

COLD BLACK MIRROR

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Dark flash tales and dark song lyrics.

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COLD BLACK MIRROR

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DANNY ZIL

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CARE TO BUY A LOSER A DRINK?

It was gettin near midnight one time down at Eddy's. The usual crowd of bums an no-hopers were proppin up the bar or scattered round the tables. I kinda liked the feel of the place especially on a wet Sunday night like this. After all, what was there waitin at home except Monday mornin.

I was at my usual place at the far corner of the bar where I could drink an watch the action so I spotted her as soon as she walked in. Blonde, attractive, mid-thirties, probably divorced. Standin there shakin rain from her folded down umbrella.

I watched her takin in the scene an I could sense her despair as she realized she was now one of us. Hey, that's why you drink at places like Eddy's till two in the mornin.

Maybe it was because some of the bums were already droolin over her or maybe it was because she wanted to sit next to a rugged worn-lookin guy but she headed over in my direction anyway. She hitched herself up onto the stool next to me. I could smell the rain off her.

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“What do you call a female loser?” she asked.

“You,” I replied.

She glanced at me and lit a smoke. “Care to buy a loser a drink then?”

I nodded up to Eddy who was just putting the blackjack away.

“What are you havin’?” I asked her.

“Sour,” she told me.

“Life or drink?”

“Both,” she replied.

Eddy brought us the drinks and we just sat around watching the scene awhile. I knew where she was coming from. She was finished and she just didn’t realize it yet. That last little shred of hope had gone and now there was nothing. It took some time to learn how to handle that one. If you ever could.

“Funny how everything can go in a few weeks,” she said eventually.

“Oh it can go a lot quicker than that,” I told her.

“Then you’ve lost--”

I glanced sharply at her. There was a boundary you didn’t cross. Not with me. Not at Eddy’s this time of night.

“Sorry,” she muttered and signaled for another round.

We didn’t say anything for awhile. Just sat there drinking and smoking and watching the action. I knew she needed the company. I knew I didn’t.

I sensed she couldn’t leave it alone. “But it all could have been so good,” she said eventually.
“So damn good.”

“Well isn’t it pretty to think so,” I remarked.

“So what is there then?” she asked. “If it’s all gone?”

“Find someone else or some kinda work you can lose yourself in,” I told her.

“I’ve already tried,” she said. “Both. Nothing worked.”

“In that case it’ll take awhile,” I told her. “But you’ll learn.”

“Learn what?”

“To wake expecting nothing. Wake up already dead.”

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â Sounds kinda bad.â

â It is,â I replied. I was growin tired of this conversation. I had been through it a hundred times before. With myself.

â Take me home with you. Just for tonight,â she said.

For a second, that note of pleadin in her voice almost got to me. Almost. I shook my head.

â Why not?â she asked.

â Because all I got inside me is dead space,â I replied, â an spendin the night with you ainâ t gonna fill any of it.â I finished my drink, nodded up to Eddy an left.

Outside, the streets were empty except for the rain. There were blurred reflections of shop lights an advertisin signs on the wet sidewalks. I headed off, lookin for a cab.

ONLY DEGREES OF MISERY

I was lyin in bed one afternoon, drinkin coffee an thinkin about how bad things were when the phone rang. I couldnâ t really be bothered talkin to anybody but I answered it anyway.

â Yeah?â I said.

â You have to help me!â this female voice pleaded. â I canâ t stand it any longer! Iâ m going to kill myself!â

â Fine,â I told her. â Go ahead.â

Silence from the other end of the line. Donâ t think it was quite the response she expected.

â I donâ t think you understand,â she said eventually. â I need your help. Iâ m planning to kill myself.â

â So you need help with the plannin?â I asked. â Like you canâ t think of a way to do it yourself? Hey lady, thereâ s loads of ways.â

There was a muffled sob from the other end of the line. I half-expected her to hang up. I lit a smoke an waited.

â Canâ t youâ !.canâ t you try to talk me out of it?â she begged.

â Why should I?â I replied. â I didnâ t talk you into it.â

More muffled sobs. More silence. It dragged on. This time I broke it.

