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Blue Eyes

Beep beep. Beep beep. Beep beep. A dog barks somewhere close. Beep beep. Beep beep. Beep beep. It must be 4:30 in the morning. I open my eyes and rub my sore lower back and shoulders. I am in a back alley. Every night I sleep somewhere different. But, I have to go. I need to be inside and get started by 5:00.

I walk out into the street. The city is still asleep. But, in a couple hours, it will be alive with the excitement of yellow taxi cabs, street vendors, and angry pedestrians. I like the calm of the early morning. It reminds me of peace, of my old life, before everything went to hell; before she left me.

I amble past the largest Macy's in the country, glancing inside, but I quickly stop my window shopping and push forward. I have a job to do. I look down at my wristwatch. 4:45. Shit, I need to get there. My back is wet with sweat as I briskly walk along the street.

I pass two men in matching sleek black suits with red ties. One of them has an earpiece and is furiously speaking. As I walk by them, the one without the piece gives me a sidelong glance and then quickly turns away as if he is ashamed of me. The other one on his phone stops talking as we pass, but resumes his rant as he moves past me, his eyes averted. I look back over my shoulder. The man with the earpiece has stopped walking and is staring at me with cold blue eyes.

Shivering, I turn away from him. Does he know? He can't know! Well he does know. Have plans changed? Is someone on to me? I am at my destination. I sigh and take a deep breath. It is 4:55. I got to get in there now! I look up and down the street. There is no one in sight. I casually walk up towards the building. I reach my hand down into the deep pocket of my rugged jeans. I grab out a piece of stale bread and chew on it hungrily. Reaching deeper in, I pull out a ring of keys. Which one is it? I take a large silver key and try it on the door. No, it doesn't work. I have to hurry up. I look down at my watch anxiously. I pick out a small golden key. No, not that one either. I am hysterical, trying each key on the ring. I push a medium sized golden key into the lock and turn it. The click of the door relieves my hysteria.

Inside the building I walk into a dimly lit, dirty corridor. I brush sweat off my brow and run my moist hands through my dirty blonde hair. Did the men in the suits see me walk inside? I don't trust them. They must have seen me! I anxiously move along the corridor, examining the minute details of my surroundings. This place is so grimy, covered in muck, dust, and cobwebs. It is as if it has been uninhabited for years. I cannot believe people had actually been in this very hallway two and a half days ago. And I had been here three and a half days ago. But, I had not finished my job. Well, I surely had not done a good job.

“Hey, hey Jake!”

I spin around, startled, perspiration pouring out of my body.

“Oh hey Paul,” I say.

“You ready?” he asks.

“Of course,” I say solemnly. “You do the north side of the building; meet you in the middle. We only have two hours before they come.”

Paul nods his head and gets to work. Beep beep. Beep beep. Beep beep. Oh no! It is 5:15 and I have not even started! I break into a sprint towards the room.

Once in the room, I gather a number of things that I need and then get to work. I labor quickly, moving rapidly through the hallway. I am tired, but I don't have time to rest. This needs to be done before they come. My mission is almost complete. I brush up and finish and then run over to the room and deposit everything, well almost everything.

As I walk out of the room, an older man with a dark blue suit walks towards me. He has graying hair, a thick mustache, and yellow teeth. I shudder. His movements make a loud clicking noise, almost the noise that high heels might make, from his dark brown shoes. He walks past me, not even noticing me. I am invisible to him. And I guess I am fine with that. The fewer people I acquaint myself with, the better!

A throng of people move through the front entrance into the hallway. A large number of teens walk past me sneering. A middle aged man in a suit follows them and gives me a nod. A small pale girl moves past me and smiles.

The building starts to fill up with all sorts of people. A middle sized woman wearing a conservative dark brown suit and high heels moves past me. As she clicks past, I watch her. She reminds me of my wife. Well, my ex, I should say. My wife was the one who taught me that business comes first. And after previous jobs, when she realized that I had adamantly listened to her, she in turn, followed her own business

advice and dropped me for some rich business executive. Last I heard of her, she had gotten a big fat raise and promotion from secretary to personal assistant.

I rub a single tear away from my eye. My wife was someone who I really cared about. I thought we were going to grow old together. Well we can. We will. She will be with me when I die. She will be at my side. We will be together!

With my head down, I walk back over to the room. Paul is sitting inside, lounging on a chair.

“Hey Paul,” I say. “You get everything done?”

“Of course buddy,” he says with a grin. “Relax, the hard parts done; but we still have to stay here for another 6.”

I sit down. I am still a little sweaty. Tired and sweaty and I still got 6 hours to go. Sometimes, I wonder why I’ve done it all these years. For these people! I do it for the people! I was at the building at 5 a.m. for God sakes. But, no more; I am done forever by tomorrow.

“Dude, you alright?” Paul says, leaning over to me. “I got some good pot, unwind and take a couple hits.”

He walks over to the corner of the room behind a locker and motions for me to follow. I don’t move. I don’t do drugs. Especially on the job! What is he trying to do? I have to report him at some point. Oh, it doesn’t even matter anymore. I’ll be finished with him by 1 pm tomorrow. After 1 pm, I will have my life back.

“I am going to make a round,” I say bitterly. Paul coughs up smoke and gives me the thumbs up.

