

An Ass Out Of You And Me

By Tim King

I swarmed like a hive of bees down the street to Susie's apartment. What I had just seen was unspeakable. There was nothing good about it. It was disgusting and wrong and the worst part was that it was completely believable, completely within the realm of reality. That's probably what had me so pissed about it.

I hadn't even bothered to call her. The moment I realized it was her, I slammed the laptop shut, threw on clothes, and walked across the street to the rows of clone apartments to find her. Although I didn't really check the time, I could tell I had made my way over much faster than usual. I had even forgotten to smoke a cigarette on the way there.

When I knocked on the door, Rachel answered. She was wearing a huge sweatshirt with tube socks and her curly molasses-brown hair was bed-headed. I obviously had woken her up with the pounding.

"Osmond. Hi," she said in her monotone voice. Her eyes were much smaller than usual. She looked better when she had glasses on.

"Where's Susie?" I asked.

"Yeah, nice to see you too," she drawled, closing her eyes. She turned around, cigarette held between her two slender fingers like a flower petal, and walked back towards her room, a trail of smoke following her like she was the yellow-brick road. As she moved, I noticed her oversized sweatshirt was covering boy boxer-shorts.

"Oh, do come in," she added sarcastically. I wasn't put off; she more or less always sounded like this.

"Thanks. I didn't wake you up," I said, closing the apartment door behind me. It wasn't a question.

"No, I was just closing my eyes and breathing heavily under my warm covers, having hallucinations and drooling. But no, you didn't wake me up or anything." She flopped onto the bed, sucking her cigarette as she did so. I lit one up myself.

"So where's Susie?" I asked, putting the lighter back in my pocket.

“Not here,” she said, smoke following her sentence. She looked like a dragon. She crossed her curvy legs. They managed to seem very long despite the fact she was just over five foot.

“Is she at work?”

“Doubtful.”

“Library?”

“Probably. She said she had a lot of research, and you know she has to keep her scholarship.

Susie was always the studious one. “Do you know which library?”

“Why don’t you just fucking call her?” Rachel asked, sitting up and giving me an incredulous look. Her eye shadow from the night before clung to the under-lids of her eyes, amplifying how much they matched the darkness of her hair.

“I want to talk to her face-to-face,” I explained, sitting down on the beanbag chair across from Rachel’s bed. Her room smelled like something else besides cigarettes. Something fruity. Opium?

“Why?” she asked. “I don’t believe you. You walked over here, walked all the way over here without calling to check if she was even here, just to ask her a question? Or talk to her in person, whatever?” Rachel snorted and pulled her hair back from the side of her face.

I nodded, eyebrows raised in annoyance. I looked away at the sunlight sneezing softly through the semi-slit blinds.

“Bullshit,” she decided, and uncrossed her legs and pointed her healthy tan knees at each other. “I think you just wanted to see me.”

I rolled my eyes. I really had not planned on getting tangled up with Rachel at the moment.

“What’s the matter?” she asked, putting the cigarette out in an ashtray. There were several scattered throughout the room. She leaned forward and put on her glasses, which lay on the nightstand next to her. They were visibly smeared.

“I saw something involving Susie,” I started to explain. “Something really fucked. Something really...really just fucked up, and I have to talk to her about it.”

“What did you see?” she asked, completely alert now, the hint of a smile tugging at her smarmy lips. Her eyes shone like a first-grader’s.

I sighed, wondering how best to explain. I finally got up and walked to the bed and sat down next to her. My hand reached over and stroked her hair behind her ear. She closed her eyes and breathed in and sighed. I leaned over and started sucking on her neck, taking in her familiar cigarette shampoo sweat smell. She shuddered and her hand rolled over my hips, the border of my pants and skin. I unzipped my fly and she knelt on the floor in front of me, smiling and taking off her glasses. She leaned forward, taking her time and looking up at me with her big burnt eyes as I played with her hair until I finished with a spasm.