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“Look lady, I said, I don’t even know you. You call me up and tell me you’re plannin to kill yourself and you want my help. Hey, how’d you get my number anyway?”

“Oh I just dialed a number at random,” she told me. “You see, I’m pretty desperate. Things aren’t too good at my end of the line.”

“Hey, they’re not too clever at my end either,” I informed her.

“But I cry myself to sleep every night,” she said.

“Hey lady - I cry myself awake!”

“Oh!” More muffled sobs. “Sorry,” she managed.

She sounded kinda nice. In a desperate sort of way. I decided to help.

“Listen, this is the only piece of advice I’m givin you, so pay attention,” I told her. “You’re not allowed to.”

“Not allowed to what?”

“Not allowed to kill yourself!” I yelled. “What the hell do you think I mean - not allowed to go out for coffee and donuts!”

There was an expected silence while she thought about that.

“Why aren’t you allowed to kill yourself?” she finally asked.

“Because the Big Boss don’t like it,” I told her. “Takes it as a serious insult after He’s granted you the precious gift of life and all that crap. Really pisses Him off.”

“You mean God?” she asked.

“Call Him what you like,” I said, “but kill yourself and things will get even worse. A damn sight worse and you won’t be able to do anything about it. Not like you can here.”

“How can they get any worse?” she asked.

“Believe me they will,” I replied. “Read Edgar Cayce.”

“Who?”

I spelled it for her.

“Will he help me to kill myself?”

“Nope.”

“Will he help me to be happy?”

“Nope.”

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â But I used to be so happy!â she wailed. â Now thereâ s just all thisâ !,all this misery.â

I laughed. â Happiness!â I said. â That old fuckin illusion.â

She hesitated. â Have you ever been happy?â she asked.

I ignored the question. â Happiness is just too fleetin,â I told her instead. â Too fleetin. Itâ s like a snow fall in the river - a moment white then gone forever.â

More silence while she thought about that one.

â Do you think people get a second chance at life?â she asked.

â Lady, I donâ t think they get a first!â I replied.

This was gettin tedious. I sensed it could go on all day. I decided to bring the call to an end.

â Look lady, this is my final word to you,â I said. â Thereâ s no such thing as lastin happiness. Thereâ s only degrees of misery. Thatâ s all there is - only degrees of misery an you have to learn how to endure whatever yours is.â

I hung up.

I lit another smoke an decided to change my number.

DOUBLE-BILL

Man I just loved the view from my tenth floor apartment at two in the mornin. All them warm lights out there in the darkness at other windows. All the late nite traffic swishin by. An best of all, the ole Brooklyn Bridge. Lit up like a Christmas tree with them fancy lights strung out between the tall girders, hangin like pearl necklaces.

Yeah, one helluva view. Unless you were sittin on one of the narrow ledges outside the block like I was with your legs danglin in space an the wind whippin at you. Glued by fear to the fuckin spot. With my window an auto length away. The spot deliberately chosen so there was no way back. Only now I wish there was since Iâ ve changed my mind about jumpin. Movin to Canada seems a better option. At least Iâ d be landin at an airport instead of landin on a sidewalk.

So why was I sittin there terrified? Simple. Because I owed the biggest psycho in Brooklyn the modest sum of 20K. Yip, 20K. Twenty thousand fuckin dollars. All lost on a sure-fire coke deal that fell thru. Just like Iâ m sure-fire gonna fall thru that sidewalk way down there.

Zybo was Brooklynâ s main dealer an he didnâ t take prisoners. Owe Zybo 10K an the repayment plan was that he took your hand. And not to shake it. Which meant I was lookin at two of them artificial ones.

Alright theyâ re pretty good these days Iâ ll admit. You can pick things up an even hold a knife an fork with them. So I could get by feedin myself an wipin my ass but suppose one of the fuckers jammed up

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unexpected when I was tossin myself off!? Christ I wouldnâ t need the hospital, Iâ d need the fuckin garage! Yeah I can just see it when I pull into Rudyâ s in the Fordâ l!â Hey Rudy, can you get one of the guys to take a look at the starter motor â fuckin thing keeps jammin up. Oh an can he take a look at my right hand as well â fuckin thingâ s jammed up too. Around my dick!â â !Christ the boys would love that one.

