

Withdrawal Symptoms

Neil Puryear and Heather Carson had fucked after watching a movie on Neil's home system. The sex had been pretty good and the movie oddly interesting.

'Neil?'

'Yes, Heather?'

"Now I'm thinking about that movie we just saw.....with the girl psychopath who stalks an Instagram star and then things get weirder and weirder."

Neil was putting his clothes back on.

"What are you thinking about that movie. I thought it was okay, but derivative."

Heather brushed her trousers and combed her hair.

"Derivative? Well, maybe the teenage celebrity stalker movie has become a genre, I guess. But those people exist completely online..they're totally wired as the old song goes. I certainly know people like that'

Neil recognized the Fall song title that Heather was referencing.

'Like the Instagram star is famous only on Instagram. It's not as if she's a movie star or a pop singer.

Neil snorted. "Well, for some time there have been people who are famous merely for being famous. At least since Elizabeth Taylor."

Heather shook her head.

"Mind you, Heather, there is a major character in...what was it called...Ingrid Goes West...who is completely analogue. The Instagram star's husband is an analogue painter. Not unlike my recently deceased brother, except Scott was not an alcoholic."

"Yes, the alkie painter and also the coke head brother. But the stalker..the psycho....was not completely unlikable. At first, I thought why are we watching this shit. But then I figured the two young women were sort of mirror images"

Maybe", Neil was worried that Heather was going to mutate into a movie critic or an art critic. He knew she was a freelance photographer.

"Drinks?"

Heather assented as Neil poured two glasses of vin rouge.

"Also, Neil, the protagonist inherited a large sum of money from her grandmother. She cashed the cheque and never put any of that money in the bank."

"Well, she was unstable. With Hollywood as well as real life, what characters do with large sums of money indicates whether they're sane or insane."

She thought about this pronouncement. She thought of the fourty thousand dollar red herring in Psycho. The cops thought Perkins killed Janet Leigh for the stolen money. If Perkins didn't do it for the money, therefore he had to be nuts.

They sat at the kitchen table and sipped on their vin rouges.

"Neil?"

He nodded to her.

"How do you make money?"

He had hoped this question wouldn't come up just yet. He had Heather had dated off and on over the month and she hadn't pried into his finances until now.

"Well, Heather, I have a trust fund. Plus I do play the stock market."

She decided to not pursue this matter any further until later.

"Your brother, Nail, did his art sell?"

"No. Well for a while maybe five to ten years ago Scott's paintings were selling. But then something happened between Scott and his dealers."

"Not Taylor and Townshend?"

"Yes. Them.There's dick all in Scott's estate. Dick all."

Heather sipped at her glass of wine.

"Do you want another glass, Heather?"

"Not now, thanks. Too early."

He refrained from pouring himself a top up.

"Neil, Taylor and Townshend are in the news. Townshend was kidnapped. What the fuck is that all about?"

"Drugs, probably. Both partners are big coke heads. Townshend has money and Taylor's a parasite."

Was your brother a drinker or drug user?"

"No, Heather. He wasn't."

"Did he kill himself because he was broke?"

"You know what? You ask too many questions, Heather."

"Sorry".

They sat silently for at least a minute.

Do you want to hear some music?

"Sure, Surprise me."

Neil chose Patti Smith's Horses album, her first. He notice that Heather didn't seem to like it very much.

'Not your cup of tea?"

Heather shrugged. "It'll do. Old punks aren't really my favourite people."

"But Patti Smith can't be reduced to an old punk. ...I mean that was so long ago...that whole English versus New York who's more punk than who."

"Exactly, Neil. It was a long time ago."

Heather used the washroom and then put her coat on.

"You don't have to go now, do you Heather?"

She nodded "I have to start prepping for this shoot tomorrow. I have to photograph somebody who is more of an Instagram star than everything else they claim to be."

Who?"

"Sorry. It's confidential."

'Well then, bye for now. Let's see each other soon"

He rose, walked with her to the door, and kissed her.

She walked to her car. She would internally debate whether or not to see Neil Puryear again.