I walk out into the hall. Other than one or two idlers, it is deserted. I walk along the now clean lighted halls, really for no apparent reason. It is almost completely useless for Paul and me to still be here other than for a few minutes during the lunch hours and maybe one or two incidents. There is just not much left to really do. I did almost all of my work earlier. But I do my job; I listen to the hot shots. My wife, my ex-wife, told me to listen to my boss. So I do my job. I do not go smoke dope! I work. I work. And then get overlooked by everyone!

“Jake.”

I turn slowly with dread. The two men who I had seen earlier on the streets are standing behind me.

One comes closer to me. He pulls out a gun.

“Get on the ground, now!” he says.

I slowly drop to my knees. The guy pushes up against me and knocks me into the hard floor. I scream as my teeth smash against the ground. My nose explodes with blood. Darkness. All I can see is darkness.

“Jake.”

I look up into cold blue eyes. They control me.

“You better not tell anyone about us, OK? You say anything, she is dead.”

My eyes are big. I feel betrayed. I shakily nod my head as he moves his own an inch from my face. He backs away for a second towards his partner who is looking away into the darkness. A second later the black shaft of his gun crashes into my face.

Pain. Terrible excruciating pain. My nose feels so tender. My whole body hurts.

Where am I?

I try to stand but a number of devices are attached to me. It is morning. It is bright in this room. Very bright. I am blinded by the glare coming through cheap shutters.

The only part of my body that does not hurt is my back because, for the first time in 13 days, I am in a warm bed. My eyes begin to adjust. There is a tiny T.V. hanging in front of the bed. An IV is attached to my arm. I am in a hospital.

A pretty woman walks into the room. She has long brown hair tied back and deep brown eyes. She gives me pills to take. Ugh, my body hurts.

“Doctor will be in soon,” she says kindly.

A couple minutes later, a man hurries in.

“I am Doctor Wassell,” he spits out quickly. “You had a nervous breakdown yesterday at Johnson High School. You seemed to have hurt yourself in your craze. You are employed at Johnson High School as a janitor, correct?”

I nod my head.

“Does your family line have any history of anxiety disorders?” the doctor says.

I shake my head.

“Sir, do you remember anything from the incident?” prods the doctor.

The image of those two men in their suits illuminates in my brain. They attacked me! I did not have a nervous breakdown, I was attacked!

“Sir, do you have any recollections from yesterday afternoon?” the doctor pushes.

I shake my head furiously.

The doctor frowns.

“Are you alright sir?” he says

I motion for him to come close to me. The doctor seems apprehensive but he moves forward.

I lean up against him and whisper in his ear, “I was attacked. A man attacked me.”

“Sir, what do you mean?” the doctor says nervously.

“I was attacked doctor!” I begin. “I’ve done a terrible thing doctor. It is wrong. It is so wrong, but what is right? Why is it that I have been so deprived? Why doesn’t anything ever fucking work out for me?”

The doctor looks down on me, confused.

“But, I had no choice,” I shout. I had to do it. I had to! I need my life back! Today I was planning on calling out sick sir. At 1 pm, something bad is going to happen at Johnson High School.”

The doctor looks down on me in horror. He turns around and grabs a phone nearby and urgently starts speaking into it. And all I can do is sit here. I look up at the wall clock. It is 12:45. I will not end it like this. I need to get to her before the bomb goes off. I need to see my ex. I run out of the hospital and out into the street. Her husband’s office is only a couple blocks away.

As I sprint by, people give me weird looks, but I really do not care. I am so close. I arrive at his building and collect myself for a second. Then, I march in. His office is on the 12th floor. I walk into the elevator and listen to the atrocious music. Oh God, I hate

elevator music, almost as much as the guy my wife left me for. I get out and walk into suite 1208. The office is empty of clients. A pretty girl is sitting behind the receptionist desk. It's her. As if in a trance I slowly walk towards the desk. Her head is down. She doesn't see me. Abruptly, she stands up and turns away.

"Nancy," I shout. I walk in past the reception door.

"Jake, what are you doing here?" she says.

I move past her.

"What are you doing?" she shrieks. "Where are you going?"

I walk into her husband's office room and come face to face with those steely blue eyes.

"We told you not to talk to anyone," the man says angrily. "We warned you."

"You contacted me last week. Everything was set to work. Why did you do this to me? Why have you made me do this?"

The man pulls out his gun and points it at me.

"You told me she could come live with me," I say. "You... you lied to me."

Tears are rolling down my face. My body hurts. My nose hurts. But worst of all, my heart hurts.

My wife walks into the room.

She looks up and embraces me with her soft blue eyes.

"I love you," I say as I calmly look up to meet my fate.

A couple hours later Jake Swancy, who was later dubbed a "psychological mess," by the press, was found dead in a vacant suite that he had broken into on the 12th

floor of the Luis A. Arks Building on 22nd and 5th street. He was 33, had no kids, was never married, and had recently been kicked out of his tenement for not paying the rent. Beside him was a sleek gun. He was wanted for questioning in regards to threats he made to his doctor. When he was found, his body was positioned in such a way that his bare arms were behind his back in a comfortable position. His eyes were oddly wide open, revealing two compassionate light blue eyes with a slight tear of joy in his left one.

By the time Dr. Wassell informed Johnson High School, it was 12:58. Students and faculty frantically rushed out of the school. At 1 pm, something did go off, but it wasn't what they expected. Beep beep. Beep beep. Beep beep.