Just as the small crowd way down there was lovin this one. How they loved the drama of a jumper. Even if it meant haulin themselves outa bed at two in the mornin to watch. Like gettin up to watch a movie repeat they really liked. I could see them down there in a semi-circle. Coats or dressin-gowns pulled on over pyjamas. All waitin for toniteâ s movie repeat â me. I can just imagine the wisecracks floatin round. All they needed was popcorn an Coke.

I can see a ripple in the crowd down there as the Cops arrive. Four of them. See them look up. They have a chat. One of themâ s gotta come up. I see a figure cross the street an enter the block.

Five minutes later he sticks his head outa my window. Young guy. Grins. â Hi buddy,â he says. â Mind if I step out?â

â Be my guest,â I told him.

First thing I noticed was the rope tied round his waist. The rest coiled in his hand. Good lookin strong rope it was. I liked that. He stepped out an glanced down then waved to the small crowd. I heard a ragged cheer. Christ, is this Spiderman?

He sat down on the ledge. Very casually. Like he was sittin down in front of the TV. I liked this guyâ s confidence.

â Mind if I get a bit closer?â he asked.

â Sit on my fuckin lap if you want!â I replied.

He grinned and shuffled closer. â Scared?â he asked.

I nodded.

â Changed your mind?â

â Pretty much so,â I said.

He held out the coiled rope towards me. I took it eagerly like he was handin me a winnin lottery ticket. Eased it round my waist. Tied a good secure double knot. Unsurprisingly I kinda felt better after that an leaned back against the wall, a bit more relaxed.

â Smoke?â the Cop asked, holdin out his pack.

â Brought my own,â I told him.

We lit up with my Zippo an sat there smokin for a minute.

â Hereâ s a good one an I know youâ ll like it,â the Cop said eventually. â When we arrived on the scene an saw you up here, the Sergeant asked for a volunteer to come up an talk to you.â He grinned.

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“My patrol buddy, he’s a real joker, he says to the Sarge, ‘Talk to him? You want somebody to go up and talk to him? Let me go up there and I’ll sing to him!’”

We laughed. I liked this guy.

“So what brought you out here?” he asked. “Money? A woman? The job?”

“The first one.”

He nodded. “Appreciate just how you’re feelin’. Got big problems myself.”

“Which one?”

“The second.”

“Woman trouble?”

“My wife’s leavin’. And she’s takin’ the girls.”

“How old?”

“Five and three. They’re my babes.”

“Shit, that’s a tough one. How come she’s leavin’?”

He glanced at me and I thought maybe I’d overstepped the mark. Then he shrugged. “I haven’t told anybody else but under the circumstances,” he said and glanced down meaningfully.

“Understood,” I agreed.

He took a drag on his cigarette before he told me. “Other women,” he eventually admitted.

I nodded and drew on my smoke. No big deal there.

“Yeah, other women,” he said. “Took me a while to work out she was a lesbian.”

No shit! I glanced at him but didn’t say anything.

“Then there was the forced anal sex,” he went on.

Christ! This was gettin’ personal.

“Still don’t know why I let her do it to me.”

What the fuck! I turned and had a long look at him then but he just glanced at me and shrugged.

“I think that’s when I started beatin’ her,” he continued.

I looked quickly at him again. Was his voice startin’ to sound a little slurred?

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“Yeah I beat her at everythin,” he admitted. “Beat her at poker. Beat her at tennis. Beat her at fuckin scrabble.”

I kinda half-smiled at that then took a draw on my smoke. His voice was definitely slurrin up. I couldnâ t smell any booze off him but we were sittin a little apart out there.

We finished our smokes an flicked them out into the darkness. I watched the glowin red butts fall, a little apart, before the wind whipped them away. We lit up again immediately.

“Then there was the necrophilia,” he went on.

“Jeeze!” I muttered.

“Christ, two good-lookin stiffs! Two strippers! Two! Does that make me a fuckin necrophiliac!?”

I shook my head. “Not in my book, buddy,” I said. Especially not out here on this ledge.

I glanced at him again. He was startin to sway a little from side to side.

“Losin the kids was the last straw,” he slurred on.

