

The Three Weasels 2-6

<http://www.14rivers.com/threeweasels.htm>

-SYLVIA-

Thirteen dollars.

-DAVE-

"It's been a crazy week, Dave."

"Do tell." It's only Tuesday.

"Yesterday I was going around the club looking for customers, and this guy grabs me by the wrist. He starts to talk real quick. 'HeyBabyCanIGetALapDance!?' Oh, man, he was creepy, pale and disgusting. He had a scruffy beard that looked polluted, and big wide wired-up eyes. I tell him a dance is 20 dollars. So he buys it, and drags me over to that corner over there."

She points to the far corner of the club, it's a blind spot from the entrance, and it's away from the three stages. It's totally blackened, cut by occasional scanning reds and blues from the overhead and wall-mounted mirrors.

"So I pull my arm out away from him and I tell him, you know 'Hands off, pal.' He throws his hands up like I'm the asshole. Just as fast he calms and says 'OKNoProbNoProblJustSitHereAnYouDoYourThing.'"

I make her say that again. She blurted it out too fast.

'Okay. No prob. No prob. I just sit here, and you do your thing.'

"So I start my dance and he's glancing left to right. With me on his lap he reaches into his coat and pulls out a crack pipe."

"No way." I say

"No, true. He lit that shit and started sucking. I jump up like, you know, 'What the fuck?' He cringes in like he's hiding it, but he's still sucking away at it. When he finishes his hit he looks up and gives me that same look like I'm doing something wrong."

"Well, yeah, you were supposed to be his cover."

"He starts in 'WhatTheHellYouDoinIPayedForThisDanceBitchGetBackHere.' I call for security, and as they're coming over he runs out the back exit. It was the afternoon at the time, and when he bolted this blast of sunlight poured right in."

"That's pretty messed up."

"You know what? I wish we had a window."

“Why, so guys can look in for free?”

“Yesterday was the only time I ever saw sunlight in this place. Everything here is black as night. Sunlight would make it all look better. Realer.”

“Maybe a big skylight, then.”

“That's a good idea.” She says “But only over center stage.”

I see her coming with her vest buttoned up tight.

“Vylisa!” I say, “Nicely done.”

“Go girl. You blew 'em away.”

We're both giving her sympathetic applause when I look over to a guy with thick framed glasses, about in his 30s. He's glancing at us.

“Sylvia, that was great for a first timer.” Jessie says

“Yeah, shut up.” She slumps into her seat.

“No, it's true. Good moves an a lot of attitude.”

“Well, whatever.” She sinks deeper into her chair. I pass her a vodka and orange, but she just slides it away on the table. We go quiet as the house music of “Ain't nothing but a G thang.” takes over the conversation.

“What are your thoughts, Sylvia?” I ask her

“Well, I did better than I thought I would.” She turns to Jessie “It's a lot of work up there, I don't know how you do it.”

“I just love to dance.” Jess replies.

The guy with the plastic glasses has moved to a table closer to us. I'm staring at him and he's intentionally ignoring me.

“How did it look?” Sylvia asks

“Sexy.”

“Really? Give me a break.”

“No.” I say, turning to her “It was actually very sexy.”

“Well then Dave, that's one promise you didn't break.”

She sulks with a half smile. Jessie taps me on the shoulder.

“I got to get back to work Dave, but it's been fun.”

“Yeah. Of course.” I slide her a twenty.

“You want a dance?”

“No, just a tip. Thanks for a good time. She slides the folded note into her corset, and blows a kiss, before turning back to the club. Mr. Thick frames can see her leave in his peripheral vision, but he's not interested in her.

“Your real name is Dave, huh?”

“That's right. David Simon Fisher.”

“OK, then what else can you tell me?” I check my watch

“I'll tell you later. It's midnight. Lets go get some coffee.”

As we leave there is an immediate vacuum of sound and the street is a quiet hum of city life compared to the throbbing beats of the sound system. As if to fill the void of sound, Sylvia immediately starts to yell at me.

“Loopy you are such a fucking prick. I cannot even believe you.”

“Oh, Shut up, Sylvia. You did a great job. Ken probably thought so too.”

“You sick bastards.”

“What did it really come down to? I ask you. A few drinks, some laughs and you made some money. What's there to complain about?”

