

A Remote Mind

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All of these years and she still can't look at me. After all we went through. After everything that happened between us, she can't bring herself to look at me. I wonder what I did to her. I guess I know but fuck it and fuck her.

"Hey! Hey Will, hold up! Will, is that you?"

I hear her voice. I can't believe I am still in love with her. I never could get her off of my mind. Why do I still give a damn about her? Why the fuck do I love her, still? Get out of my fucking head!

"Hey Will. Will, it's me Mary. I know you remember me. How are you? It has been forever since we've seen each other and you can't be more excited than that?"

"I'm sorry Mary. I thought that your voice was in my head. It has been forever, hasn't it?"

"Well, how have you been Willie? You look good. I can't believe you still have that hat. That's why I was certain it was you. Haha."

She snickered at me after all of these years, her eyes are still on the top of my head.

"I just can't let it go. It's still my favorite hat. And I'm doing well Mary. I can't complain. How have you been? You still look fucking amazing."

"Watch your mouth Willie. You still have that potty mouth. What are you up to right now? Let's catch up for a bit. You have a little time don't you?"

I probably should not accept her invitation. I don't have anything significant planned today. I am just out looking for a good cup of coffee. I have time for her.

"Well I was just going to grab a cup of coffee. You can

join me if you want.”

“That sounds great Willie. I don’t have to be back at work until two. Does this café serve food?”

“I know of one that does.”

“Ok sweet, Willie.”

I can’t believe I am walking with her to have coffee and lunch. I can’t believe that she works down here. I walk down this street everyday. She’s here everyday and we’ve never ran into each other. The world is really big.

“I didn’t know you worked downtown.”

Now she’s going to tell me where she works. I can’t believe I’m going to know where she works.

“I moved downtown about a month ago. I got a job assisting a local designer open up a shop on 6th and Los Angeles. Jonny Castellanos, have you heard of him?”

“I haven’t.”

“His dresses have been on the runway at the Grammys and the Oscars and many other award shows and events. He wants me to be his assistant designer. I don’t know if I should take the position because I am still working on my own line but it is a great opportunity. And he’s an amazing artist. I am so confused. The body is his canvas. His vision is outstanding. But he is own artist, you know? I want people to wear me. To understand how I see the body. So I’m going to be running his store. Downtown is a weird place, I am still trying to get used to it. ”

It’s like we have always been together. This is how she would talk to me when she came home from work. In our small

studio apartment, a shitty place. She still has her passion.

“What have you been up to Willie? You still at the same job? Are you still in school?”

“Yes to both. I’m still selling cell phones and I’m now working on my Master’s. I finally transferred to UCLA, where I got my bachelors, and I am still there. After all of those years at Los Angeles City College. I have been taking a lot of pictures and I have been painting much more. I am planning an exhibition of my work on Gallery Row. I have a few artists from all over town supporting the exhibition. Oh, well here’s the café. Have you ever been here?”

Hopefully she says no so I can tell her about all the cool places to eat and drink downtown. Maybe we can be in each other’s lives again and at least be friends. I hope I don’t talk too much like I always did, do. Damn, she still looks incredible. I bet her pussy still smells so sweet. I think I can smell it. I wonder if I can still get her as wet as I used to. She used to love when I fucked her. I loved fucking her.

“I told you that I am new to downtown. I haven’t been anywhere but work and home. Jonny usually cooks so I don’t eat out much.”

“Oh, I see.”

She has a fucking boyfriend and he’s in fashion. She doesn’t have a problem living with him. He’s probably in the closet, faggot.

“This place looks great Willie. The ambiance is welcoming.”

“Yeah I come here all the time, usually in the evenings after work or after a long day of painting. They have great coffee

and their food is incredible.”

“Willie what are you doing getting coffee right now? Do you have another job or something? How many cups have you had today?”

“This is going to be my first cup. I have been painting all morning. I am still getting ready for the exhibition. I want it to be ready in time for the next art walk. I only work three days a week if that. I survive on my art. I can only afford coffee and paint after paying all of my bills.”

“I was going to say that you have lost a lot of weight Willie. You need to start eating more. Have you just been painting and drinking coffee all of these years? But congratulations on the exhibition. You’ve made a lot of progress. You should give me more details about the show and maybe I’ll stop by. ”

She still has a problem with my art. But she is a bit more encouraging. Maybe she is being condescending. She’s good at that.

“Yes I have. That’s all I ever want to do. And of course, my exhibition is going to be at the old Bang Gallery on 4th and Spring, next Thursday at 8:00PM. I hope I don’t die before my first exhibition. That’s usually how my life works.”

“You still possess that very dark sense humor Willie and I still love it.”

“Why is that dark?”

“That’s all you want to do? Is drink coffee and paint? You hope you don’t die in a week? There is more pleasure in life than that. You can’t just be interpreting Willie, you have to be doing. You’re a fabulous painter and I understand, now, that you’ll be a painter your entire life but it’s okay to take a break and become

inspired. Dream bigger.”

I know that she has said these same words to me before. I am essentially an underachiever.

She always told me I was underachieving like I didn’t know that I was. Like underachieving isn’t a choice. I still love that she still cares.

