

THE TEACHER

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Matt Drega was no genius by anyone's standards. He was lukewarm average in just about every sense of the word. So were most of his friends. So was most of his existence up to this point. He had gotten into a pissing contest with another student in the hallway. Punches were thrown and Matt ended up on the losing side. No real harm was done, the fight was broken up before any real damage was done. He got a stern lecture from the vice principal, Mr. Ramsey, and was given a week's detention. The other kid had been given a free pass since he was on the basketball team and they had a big tournament out of state. Matt was smart enough to know to just take his punishment and not complain. It wouldn't do any good anyway. Mr. Ramsey was judge, jury, and executioner at Prairie High School.

Detention consisted of sitting in a class with the other losers for an hour after school. Some teachers were cool and would let you use your phone or sleep. Some were not so cool. Case in point was Miss Pamela Bly. Matt had her for American History. She was almost like a robot. Never laughed or smiled. All business, one hundred percent of the time. She ran the class with an iron fist. He needed to pass her class and graduate. He was barely passing. He could barely stay awake in her class most days.

The real tragedy here, as Matt saw it, was the fact that Miss Bly was absolutely stunning. She wore business attire and it did a good job of concealing her almost perfect body, leaving quite a bit to the imagination. She had perfect curves. Matt had to wonder just how many others in the class were mentally undressing her, both men and women.

Miss Bly was going to be doing detention that week. That was going to be a problem, a big problem.

He had detention last year and at least the teacher babysitting them, let them read books. Miss Bly wouldn't even do that. She actually expected them to just sit there and "think about how their actions led them to be in detention." Like anyone in detention needed to be reminded of why they were here.

He had heard that two others, Jennifer Hopkins and Stacy Clarke were given detention also for being caught smoking in the girl's room. He stopped them in the hallway before class.

"Heard you two got detention?"

"Yup. I guess we got lucky. Ramsey could have suspended us. My mom would have killed me." said Stacy.

"Well, I'll be right beside you. My little slap fight got me a whole week," said Matt.

"You know who the teacher is right?"

"Yeah, I heard. Just our luck," said Stacey

"She won't even let us read a book. What kind of shit is that?" asked Jennifer.

"I think she enjoys detention. Most teachers hate it. Mr. Cruz says he actually pays other teachers to do his detention duty. Not Miss Bly. I think she looks forward to it. You got any smokes on you, Matt?"

"No, they're in my car. I'll bring some to detention. I think we're going to need them." he said.

Detention began promptly at three o'clock and ended at four o'clock. Being even a minute late bought you one more day. Skipping detention was an automatic three-day suspension. Matt didn't want to risk getting in trouble with only a few months left to go until graduation. The girls thought pretty much the same thing. They would only have to put up with this crap for three more months, then they were out of here and this town. Matt was planning to move to Los Angeles right after graduation and live with his older brother who owned a moving company. His parents made it clear that he needed to graduate first. As soon as he had his diploma, he could do whatever he wanted. LA sounded so much better than rural Kansas.

Miss Bly was already waiting for them. Matt made sure he was seated by 2.55 PM. The girls came in a short time later. There was another kid in there as well, some dorky sophomore named Zane. That made a total of four of them....and Miss Bly.

"Okay, now that you are all present and accounted for, let me go over the rules of my detention class: No talking, no eating, and no electronic devices. You are to sit and think about why you are here. Am I clear on his?"

"Can we do homework?" asked Stacey.

"No. Homework is to be done at home," she replied.

"So we just have to sit here and stare at each other for an hour?" asked Jennifer

"No, you are to consider why you are here and what you will do in the future to avoid being here," she said

"We kind of already know that Miss Bly. We are only here because we got caught," said Matt.

"Well, then next time, don't get caught," said Miss Bly.

If you can't do the time, then don't do the crime. Simple as that.

Matt sat in his chair and watched the hands on the clock go by ever so slowly. Right now, even being homeless on the streets in LA sounded better than staying in this town. The town had around ten thousand people. If you weren't a jock, or come from one of the prominent farming families, you were pretty much a nobody here in the school. Matt's father came here five years

ago to be a tractor mechanic. The farming industry was in dire straits and his dad was laid off this year. They wanted Matt to finish high school before they left. The town once had over sixteen thousand people, it was just a shell of what it once was now and was losing more and more people each year. Matt quickly discovered that there was zero future in farming unless you were growing pot.

He had no idea where Stacey and Jennifer came from. Stacey only showed up last year. She was living with her aunt, while her parents went through a divorce. She couldn't wait to get out of Kansas either. Matt was lucky enough to get hired as a bag boy at the only supermarket left in town. He had to get right to work as soon as he was out of detention. Right now, he was the only one in his family that had a job. He just fantasized about how great Los Angeles was. Of course, it was expensive. Awesome places always are. That's how they keep out the shit bags. His brother said he had more work than he could handle and said he could start work as soon as possible. Matt was just counting the days until he could leave this place and start his new life.

"Miss Hopkins? I don't allow sleeping in my class," said Miss Bly looking up from her desk.

"Sorry."

"Don't be sorry, just don't do it again."

"Fucking bitch." she said under her breath.

"Excuse me young lady?" she said.

"Young lady? You're like what.....five or six years older than me?"

"Let it go, Jen," whispered Stacey.