“Christ, that mustâ ve been pretty bad,” I said.

He nodded. “Judge gave her custody. Just cos sheâ s got some land upstate an they can graze there.” He grinned lopsidedly. “Man, I loved them fuckin goats. Two kids each they had.”

That was when I realised this Cop was fuckin nuts. Then he proved it.

“Canâ t take losin everythin,” he slurred, “so I was headin for the Brooklyn Bridge myself after toniteâ s shift. Took a shit load of Valium earlier,” he drawled. “A shit load. Feel nice an woozy now. Nice an woozy.”

He glanced at me. I could now see the nice an woozy look in his eyes. What I had taken earlier as confidence had been Valium.

“Man, them blues sure kicked in. Feel all kinda relaxed an rubbery.” He grinned an drooled. “No point in waitin for the Bridge,” he slurred.

Then he just rocked forwards and fell off the ledge. I watched him go then I suddenly remembered. I was fumblin pointlessly at the double knot when the rope tightened an I was hauled off too.

I tried for a last draw on my smoke but the wind whipped it outa my hand. The sidewalk was comin up awful fast an I could see the Cop headin down, the rope taut between us.

The small crowd rippled an moved back like a wave breakin. I could see them all starin up at us. At their movie repeats.

“Hey look â we got us a double-bill!!” some sick fuck yelled.

Laughter from the crowd was the last thing I ever heard.

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IT'S NOT YOUR DAY JFK

You probably still come across this now and again in a magazine or maybe even on the TV where were you and what were you doin when President Kennedy was assassinated? Well I know exactly where I was an exactly what I was doin I was on the sixth floor of The Texas School Book Depository in Dallas with my finger on the trigger of a bolt-action rifle.

Watin for him to arrive. And the cunt was late. Late. Which made me late. Late for my Origami class. Damn cunt an his damn bitch.

Them paper-foldin Origami classes are real important to me. Not like this shit. I just do this for the dollars. Usually Mafia hits. This is a big deal though. Pays big deal dollars. Gonna let me open up my own CHRIST HERE IT COMES! THE MOTORCADE! THEM BIG-ASS HARLEYS OUT IN FRONT. DAMN THEY LOOK GOOD. LIKE THEY'RE JUST FLOATIN ALONG. MY SIGHTS. CHECK MY SIGHTS. STILL SPOT ON. BE ONLY A MINUTE NOW.

Yeah, been doin them Origami classes awhile now. Makin all sorts of little folded paper dudes. Like swans an roses an people an buildins. First thing I've ever loved. Givin me real purpose, real focus. Like I've finally found what I was meant to be doin. Strange how it can take a man so long to find himself.

Gettin real good at it too. Teacher says I'm a natural. Good with my hands. With my fingers. My trigger finger. Could've told her that anyways. Been good with my trigger finger since my Army GOT HIM IN MY SIGHTS! SEE HIS FACE! HE'S SHAVED THIS MORNIN. WE'LL HE'S GOT ANOTHER CLOSE SHAVE COMIN. FOR MAKIN ME LATE. CHRIST I COULD SHOOT A FLY UP THE ASS FROM WAY OFF. BUT THE FIRST ONE'S GOIN IN THE BACK. DELIBERATE. FOR MAKIN ME LATE.

Yeah, my exams are comin up at the end of the year. Lots of work to do before then. Makin this my last hit. So I can concentrate on the paper foldin. Tonight we start the complicated stuff. Bigger stuff. With expressions. Expressions on people's faces. Like there's goin to be soon on Jackie'S TEN SECONDS TO LIVE, JFK! IF ONLY YOU KNEW! WHAT CAN YOU DO IN TEN SECONDS? COULDN'T EVEN FUCK HER IN THAT. SLOWLY TIGHTEN ON THE TRIGGER. EASY NOW. DEEP BREATH IN AND HOLD. SQUEEZE. FIRST ONE IN THE BACK. FOLLOW HIM. SQUEEZE. SECOND ONE IN. BRAINS FLYIN OUT. FOLLOW HIM. SQUEEZE. THIRD ONE IN. JUST TO MAKE SURE.