I lay back, panting, and she handed me a tissue and I cleaned myself off as she went to spit. When she came back, I was standing up.

“That’s what I fucking saw,” I said, feeling dead. “That. More than that. I saw it on a fucking porn website. One of those ones where they wear masks and pay the girls to do stuff.” I shuddered at the memory of stumbling across it while jerking off less than an hour ago, and felt numb and unreal standing in Rachel’s room instead of Susie’s yet again.

“Wait, are you fucking serious?” Rachel asked. She was genuinely shocked. I nodded.

“No fucking way,” she said. I nodded.

“*Susie?*” she asked, agape with furrowed brow. “Feminist small-town-girl Susie who didn’t lose her virginity until college?” I nodded again and kissed her cheek, heading out of her room into the main one.

“Wait wait wait wait wait. No *fucking* way did you see that,” she said loudly, following me.

“I did,” I said, looking over my shoulder as I stopped and lit a cigarette. “Don’t tell anyone,” I added.

“Fuck you Osmond, I’m not going to tell anyone shit. Jesus Christ,” she said, and paced. “I don’t believe you. Show me.”

I went to her desktop and surfed until I found the link.

“I can’t watch it. I’m going to go find her. Enjoy,” I said, and headed towards the door as she clicked on the links. She yelled something as the door slammed, but I’m not sure what.

As I walked back to campus, I pulled out my phone and hit Susie’s number. I hoped she wouldn’t answer. I hoped I would just run into her on the way back, or that she would just be in my room.

“Hello?” she answered. I cursed silently.

“Susie. Where are you?” I asked, trying to sound normal.

“I was just heading over to eat something actually. Do you want to meet up after that?”

“Yeah. Come to my room,” I said, and snapped the phone shut.

“Yo, Beacher!” a voice called as I crossed the street to the entrance of campus. I turned and saw Natman and Roger in an SUV slowing down behind me. “Get in,” they said, and I climbed in for the ride.

“What’s happening, man? Where’d you go last night with that girl Maria after the party?” asked Roger from the shotgun seat as we started to move forward. He grinned his wide stupid dog grin, his baseball cap tilted back and his popped collar making the smile seem even wider. He could be an ass, but generally he was a nice guy and one of the few people I trusted at the school.

“Got her back to my room.”

“Oh yeah?” said Natman as we passed through the security gate. “And then what’d you get her?”

Natman and Roger were both part of one of the frats. The party we spoke of was at their frat house. I sometimes regretted not joining myself, but I was friends with them anyway, so I guess it didn’t matter in the end. I got most of the benefits of their house and no responsibility. Their frat apparently wasn’t that intense; they didn’t have to do anything too over-the-top to get in or anything, at least not according to them.

“Did she let you fuck her?” laughed Roger. “Something tells me she’s a slut.”

“Yeah, she did. I was real drunk though,” I said, remembering the previous night. She was a really sexy girl, but for some reason the encounter seemed unremarkable. “I made her leave right after,” I added, laughing.

“Haha, attaboy. Did she make you a sandwich afterwards?”

“Dude, she’s Mexican,” Roger pointed out. “She made him a taco, right?” They both laughed and poked each other.

“Nah, I wasn’t even hungry,” I said, and we laughed. “So yeah, she just left.”

“I knew for a fact that girl is a slut. We ran into her last weekend. She looked like a lot of fun.” Roger smiled at Natman.

“Yeah man, good job,” added Natman, turning the car into a spot. “You know Spanish girls love the cock.” I’m about to say she’s Mexican, not Spanish, but stop myself. “What they say is true, chicks with dark skin are natural sex hounds. She wasn’t hairy, was she?”

“No, not at all,” I said. He nodded, as if he knew. “What about you guys? Any luck?”

