

Withdrawal Symptoms

Neil killed time on Face Book while scowling.

That woman had had a nerve, pestering him about some discrepancy between the suicide note handwriting and Scott's everyday writing. Did she have no concept of how groggy, how stoned her brother would have been after swallowing all those antidepressants?

Who was she anyway, in addition to being a Nosey Parker?

Laura Sinclair's name didn't come up among his Face Book friends, so many of whom he had no idea who they actually were or what they did. Neil could have searched for her but he decided not to. He wanted no further contact with the woman, or her landlord friend.

Neil had contacted his lawyer...Bill Jennings. Bill had told him that Scott had died without a will or estate instructions. Neil was annoyed but not surprised. It was not as if his brother owned property.

What was to be done with Scott's paintings? Damn Taylor and Townshend for letting Scott go from their fucking gallery and in the process help make him suicidal. Perhaps some other art dealer might be interested in Scott's paintings? Didn't dead artists have currency?

Or...what about an auctioneer? That was making more sense.

Neil guessed that Scott's paltry bank account would be left to somebody, but whom? Or, it would be defaulted to the government since there was no will? Well, it wasn't exactly a significant amount of money.

Neil retrieved a CD of The Clash's Greatest Hits. When in doubt, fly back to 1976. Janie Jones, I'm So Bored With the USA, Career Opportunities, White Riot.....would anybody use that title today even though The Clash were anything but racist. And then Police and Thieves, their slower-tempo reggae cover.

He liked social punk, council-flat music even if Joe Strummer had been a diplomat's son. He disliked nihilist crap like The Sex Pistols, or that Toronto band The Scholars. He remembered their lead singer....Murder Mark. A drunken asshole shouting gibberish masking as anger.

And Scott had been so opposite from Neil in his musical tastes. Scott thought The Clash were just The Stones with a sore throat. Scott didn't like vocal music very much...he wasn't much of one for language. That's why he made those abstract paintings. What did they mean? Nothing.

Neil was supposed to get together with this woman Heather whom he had met at a friend's birthday party. But he didn't feel like seeing anybody, so he called her and requested a rain-check. She sounded disappointed, but that was her problem. Not his.