Just to make sure. Cos I need them big deal dollars. Plannin on openin up

my own Origami shop after my exams. Sellin just my own stuff. Gonna be the best CHRIST JACKIE'S CRAWLIN ALL OVER THE FUCKIN CAR! ALL OVER IT! LOOKS PRETTY IN PINK. CRAWLIN ON HER HANDS AND KNEES. WOND'ERIN WHAT THE FUCK'S GOIN DOWN. JFK'S GOIN DOWN. THAT'S WHAT'S GONE DOWN.

Think I'll do an Origami of Jackie tonight. Fuck she looked good crawlin over that car. Do one of her on her hands and knees. Nude. Tits hangin down. Ass in the air. Legs spread. And oh, that shaved pussy.

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LEGEND

Iâ ve watched you from a distance

watched you from afar

Iâ ve got your pictures on my wall

Mister Superstar.

Iâ ve listened to all your songs

know them all by heart

youâ ve been my hero for long enough

envied you from the start.

But Iâ m tired of all this distance

this worship from afar

John, itâ s time to get close to you

and change the way you really are.

Yeah one day

Iâ ll get near, near to you, John

yeah one day soon

Iâ m gonna get close

real close to you, John

gonna get real close to you

and thereâ s nothing

you can do.

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I jetted in from Hawaii
although I hate to fly
I passed the time cleaning my gun
and reading Catcher In The Rye.

I checked out your apartment
can't afford a lapse
as usual there were fans of yours
taking photographs.

The one taken outside the Dakota
hey man, ain't that a laugh
I'm standing right behind you
just after you gave me your autograph!

Yeah I've got near
near to you, John
told you I'd get close
real close to you, John
closing in on you
and there's nothing
you can do.

I returned a few hours later
waited patiently
I knew what I was gonna do

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understood my destiny.

My own lifeâs pretty shabby
nothing quite worked out for me
but itâs time for that to change
to change from Mister Nobody.

You were walking on thin ice
when you strolled to those stairs
I drew the gun, I felt quite calm
people screaming everywhere.

Yoko was right beside you
but itâs you Iâm here to kill
saw four bullets hit you
hey man, what a thrill!

And when the killingâs over
yes and when they ask me why
Iâll just shrug and maybe say
that Iâm just a jealous guy.

Yeah I got near
near to you, John
told you Iâd get close
real close to you, John

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well I got close to you
and there was nothing
you could do.

If there was anyone in this world
anyone that I could be
Iâd love to have been you, John
you were my double fantasy.

But there ainât no room for both of us
hey thatâs what Iâll tell the Judge
canât have two of me in this world
thereâs only one of us.

The Court did not believe me
but they couldnât quite decide
so it looks like Iâve committed
this living suicide.

So now Iâm famous too, John
but itâs quite a different kind
whereas you are a legend
Iâm just a legend in my own mind.

But I got near
near to you, John

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didnât I get close
real close to you, John
yeah I got near
near to you, John
close, real close to you, John
and there was nothing
you could do.

MY LITTLE JAIL BAIT

Youâre brushin your hair
in front of the mirror
the curves on your body
are makin me shiver.

Youâre turnin me on
I know that you know it
I try to be cool
try not to show it.

Youâre only fifteen
but act so much bolder
so what do I do
wait till youâre older?

My little jail bait

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little jail bait,
my little jail bait
little jail bait.

I light up a smoke
mouthâs gettin dryer
you bend down for somethin
your skirtâs gettin higher.

I look at your legs
hope you donât see
but those come-to-bed eyes
glance over at me.

Yeah you know what Iâm thinkin
hey I can hardly disguise
the way that Iâm starin
with these hard-on eyes.

I know that you want it
know youâre on fire
you got the body
I got the desire.

My little jail bait
little jail bait,

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my little jail bait

little jail bait.

Iâm out of control

you sweet little mover

I hold out my hand

you smile an come over.

You sit on my knee

my body is shakin

your body is hot

for some sweet love-makin.

I flick out the light

hands they start roamin

Iâm already hard

youâre already moanin.

My little jail bait

little jail bait,

with the come-to-bed eyes

come-to-bed eyes,

warm silky thighs

warm silky thighs,

my little jail bait

little jail bait,

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my little jail bait

little jail bait.

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