“I just went to Mallory’s after,” said Roger. She and Roger had been seeing each other for about a year. They systematically cheated on each other. I had slept with her before Roger and her had even started seeing each other, and I had also just fucked her two months ago. She was a fantastic lay, and it always made me wonder why Roger would ever cheat on her. And again, he was a good guy, and it was confusing that Mallory would cheat on him. I briefly wondered if he knew about me and her. I had never told him.

“Yeah, I was too drunk to fuck,” explained Natman. I doubted this. Natman had a pretty bad reputation with girls. He was a bit of a misogynist. Rumor had it he used to hit his ex. We stepped out of the car.

“We’re gonna head to the gym,” explained Roger as he went around back to the trunk. He threw Natman his gym bag and grabbed his own. “You comin’?”

I declined like they knew I would. I never worked out these days. “Maybe next time. I’m gonna go back to my room.”

“Well enjoy that shit,” said Natman. “Come by the house later. We wanna let you in on something.” They grinned at me.

“Will do,” I replied, and we slapped hands and headed off our separate ways. I wonder briefly what they’re going to let me in on. Probably some bulk purchase of drugs. Maybe a poker tournament or something. I headed back to my room and flopped on the bed to wait for Susie.

After ten minutes, I sat up and went online. As much as I didn’t want to, I searched for the video again. I got it through one of those sites that have links to movie previews. I just stare at the thumbnails, not clicking the movie itself. In the first thumb she’s sitting on this leather couch. I assume one guy is taping her and the other, wearing a plain skin-colored full face mask with no mouth or expression, just eye slits, has his arm around her with money in it and is talking to her. The next thumbnail shows her sucking someone off, presumably the one who had his arm around her earlier, her eyes gazing directly into the camera. I minimize the window angrily and slam down my laptop and lie back down, staring at my white ceiling. It has a dark stain in the corner that’s been spreading.

Susie and I dated freshman year for the entire year and half of the summer. She was basically a virgin when I met her, had only slept with one guy before me, and she said it was a mistake. It took me four months to get her to sleep with me, even. She wasn’t like anyone I had dated before in highschool. She was stubborn and very smart. She loved studying, I loved partying. I guess we balanced each other out that year. We were attached at the hip.

When summer rolled around, I went back to my town and she visited often, but it ended up not working out. Despite how close we had been all year, the breakup wasn’t really rough at all. We stayed friends and still hooked up every so often, some times more than others. We never had any long-term relationships, except for a couple months where she saw some guy from

her town. It was during this time I first hooked up with Rachel, who was Susie's roommate and close friend sophomore year.

After she broke up with her hometown boy, Susie hooked up with me from time to time. Towards the end of sophomore year she slept with Roger, but I didn't care. If she was going to sleep with anybody I knew, I was glad it was Roger. Plus I felt like the fact I slept with Mallory made us even.

Now it was spring of junior year. Things stayed stagnant. Weeks and weekends blurred together. Susie and I saw each other less and less, and Rachel sort of took her place, plus the occasional hookup like that girl Maria. Despite it all and despite our distance, I still felt like Susie was mine. I often wondered if we would ever start seeing each other again exclusively and even asked her at one point, but she gave me something about needing to concentrate on school. It made sense to me, and I wasn't arguing since we still hooked up.

"Hello hello," chirped Susie. Her head was in my doorway. I sat up. I hadn't even heard the door open.

"Hey," I said. I brushed my hair out of my eyes and looked down. She walked over to the bed and set her backpack down.

"What's up?" she asked, looking at me.

I turned my face up to look back at her. She has shimmering blue eyes, and she looked tired. Her sunny hair was pulled back in a ponytail, and she wore a t-shirt and jeans. She always looked great in jeans. She wasn't really a skirt-wearing kind of girl. Barely ever wore makeup either. She didn't really need to.

"Nothing really..." I said, and trailed off.

"Cool?" she said, and laughed awkwardly. We sat in silence.

"Do you need money?" I asked after a moment.

"What? Why?" she asked, one of her eyebrows furrowing. I shook my head.

