and he was walking through the alley when he spotted a strung out pregnant woman smoking a Virginia Slim 120, drooped against the brick wall. His mind played back women in his life. Unable to remember the night he spent with the hippy, who lived on 9th and Hennepin, the beautiful brunette he met after a show, or the sixteen year old girl who lied about her age. What he did remember; however, was the pain his wife went through while clutching his hand, and the lifeless expression on her face in the moments after she passed. Even remembering the flat they picked out on the east side of town, and the room in which, Kayla, their daughter
would have slept in. He tried not to remember those things.

When he returned home Adrien was passed out on the kitchen floor.

“Really, again? How many times are you gonna O.D. dude, fuck!” Reaching in the cabinet drawer he grabbed an adrenaline shot and ran over to Adrien. He knelt down beside him and checked his pulse. It was faint. He ripped Adrien’s shirt off and found the center of his heart. Immediately after the needle pierced the breastplate Adrien shot up and gasped for air. “Jesus Christ man you scared the shit out of me”, Standing up Eugene looked at the mirror on the counter top which they always used to cut their lines out onto. It was littered with white speckles. How much did he do at once he thought? Staring at the substance, he contemplated what Adrien told him earlier in the week and the situation at hand. His nose inched closer and closer, then the distinguished smell suddenly struck him. It sent his brain receptors into overdrive. Teasing Eugene, his body drifted into a false sense of euphoria and thus he took the razor blade and scrapped together a pinkie sized line and snorted it all in one breath.