

Hotel Pugmarks

Laying naked on the bed in his hotel room, he listened to the rain outside, the drizzle dashing against the windowpanes.

A woman he did not know lay beside him. She was naked too. They had just had a round of sex. She lay motionless, half asleep, her arms and thighs huddled against him. Her touch seemed feral and dusty yet it left a gossamer feel on his skin. She smelled of sadness.

He rolled out of the bed, put on an old robe, lit a cigarette and walked up to the window. He tried to look outside, but couldn't see beyond the drool on the glass. He ran a finger on the surface of the pane. A fat line appeared on the glass, scraping away the moisture.

The woman had her eyes open now. She had frizzled hair, a black nest, and a pale white face. A pearl string collared her neck. He ran his fingers through his thick hair. Then he sat down on the sofa and picked up the cigarette pack from the table. He crossed his legs and lit a cigarette. It was quiet, except for the rain's pitter-patter outside. He looked at the trail of smoke emerging from the cigarette lodged between his two fingers.

"Can I have a smoke?" the woman said.

"Sure," he said, tilting his head to her side. He flicked the pack of cigarettes and a book of matches toward her. It fell on the bed at a distance from her. The sheet fell off her bosom as she reached for the cigarettes. Her large breasts drooped. Was it because of age or overuse, he asked himself. Must be overuse, he thought, because she couldn't be more than twenty-five.

He watched her as she smoked. She had long, slender fingers, her fingernails polished deep violet. He liked her lips, which were like Michelle Pfeiffer's. He had always fancied such a mouth and she had it.

He had picked her up in the hotel lobby. He was a salesman and was on a tour. Whenever he came to this area, he stayed in this hotel. The hotel manager knew him well. Today he had picked up this girl for her Michelle Pfeiffer lips.

She got down from the bed and walked to him with a swing, naked,

with the cigarette between her lips. As she walked, her bosom heaved, her pelvis bopped. She stopped before him, resting an arm on her hip.

"Can I have a drink?" she said, her eyes squinting.

A cloud of smoke screened her face. He nodded and said, "Sure. Help yourself."

"What about you?" she said.

"Yeah. Good, thanks" he said.

She strolled down to the mini bar in a corner of the room. She began pouring the drink in two glasses. He gazed at her back. She was tall and slim, yet had a sensuously plump butt. Her thighs were healthy and her shins stout. He thought about his wife. He tried to think of her body but he could not recollect any thing. He had forgotten how she looked stripped. He tried to remember her face. Even that seemed vague, non-descript, faded. She must be asleep or watching TV with the kids, he thought.

"Have," she said, shoving a glass to his lips.

"Oh, thanks," he said, holding the glass in his hand.

"What's on your mind, boy?"

"Ah, nothing."

She sat beside him and touched her glass to his cheek.

"Cheers!"

"Cheers!"

He took a sip and then put the glass down. He then took a deep puff. He reached for a cover from the bed, pulled it off and put it on her bare body.

"Thanks," she said, huddling herself under the sheet's warmth. A crimson wave flashed across her face. She was a shy hooker, he thought.

"Pretty unusual," he muttered to himself.

"Excuse me?" she said.

"Oh, nothing. Just blabbed. An old habit," he said, lighting another cigarette. "By the way, what's your name?"

He just wanted to have a little conversation with her to drive the melancholy out of the room.

"Is it the sadness of sinning? Are all sins sad like this?" he wondered.

"We don't give away our real names in this business," she said, with a teasing grin on her face. "But you can call me Lily."

"Lily. That's fine," he said. "I like you Lily."

"Thanks," she said, her Michelle Pfeiffer's lips touching the brim of her glass. "May I know why you like me?"

"You are kind of sweet and shy, and you don't blabber on, that's what I like in you," he said. He thought of telling her how he felt about her lips. But he shrugged off the idea. He need not seduce a paid girl.

She inched closer to him and put her hand under his robe. He eased himself and let his neck rest against the sofa. He liked what she was doing with his body.

"You mind if I ask you something?" she asked. Her voice was gentle and mellow, and almost melancholic.

"Go ahead," he said without disturbing his pose. He had his eyes closed now. Her fingers were weaving magic on him.

"Tell me something; something from your life that kicked your ass," she said.

"Okay—but what kind of stuff you want to hear about: funny, schmaltzy, horrific, weird..."

"Horrific and weird, I'd go for that," she said.

He fell silent for a moment and raked up his memory for a story. He remembered a childhood event.

Her hand was on his crotch now.

He began narrating the most horrific and weird event he remembered from his life: "It so happened once that I was"

It had happened when he was a kid. He lived with his parents on a farmhouse. There were fields and trees all around the house. It was almost like living in the wild. One day about noon, while it was raining, he got out of the house looking for his dog. The dog, a pug, had this habit of sneaking out of the house and running around in the fields. So he put on a raincoat, and went looking for his dog. He did not notice he had come far away from his house. Running in the vast open field, he called out for his pet. Soon he got tired of running and calling. He sat down on his haunches under a tree. Fat drops of rainwater hit his coat. Suddenly he saw a tiny figure in the distance approaching him. He waited for that tiny thing to come within his clear sight so that he could recognize it. The rain had blurred the view.

"And it was your doggie," she said, interrupting him. She held him in her hand.

"No, it wasn't my doggie," he said.

"Then must be a cat or a wolf."

"No, wrong again. It was not a cat or a wolf; it was a strange creature."

