

One

A small white dog, trailing his leash from his collar, came up to me and dropped half of a dead lizard at my feet. We were in the cafeteria at the old campus for the fundraiser. It was for the English Department; that's why the old campus. Had we been the Business School, we would've been across town in one of the shiny new buildings.

The dog was Professor Martin's, I was sure. He brought the damn thing to class every day. He was tenured and so never bothered to learn any new rules. Apparently when he started teaching here in 1947, he was allowed to bring whatever pet he desired to his classes. Old habits, he was wont to say.

I hated that dog. It barked incessantly during class, which was a pain as I taught three classes next door to Martin. He was deaf and didn't hear it barking. He also only gave A's to his students because he was going blind and refused a TA, so he couldn't read any papers anyway. The kids loved his class. They mostly had their headphones in during class.

The fundraiser was for wider parking spaces in the teacher's lot, I think. Something ridiculous, no matter what it was, because we had enough funding for our department. All I knew at that moment was I had dead lizard on my only good pair of dress shoes. I apologized to whomever I was with, picked up the thing with my napkin and went outside.

I walked to the parking lot and put the lizard in Professor Martin's car. He left his windows rolled down whenever he arrived on campus. No one quite knew why. As I walked back I noticed the parking spaces could be bigger, then I saw what looked like two people in the botany lab in the science wing.

I went inside and clicked on the light. It was two of my students in varying degrees of undress atop the lab table. Like cockroaches, they scurried about when the room was illuminated, panicking as they redressed.

‘Sorry, Prof,’ said Jeremy. He was in my Monday Wednesday, Friday class on the Romantics and had evidently done his homework. ‘The party was really dull.’

Gina, his date, was in my Tuesday, Thursday American Lit class. She asked, ‘You gonna tell anyone, Mr. Scott?’

I bent down and picked up Gina’s shirt and handed it to her. ‘No, Gina,’ I said after a moments contemplation. They were sweating, either from their exertion or my pause. ‘Just head back to the dorms right quick and try and stay out of the science labs for this sort of thing from now on. Okay?’

They both thanked me profusely as they put on their shoes and left. I looked across the walkway to the fundraiser and saw Professor Martin. He now had the leash to his dog, but no dog. I laughed and lit a cigarette.

‘Mind if I steal one of those?’ a voice asked from behind me.

I turned and saw someone I knew. ‘Sam,’ I said. ‘Hi.’

She took a cigarette from my pack and lit it with my lighter. I apparently hadn’t moved, so she did all the work. ‘Been a while,’ she said.

Two

Sam and I had taken a psychology class together in college and hadn’t seen each other since. She was hot and I was a nobody. We flirted a bit, but nothing ever came of it. And here we are, twelve years later. And I thought I wasn’t memorable.

Three

It turns out Sam had only remembered me because one of the other professors at the fundraiser tonight had pointed me out as single and she strained and strained until she found out why I looked so familiar. We had collaborated on a paper for that psych class. She got an A. That's why she remembered.

Four

I was flabbergasted. It was not what I was expecting from this evening and had no expectations on how to proceed. So instead I simply said, 'Hi, Sam.' It was a work of art.

'Hi, yourself,' she said in return, taking a drag from her purloined cigarette. 'You look good.'

'Likewise, Sam. What brings you to our parking lot fundraiser?' I threw down my cigarette butt and stamped it with my foot.

'I'm one of the new English Associates,' she said. 'Is this really for the parking lot?'

I shook my head. 'I dunno,' I told her. 'The department head tends to mumble a lot.'

We stood outside smoking for five more minutes, staring into each other's eyes, remembering (fondly, I'd hoped) our school days together. There was a silence which permeated the air, but was interrupted by a sharp barking.

It was, of course, Professor Martin's dog, that tenured son of a bitch. Sam and I looked away from one another and toward the sound of the barking dog, stamping out our cigarettes in unison. Sam broke our silence first. 'I guess we should go back in to the parking spaces party,' she said, with a wisp of a smile curling her lips upward. 'Wanna buddy up?' she suggested.

I agreed. 'Might make this party go a little faster with a pretty face to keep me company,' I said. She smiled. I dug around in my pocket and found a package of mints and offered her one. She only opened her mouth as an acceptance. I place one on her tongue and she closed her lips around my finger. I slowly removed it, taking my time, feeling the warmth of her mouth.

Five

We walked the party for another hour, her arm wrapped around mine. We talked to the Dean, who was glad I was being so welcoming to the new hires. I desperately wanted to know what this fundraiser was for, but couldn't quite muster the courage to ask. The Dean, Nimitz, was four years sober and was working, unsuccessfully, I might add, on his third marriage.

You could ask me now, how I knew it was unsuccessful, this third marriage. My reply would be two fold. First, he spent our entire conversation staring at Sam's breasts. Second, and perhaps most importantly, I had earlier walked in on his wife and the maître d otherwise engaged in one of the men's room stalls.

Sam pinched my arm and made a gesture which suggested we leave as quickly as possible. I apologized to the Dean and told him I had promised Sam a tour of our departmental offices. He looked crestfallen he could no longer stare at her, but contained his disappointment when I told him Professor Alexi's 23 year old model wife was waiting by the buffet line. With barely a word to us, he was over across the room staring at her breasts.