As we continue down the boulevard she jumps on my back and tries to punch my head. I push her off me saying; “Settle down.”

“I never wanted to be a stripper, Loopy. Now a whole bunch of fucking strangers plus one enormous jerk have seen me topless. You think that sets well with me?”

“Don't be a hypocrite.”

“What did you just say?”

“You're a hypocrite. I mean really, Sylvia, how is this any different from what you do to the boys at the gym locker room?”

“What?”

“You know what I'm talking about.”

I pull out my cell phone, and start clicking through the images.

“You sneak around at night and take pictures of naked guys.”

“Yeah? So?”

“So how is that any different or any worse than what just happened to you? Isn't this exactly what you do to them? Isn't this just how they would feel?”

“No. No. No. I'll tell you why that is different, because it's art. I'm just making an artistic statement. I'm not hurting or exploiting anyone. I am an artist. A photographer.”

I show her a picture on the phone, and I click them through.

“So am I, Sylvia. I guess I'm a photographer too.”

When she reaches to grab the phone I push her away, and she leans against a wall of a closed restaurant. I show her the picture again.

“I hate you.” she says

“That's right, Sylvia. Now I'm the same as you. How can you go around holding it over my head that I'm some kind of thief. You have no place to look down on me. I've got you on camera. So you can finally know what it is like to do what you do. Understand? God put us together, did you know that? Repent and change your ways. Seek God and his eternal kingdom. Do you see what you have to do?”

Her eyes go wide and full of light and indignation.

“What the Hell are you talking about? You're no fucking messiah. Just a crook who lied to me, and put me up on a stage to pop my tits out. Then you have the NERVE to tell me to repent?”

“Justify it any way you want, Sylvia. I have all the proof I need right in this picture.”

“You want to know what I see in that picture? It's fuzzy because you have no white balance. It's blurry because the exposure is all wrong. It's more or less completely out of frame. It's even crooked. Also, if I ever get a hold of it, you're going to jail.”

“Yeah? For what?”

“I won't be 18 for another 4 months, you fucker.”

“Huh?”

“Congratulations Loopy-David Simon Fisher. You're a child pornographer.”

“Well, you're the same thing then, right?”

“No, I'm not. I'm a photographer! TALENT, tough guy. That's the difference. I've shot with a disposable Kodak better than those rejects.”

I fold the phone up and put it in my pocket.

“Look at this any way you want. How I see it is that you're no better than me. Thief, voyeur, what have you.”

“Then why don't you repent? Huh?”

I put the phone away.

“We're getting coffee.”

We go around a corner, then I make her jog down the sidewalk a bit, and I push Sylvia into a full moonlit alley. It's October. That means that this is the hunter's moon.

I put my back to the building behind me, and have her do the same.

“Just stop a second. We need to slow down.”

She heaves her breath heavily. Deeper and deeper it became. Then gulping into her lungs I realize she's crying. She slides down the filthy painted brick wall, bunches up her knees head and arms and cries there in a little ball.

When I see the shadow I swing my fist as hard as I can.

My punch catches him right on the nose, and bashes his glasses up to his forehead. He keels back on the sidewalk. I stomp him heavy with my shoe on his chest. That's when I realize he's a real fat man. He cringes his arm up to his chest, then reaches for his belt. He's got a flip knife clipped on there. I stomp him again, and take the knife off his belt before he can get to it. On my knees I blade it up, and cut a big gash into his shirt.

"Oh my god!" he shouts "Stop!"

I put the knife up to his face. This shuts him up fast. He's been following us since we left the club.

"You turn and you run, you son of a bitch."

I punch the blade into his bare belly about an inch.

"No! Oh, my god! No! Please! No! Don't kill me."

Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt mean business. He gets up and does just what I told him. He runs like a coward with one side of his bloody shirt flagged open, clutching the bleeding wound in his belly.

I look back at Sylvia, still crouched in the alley. I clip the knife back together, and throw it hard into the narrow empty corridor.

"He'll make it to a hospital. He'll be fine."

I check my hands. No blood. Sylvia sobs deeply. I kneel down, and put my arm over her shoulder. She smells of cigarettes. I take out the phone and delete the pictures. She watches me do it.

"You could be right, Sylvie. For that, I'm sorry."