"Osmond, what's up?" she asked again. She put her soft white hand on my knee. I turned away from the familiar gesture and leaned over and opened the computer. She stared, mouth agape. I looked past her. Nothing was said for a while.

"Well?" I asked. "Do you need money, Susie? Because you could have just fucking asked me." My voice was flat and didn't feel like mine.

"Osmond, what are you talking about?" Her New England accent, which I usually found cute, only pissed me off more.

“You don’t need to go out and fucking whore yourself out for money. Fuck!” I hollered, and slammed the screen shut. I stood up and stood over by the fridge to take out a beer. She said nothing, mouth open again. “I thought you were against that shit, anyway.”

“How dare you,” she said, her voice low and different. “You don’t fucking *own* me!” She stared down at her blue-jeaned knees, then up at me, eyes burning.

“How dare I what? You’re fucking strangers for money, Susie! Strangers! That upsets me! It’s on the fucking internet for the world to see you fucking. What if your parents saw this? What if your brother saw this shit, huh?”

“Why the fuck would my parents be looking at Poorcollegegirls.com? Why would *you* be looking at it? Why-...” She stood up. “I need to leave.”

“Yeah, I think you do,” I said. I opened the door. She grabbed her backpack in a jerking motion and strode to the door. She stopped, took a breath, and faced me as I held the door open.

“You assume too much about things you know nothing about,” she said. “And you’re a fucking hypocrite,” and with that she was out the door. I slammed it shut, chugged the rest of my beer, and threw it against the wall as hard as I could. I didn’t bother to clean up the broken glass.

The rest of the day, to use a tired phrase, was a blur. I did some work for class to get my mind off it. I went to the gym and lifted weights. I went for a jog and listened to the angriest music I could. After I showered I walked to the local pizza place and ate until I felt like I was going to boot.

By then it was finally twilight. I figured I would stop by the frat house for a little before I went back to campus. I dreaded running into Susie.

“Beacher, come on in,” said Natman when I did the knock on their frat door. I walked into the hallway. It was very clean. Usually it was piled up with garbage bags and stacks of newspaper and magazines and other junk. We headed up the stairs to Natman and Roger’s room. Roger was sitting on his leather couch with some girl I’ve never seen before. His frat banner which usually hung above the couch was down and folded in the corner.

“What are you guys up to?” I asked after I slapped Roger’s hand and waved politely at the girl. She was wearing a short skirt and a sweater. She was very pretty. She had glasses, and her eyes shone with obvious intelligence.

“Beacher, I’d like you to meet Jayna,” said Natman, motioning towards the girl.

“Hi,” she said. “Nice to meet you. You’re Beacher?”

“Hi, yeah...you from around here?” I asked. Something wasn’t right.

“Yeah, I go to the state school up the road,” she said. Her smile looked as uncertain as I felt. She looked impatient.

“Ah, cool,” I replied. I looked behind me and Natman was gone. He reappeared a second later holding something in his hand. A camera.

“Beacher my man,” started Roger, standing up. “Listen. We have this sweet thing going on. But you cannot tell anyone.”

“We figured you’d be into it since you’re a mad pimp,” Natman added.

Roger reached into his back pocket and pulled out a mask. It was plain, it had no facial features and just slits for the mouth and eyes, skin-colored. I stared at it, my throat dry.

“Jayna’s an odd case because we usually know the girls we do this with,” he explained. “Like with that girl Maria, we knew her first and asked if she was down. She said yes.” I stayed silent, felt a chill.

“It works out for both parties. See bro, we pay the girls, and this company pays us mad cash to tape them with us. We just gotta wear masks so we don’t-...”

I couldn’t. I couldn’t listen, could not be there, could not keep existing. I ran out of the house and into the street before he could finish. I stopped and fell to the ground and vomited against the pavement. I tumbled onto my side, my face hot as the sun and my entire dinner in front of me. I could almost see the stink lines rising from it. I felt numb. Above me, a freshly blossomed tree let a white petal flutter down to my face. I brushed it off.