Six

Sam and I opted to skip the tour of the offices. Looking back on what happened instead, I think I would've preferred the office. We walked around the party for a few minutes, not to look like we hurried off for less than altruistic purposes. We said quick hellos, quick goodbyes and even some quick, well don't you look greats.

We went outside into the crisp air; it was late March. I put my coat around Sam and leaned in and kissed her. Our lips met and parted, our tongues seeking each other in the nighttime air. We separated and our foreheads met, our eyes locked. We both smiled and nipped a small brush of lips.

‘Let’s go to my place,’ she said.

Seven

We made it to my car and that’s about it. The engine was on, but we sat in the front seat, our lips locked in an embrace. Our hands explored each other’s bodies as it lightly started to rain outside. AS far as either one of us was concerned, there was no outside world. There was only the moment we were sharing inside. Sam tore away from me and looked at me with her bedroom eyes.

‘Let’s get the hell out here and somewhere more comfortable.’

I’ve never said yes faster in my life. I put the car into reverse and hit the gas.

There was a thump for which I was unprepared. I hadn’t parked near anything or so I thought.

‘What was that?’ Sam asked, looking out the back window. ‘Did we hit somebody?’

‘I didn’t see anyone back there,’ I said as I unbuckled and opened my door. I walked around to the back of my car and something I never wanted to see in my life. ‘Shit,’ I said under my breath.

Sam came around the back of the car and let out a small shriek when she saw it. I walked over it and held her for a second. ‘Is it dead,’ she asked.

‘I think so,’ I told her and bent down to check. Yes, it was dead. That damned dog of Professor Martin’s. I had run over the fucking thing with my car.

Eight

‘We have to do something with it,’ Sam said confidently, any trace of shakiness or fear had left her. I think that was the moment I fell in love with her. ‘We need to get it the hell out of here and fast.’

I looked at her intensely. I had no reply to what she had said; I was simply mesmerized by her, by the beautiful woman before me.

‘What?’ she asked.

I leaned in and kissed her, deeply, taking in her warm breath. It was still only sprinkling rain outside but our heads were getting wet. I put my forehead to hers and closed my eyes. I had never been happier than I was with Sam, standing over a dead dog I had accidentally killed only moments earlier. ‘Help me with this thing,’ I said and took my jacket off her shoulders.

‘Hey!’ she exclaimed, ‘I’ll get cold out here in the rain.’

‘Sorry,’ I said, ‘But Martin doesn’t stay long at these things. And if the dogs not with him, he’ll be out looking for it.’

‘What are we going to do with it?’

I place my jacket on the ground and carefully rolled the dog into it. I closed the flaps of the lapels and tied the arms together to create some sort of body bag with a strap. ‘That oughtta do it,’ I said, with grim and smug satisfaction, standing up.

‘Well, where do we put it now?’ Sam asked.

I had just the place.

Nine

Remember - Professor Martin always leaves the windows of his car down; no one quite knows why. We suspect he just doesn't give a damn about the interior getting wet. Still, no one knows and no one cares. His car gets wet, he bitches, does it again the next time it rains.

Tonight, however, his stubborn refusal to be dry as he drives in the rain came in handy for those of us who seem to have killed his dog. I lifted the make-shift bag made out of my coat containing the dog and walked over to Martin's car a few aisles over. Sam was right behind me.

'Are you sure about this?' she asked me, moving up beside me, to the side without the dead dog bag.

I took her hand in mine and smiled at her. 'Darlin,' I said, 'I don't have a better idea and we gotta do this quick.'

She nodded and put her head on my shoulder. We arrived at Martin's car. There was a half-eaten lizard in the back seat. I not-so-carefully threw the dog in the back with the lizard, remembering to keep my jacket with me. Using my jacket, I arranged the dog so he looked like he was sleeping - on his belly with one paw situated under his chin.

'There,' I said and turned back to Sam.

'You look like you've done this before,' she mused.

'Well, never with a dog,' I replied, trying to hide a smile. 'What do we do now?'

'Let's go back to the party and get a drink,' Sam said. 'Let's get a little drunk before we go home,' she told me and kissed me.

Ten

We stood at the bar watching all the people come and go. We avoided eye contact with others, lest our faces give away what we'd done. Professor Martin was looking for his dog. Sam and I avoided him and ducked into the coat closet.

I kissed her, tasting her drink, feeling her tongue massage mine. I squeezed her breast and she grabbed my crotch. 'We've got to get the hell out of here,' she said. We kissed a little longer, feeling each other's bodies.

We left the coat room and walked around the party again, this time saying actual goodbyes. We walked out the main doors and out into the air. It was again only sprinkling. Small droplets of rain covered our lips as we kissed.

We heard a scream come from the parking lot. Three aisles in, I saw. Many others came rushing out of the fundraiser having heard the scream. They didn't know what we knew.

'I guess he found it,' Sam said and took my hand in hers. We walked slowly down the stairs toward the parking lot.

We stopped at the bottom of the stairs and looked up at the sky. The light rain had stopped and the clouds had moved on quickly. We saw the stars come out, twinkling one by one. Sam looked back down at me and brought her face to mine, letting our lips meet in passion. We eventually broke the kiss.

'Let's get out of here,' I said.

And we did.