Her crying becomes kind of a heaving and gulping. I jump to my feet, as she keels to one side and barfs.

-ARTHUR-

I'm at my desk, off the phone, and I'm doodling.

I haven't decided yet what I want to be.

Susan, one of the claims agents passes. As I say hi she smiles and looks down at my hand, tellingly. I'm doodling a rocket ship. My hand really does hurt quite a bit, but I keep on going. Doodling a rocket ship.

Astronaut?

I scribble out the rocket ship and one of the band-aids on the back of my hand pulls loose. I can feel the sting of the opening cut.

"Ouch"

I re-seal the bandage and set the pen back to paper. I start to draw a bank.

Burglar?

I immediately think of Ken. I scribble out the bank and pick up the telephone, dialing Sylvia. It rings for a while and just when I think I have to leave a message she picks up.

"Hi, Arthur."

"Hey, Sylvia. This isn't a bad time, is it?"

"No, I told my teacher that it was an urgent call. I'm just in the hall now."

"Well you left me a message this morning that you had more info. Is it about Ken?"

"Don't ask me about him anymore. I don't want to see him anymore. I've only got info on Loopy."

"Is that so?"

"Yeah! I hate him, and he got me drunk, and then-no I won't talk about what happened next."

Jesus, Ken, what did you do to her? I bet it was tight.

"Can we just do something together again? Like racketball?"

I switch to what I guess is my calm, smooth sexy voice.

"I'm so sorry, Sylvia, we can't be together unless we catch Ken."

She still hasn't figured it out, and something in me wants to tell her, but this may just prove too much fun.

"Please, Arthur. I don't know. I can only tell you about Loopy. His real name is David Simon Fisher. He lives near Jeffories Street, and he steals for a living.

"Wait, what?"

"For what?"

"Go back."

"He-uh, his real name is not Loopy, it's David."

David what again? I've stopped doodling, and I get my pen ready.

"David what again?"

"David Simon Fisher."

I put the name down under my doodle of a bank. Easy money.

I see my dad coming down the hall. I take my sketch pad and hide it and my right hand under my desk. I switch to my strictly business voice.

"I see, and you are quite certain of that?"

"Well, that's what he told me the other night."

"Very well, I believe that information may help us make a decision about your claim."

I wave to my dad with my left hand. With a smile and nod he makes his way down the hall. I put my pad back on the desk and switch again to my sexy voice.

"What claim are you talking about?"

I'm doodling a dinosaur.

"I want to meet Loopy."

"That's great. I'll show you where he lives. I can even jimmy his front door."

"No. That won't do. I'm going to throw a party Halloween at my place."

"Awesome!"

"I want you to bring Loopy there. Invite him out, but don't say where. Just take him out. Halloween, next Wednesday at 10:00 PM."

"And I have to bring him?"

"Yes, Sylvia. Don't come if he's not with you."

"OK, fine. I'll have him along."

"This party won't be past your bedtime will it little girl?"

"Little girl?" She says sarcastically, "You asshole."

"So I'll see you then."

"Can we do something this weekend?"

I look down at my doodle of a dinosaur. I could dress up as a caveman. I scribble it out.

Nah.

"No promises, sweet heart. Remember to wear a costume."

"I'll call you before then."

"Good bye, Sylvia."

"Bye." She says sweetly.

I hang up the phone and doodle a ninja.

"My God, Arthur, are you alright?"

I turn and see Tim, another insurance agent, is hanging over my shoulder. He's a big guy

with a pitch about two notes higher than you would expect from looking at him. He's staring with concern at my hand which is covered with bandages from wrist to pinkie to heal all the little cuts Martha and I were putting in last night. Only 8 of them, though. I have him at a moment of shock, so I make it more shocking.

"Yeah. Little accident with a weed-whacker."

"God-damn." He says wincing "Must have hurt like hell."

"Well, I've still got my fingers, at least."

I turn back to the paper and scribble out the ninja.

"OK, but what's with the hair?"

Oh, fuck me, the ink. It won't come out. Tonight I'm going in the tub with five bottles of paint thinner.

"What; this? Just trying out some dye for my Halloween costume."

"Really?" He asks "What are you going as?"

I close the notepad and put the pen down, then I look Tim right in the eyes.

"Dracula."