"Strange in what way?"

"It was sort of a dwarfish character with long flowing hair—like a woman. It had a black robe on it. And the strangest thing was the rain was not drenching her hair. It was rather flowing as if someone was blowing it for her.

"And it scared the shit out of me. I'd this feeling that it was heading for me with a sinister motive."

"And then you waited to see it in full?"

She slipped between his legs and took him in her mouth.

"Ah!" he let out a grunt of pleasure. She looked up at him with her big

black eyes. "No way. I ran away like hell, like never before, and did not look back till I was inside my home."

He could remember his heart beating madly when he had made it to his house. Despite the rain he was bathed in sweat.

She looked up again and chuckled at him. There was froth around her lips.

"Did you find your pet then?" she said.

"No. I never found it," he said, with a ring of sadness in his voice. "I cried for a few days about my pug but dad gave me a new dog and it was all forgotten. End of the story. "

She raised her eyebrows as if in appreciation of the story.

He forgot everything as her sucking intensified. He turned firmer and firmer and his body began to throb with pleasure. No sooner he was to hit the apex of ecstasy than she pulled him out of her mouth. He sighed with pleasure, almost exploding. But he managed to hold himself.

"Ah! Honey, that was great," he said.

Her mouth was full of saliva. She got up and gesticulated that she'd go to the bathroom and come back. He nodded. She dropped the sheet from her body and walked seductively to the bathroom, looking back at him with drunken glances.

He was joyful with the treatment he was getting from her. "I'd pay her double than agreed," he thought.

He stood up from the sofa and staggered to the bed. He was still stiff between his legs. He took off the gown, flung it on the sofa, and tossed himself on the bed. The mattress bounced him up gently. He slipped beneath a sheet. He felt buoyed up by desire.

He heard water run in the bathroom. He closed his eyes and waited for her. He could hardly wait and began the count down: thirty, twenty-nine, twenty-eight.... Half a minute passed like this. She did not come back.

"How long will she take to piddle?" he muttered to himself. He got

restless. "Is she putting on lipstick? Is she combing her hair?"

He turned over and squeezed himself between his thighs. Then he began another countdown: sixty, fifty-nine, fifty-eight...

A minute passed. She hadn't come yet. He was flaccid by now and more than that he was pissed off.

"Fucking whore," he said and got up on the bed.

"Lily!" he sounded out. "What the fuck are you doing there?"

Lily did not reply. He touched himself with a distasteful sigh.

"Honey, come over fast," he said. "I'm sagging, baby."

Still there was no reply from the bathroom. He got puzzled. "God forbid, has she passed out or something?"

With measured steps, he walked to the bathroom. He thought he'd give her a piece of his mind if she were sitting on the pot just like that, sleeping or drugging herself.

The bathroom door was half open. He put his head inside and for a moment his heart stopped. There was no one there. He pushed the door further and it creaked open and touched the wall. He looked behind the toilet seat. There was nothing. The window on the wall was perfectly bolted. He looked into the toilet bowl. The frothy water still bobbed. There was a putrid stench in the room. He moved back from the pot and looked up at the ceiling. There was nothing unusual there. Then he looked down at the floor. What he saw was enough to blast his heart with one hundred cannons. He saw little dog prints on the floor.

Suddenly he felt feeble as if blood had drained out of his body. It seemed as if he'd fall down on the floor.

Five minutes later he was walking down the lobby with his suitcase. He reached the check out counter and asked the clerk to settle the bill.

The hotel manager greeted him. He was taking a round of the lobby.

"Checking out? I thought you'd stay till morning, sir," he said.

"Yeah. Something urgent. Got a call from home," he said sheepishly.

He started for the main door and the manager walked along with him. He was wondering what to do now. I'll have to find another hotel, he thought. The manager stared at him through his glasses with a fixed smile on his lips.

Then he thought about Lily. A cold wave of fear ran through him.

"May I ask you something?" he said hesitantly, stopping at the gate.

"Yes, sure," the manager said.

"Do you know a hooker called Lily?" he said.

The manager stood thinking for a moment. Then he laughed and touched him on his back.

"Must be kidding, sir. I don't know a hooker called Lily," he said, still laughing. "But I knew a bitch with that name," he said, winking at him.

He ran the tip of his tongue on his lips.

"What do you know?" he said. "Tell me about that bitch."

The manager readjusted his glasses on the bridge of his nose.

"Legend has it that Lily jumped along with her lover, a former manager of this hotel, when he committed suicide by flinging himself down from the roof of this hotel," he said. "The only tragedy that ever occurred at this hotel."

"Did she love him a lot?" he said.

"Definitely, she did. She was mad about him, " the manager said.

"So, she was his wife. Or was she just a lover?" he asked.

At this, the manager again burst into laughter. He was short and fat and he held his belly as he laughed.

"What the hell! She was his pet dog," he said, trying to muffle his laughter. The muscles of his face were pulled in a strange manner.

He was stunned to hear this.

"You must be kidding," he said.

"No, I'm not!" the manager said, before turning back to the lobby. He was smiling.

"See you soon, sir," the manager said waving at him. He waved back feebly. In a parting glance he noticed the manager's teeth shining like golden fangs. Was he saw right what he saw just now or was he imagining things? He did not know for sure. He felt woozy.

A cold flush moved under his shirt. A strange smell attacked his nostrils: it was feral, earthy, and dusty. Taking slow steps, he went out of the hotel gate. It was still raining outside.

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