“I am always painting so I am always inspired. I never paint unless inspired. We order here at the counter then we can sit wherever we want. I’ll take a cup of coffee. Do you know what you want yet Mary?”

“Yes. I’ll have your seasonal fruit bowl with strawberry Greek yogurt and a Blue Moon. Willie it’s too late in the day for a cup of coffee. Grab a beer, on me.”

“Why thank you Mary Berry. I’ll take a shot of Glenlivet 12 year.”

“I haven’t heard that name in years. Haha. I can see you still like to Irish up your coffee as well. I guess the good things never change.”

I can’t tell if she is being condescending again or generally supportive. She is drinking a beer at 12:30PM. It’s okay to drink after noon you always adhere to the rules.

“Yeah, liquid inspiration. I have been drinking all morning. Johnnie Walker has a hold on me.”

“I know you’ve been drinking Willie. I can smell it on your breath. You can afford coffee, paint, and whiskey too. You’ve moved up to Johnny Walker, huh? At least you’re not drinking, what was it? Evan Williams? That bottom shelf garbage you used to come home with. That means you’re making some

money.”

She always talked about money even more than she talked about herself or talked down on me. Her faggot boyfriend probably has a lot of it.

“I am surviving the best I can. Let’s sit outside. It’s a beautiful day.”

“It is a beautiful day, isn’t it? I am glad I ran into Willie. You changed your phone number so I couldn’t get into contact with you but I was wondering if you still had my iPod? I know it’s an awkward request after all of this time and you probably pawned it or sold it on Craigslist but it would be nice if you still had it. We have a lot of work to do at the new shop and it would be nice to have my own music to listen to.”

She flagged me down for an iPod? This spoiled, high maintenance dumb ass bitch that I love for some dumb ass reason. She saw me and thought of her iPod, only. After a six year relationship that is all I am. I have prevented her from denying the sounds of the world, of the universe. Why hasn’t she bought a new one already? She doesn’t have an iPhone or some shit? I bought the iPod for her. She didn’t want anything from me in the end and now she wants music. I am still glad I am here with her. Anything she wants, still.

“Yeah I still have it. I left it at home today for some reason. I usually have it with me but today I just forgot or didn’t think to bring it. I probably wouldn’t have heard you calling my name earlier. Good thing I forgot it. Isn’t it?”

I wish I had brought it so I didn’t have to see her again.

“That would have been convenient Willie. I’m glad that you did forget it though. You wouldn’t have heard me, even

though I grabbed your shoulder. And we wouldn't be sitting here having this conversation. This is nice."

"Yeah. How is your fruit bowl and yogurt?"

"It's delicious! This place is great. I love that they have a full bar as well. I've had a couple myself this morning. Every hour not drinking isn't worth living. Haha."

She always hated my drinking. Now she's an alcoholic stealing my axioms of alcoholism. I need more Glenlivet.

"Another round on me Mary."

"Let's do it!"

I wish she really wanted me to take her to the bathroom of this café and fuck her brains out. Let's do it baby. Let's fucking do it.

"Awesome! Do you want another Blue Moon? Or do you want something else?"

"JC loves Glenlivet too. We drink that and MaCallans all of the time. I'll take a glass of 18 Year Glenlivet neat and another Blue Moon, as well. Thank you Willie."

"Cool. I'll be right back."

I cannot believe that I am here with the love of my life. Drinking with her and buying her drinks again. She sucks but I love her. She orders an 18 Year and another Blue Moon on me? That's already double what she paid for both of us. She is not my girlfriend anymore. I know I still love her but damn she can still spend my money. She is still worth it.

“Here you go. You drink better than me now.”

Maybe a few more and she’ll fuck me.

“Well, the student surpasses the teacher sometimes.”

And sometimes the teacher fucks the student.

“I can’t explain it but our meeting once again reminds me of this old man I always see on the bus. I see this old man everyday on my way to class. An old cantankerous and ornery black man who got on at the same stop as me. He always stands at the doorway in the rear of the bus shouting at the bus driver. Shaking his cane and his fists, waving his briefcase at the bus driver. No matter how short or long the bus he always stood in the furthest rear exit, shouting, refusing to adjust the volume in his voice to the size of the bus. To the old man every bus had three doors and six wheels. I rarely heard what he was shouting. Actually, the very first time I noticed the old man was the only time I ever heard him speak. The very first time I saw him, before I placed my headphones over my ears he shouted, ‘This nigga can’t drive the bus because he’s too busy talking to that nigga. If I was driving this mother fucking bus everybody on this mother fucking bus would be where they had to be.’ I always saw him but never heard him after that. I saw how demonstrative he was and could probably replicate his mannerisms but I never heard him. I think most people on the bus just tuned him out. No one aboard the bus reacted to his words not even the different bus drivers. No one cared what he had to say or what he did. He was just there, no matter how animated he became, no matter how visibly furious. Thanks to your iPod I never heard anyone or anything but the music. I was estranged from the world, a sullen but necessitated remoteness. I can’t wait to hear what else he has to say.”

“You can bring the iPod by the shop on 6th and Los Angeles. It’s right on the southeast corner. Thank you and thank you for the drinks. I have to get back to work but maybe I’ll see you around again soon. I truly do miss your little stories. You should have been a writer, maybe. Take care, Willie.”

She still needs something from me. She still loves me.