

Two for Tuesday

A NOVELLA

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Author's Note

For Vienna -

I love you. I thank you. I miss you. I *am* you.

Till we meet again...

- Papa

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Monday, 9:42 a.m.

Corey opened his day with back-to-back study halls. Thus, after fall semester, he'd arranged a pass that allowed him to report to school for third hour, which commenced at 9:50.

By the time he got to school on Monday, the DVD copies had already circulated the school. From player to player they went, with dozens of students gathering around in classrooms, restrooms, and halls to witness each showing.

Snickers and jeers accompanied Corey to his locker; eyes cemented upon him.

Charlie raced to his side. "Dude..." Charlie grabbed him by the forearm, and tried to pull him

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toward the exit, seven lockers away. “You’ve gotta get outta here.”

2 Corey shrugged off Charlie’s attempt. “What the fuck are you talkin’ about?”

“Come with me.” He tugged Corey’s elbow. “I’ll tell you *exactly* what I’m talkin’ about.”

Corey looked down the hall; eyes studied him from every direction. He stood, contemplative. *What the hell?* he thought.

Charlie grabbed him by the shirt back. “Come with me!” He pulled Corey down the hall and out the exit. “Now, listen to me!” He pushed Corey up against the white block exterior. “You know that party you went to on Friday with your ‘buddies,’ Derek and Marcus?”

“Yeah.”

“Well, they’ve got a video of it.”

Corey scowled. “So fuckin’ what?”

Charlie poked his finger into Corey’s chest. “Do you have any idea what happened at that party?”

Corey swatted the finger. “Yeah. I got hammered and passed out. Big fuckin’ deal. Not the brightest thing to do. But it sure as hell didn’t hurt anyone.”

“No, it didn’t hurt anyone...*except* you.”

Corey squinted. “Me? I’m not in any trouble. Well, not unless someone told my mom.”

“No, I don’t think your mom knows yet.” Charlie put his hands on his hips and turned to the nearby foot-

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ball field. The pre-storm current rustled his blonde, bushy locks; it slapped his charcoal Adam Ant tee-shirt and faded jeans to and from his lanky six-foot frame. He exhaled a deep breath, then turned toward Corey. "OK..." He stared at his buddy for a long moment. "Do you remember three Somalians?"

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Corey leaned against the wall; one Vans shoe soul rested against it. He put hands in front pockets. "Yeah. They had drugs or something."

"That's not all."

"Just tell me what the fuck is goin' on."

Charlie nodded. "OK, Corey, I will." He eyed the ground for a moment, as he placed hands in back pockets. He looked to Corey. "There's a DVD circulatin' the school right now. It has you on it."

"Yeah? So what?"

"It also has the Somalians on it."

"Again, so what?"

"It has you with the Somalians."

"What do you mean, me with the Somalians? I didn't even talk to those losers."

"It has you," Charlie poked his finger at Corey, "*with* the Somalians."

Corey eyed him. He thought for a moment. He hadn't even talked to the Somalians. He didn't understand what Charlie meant.

"Dude, remember when you told me on Sunday that you thought you must have fallen off a truck that

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night, because your ass hurt so bad?” Charlie shook his head. “Well, you didn’t fall off any truck.”

4 Corey’s eyes bulged; his jaw hung. “What the *fuck!* What are you *fuckin’* sayin?!”

Charlie looked to the sidewalk.

“No way!” Corey flung his head from side to side. “*No fuckin’ way!* That did *not* happen to me!”

“They’re not your fuckin’ friends, dude. They set you up. And everyone in the school has seen that damn thing—including Harmony.”