"Regardless of how old I am, this is my class and I am in charge. Do I need to send you to Mr. Ramsey's office?" she said with an ice-cold look on her face.

"What is your problem? Every other teacher in this dump is cool. You're the youngest teacher in here and you act like you're the oldest. My grandmother is more fun than you."

"Shut up Jen," said Stacey, this time saying it loud enough for everyone to hear.

"I'm not here to be your friend. I am here to be your teacher. If you don't like my methods, don't take my class." said Miss Bly.

"Why do you care so much about a job you won't even be at next year?"

"I'm sorry....would you care to elaborate?" said Miss Bly

"Every teacher knows the school is in bad shape. They're all afraid of being laid off. Some of the teachers are going to be laid off. You're the newest one with the least amount of seniority. You'll be the first to go."

No one in the room said anything. They looked at Jennifer then back at Miss Bly.

"Well, we can't control every little thing that happens to us Jennifer, now can we?"

"Wait....she's right Miss Bly. If you are going to be fired after the school year ends, then why do you care so much about us following the rules?" asked Zane.

"Because it isn't my rules you are following, it's the school's rules. You are all going to have jobs someday and you will have to follow their rules as well. Our entire society is run by rules. That's what civilization is. Rules are order, and without order you gave chaos. Do you want to live in a world where there is nothing but chaos?" she said looking at Zane.

"Well, no," said Zane.

"I certainly wouldn't want to either. That's enough talk for today. Next one that says anything gets another week's worth of detention." she said and went back to her paperwork.

The rest of detention went by at a snail's pace. Matt nearly fell asleep several times, as did the rest of the group. When the clock struck four o'clock, Miss By stood up.

"You're dismissed. I expect you all here tomorrow afternoon. Don't be late." she said.

"Have a nice day Miss Bly," said Jennifer as she walked by.

The two of them gave each other a fake smile as they passed one another. If looks could kill, Miss Bly would have been comatose.

"God, I hate that bitch!" said Jennifer as the three of them had a cigarette at Matt's car.

"Everyone hates her, Jen. She knows we hate her. Don't go poking the bear." said Stacey.

"She just gets away with her crap because she's hot. That's the only reason we put up with her," said Matt.

"She is not hot."

"She kind of is Jen. I'd do her," said Stacey.

"What? Eww. You're such a slut. With her? She's awful."

"She's just a prude. She went to High School in Coffeetown. She probably never had a boyfriend in high school. I still don't think she's with anyone. Still single. That's the real tragedy in all this. An incredible body like hers, wasted." said Matt.

"You guys are nuts. Just once, I'd love to see her lower her guard. See the real Miss Bly. If there is a real person in there."

"How are you gonna do that? Get her drunk?" asked Stacey

"We should put some ex in her coffee. I got a few tabs at my house. That might loosen her up." said Matt, who was not really serious.

He saw the looks on their faces and realized what he had done. It was too late to take it back.

"Dude! That would be awesome! You'd be a legend!" said Jennifer.

"I'd probably get sent to prison. Come on, how long would it take the cops to figure out it was one of us? Even these idiot cops would be able to figure it out." said Matt.

"No, not necessarily. She always has that coffee cup with her. It can take up to two hours for the full effects to kick in. What if we put it in the teacher's coffee pot? The one in the teacher's lounge. There would be no way they could prove it was us. There aren't any cameras on the first floor."

"How do you know?"

"Cause I heard the teachers complaining about a few weeks ago. None of them have worked for years, but the school doesn't have any money to replace them. They could never prove it was us. All we'd have to do is deny it." said Jennifer.

"Jen, the first time I took ex, I puked. Then I got all weird. It felt like I was dreaming, but I was awake. Everyone reacts differently to it. Some people can get really sick." said Matt.

"Yeah, but it's only temporary. She'll be fine once it wears off. Come on, Matt. You gotta do it." said Jennifer.

"You want it done so bad, you can do it. I am a full supporter of equal rights....especially when it comes to prison sentencing," said Matt.

"Why don't we just blame it on that Zane kid? Nobody would miss him anyway," said Stacey.

"You guys are nuts. I gotta get to work," said Matt.

Jennifer stopped him and got very close to him. He wasn't quite sure what to do. This was uncharted territory for Matt Drega.

"I'm glad I have detention with you Matt," she said and moved away.

"Okay, well, I'll see you tomorrow," he said and drove away.

The two girls watched him drive away. Stacey knew exactly what she was thinking.

"You aren't going to do what I think you're going to do are you?" she asked.

"What are you talking about?"

"Come on Jen. I know you. I know how you can be when you want something."

"Oh, stop. I'm just going to tease him a little. He has to do this. She has to be put in her place."

"We'll be out of here in less than three months. Why don't you just let it go?"

"Cause I can't. I can't stand that bitch and she knows it. She would do the same thing to us if she had the chance." said Jen.

"What? Put ecstasy in our coffee? No, I don't think she would." said Stacey.

"You're too nice Stacey. Nice people just get shit on in this world."

"I just want to stay out of jail Jen," Stacey replied.

The next afternoon, the four of them were in the detention room, waiting for their shared misery to be over. Jen was tapping her pen on the desk.

"Can I help you Jennifer?" asked Miss Bly

"Do you have a boyfriend Miss Bly?" she asked

"I hardly see how that's any of your business Jennifer."

"I just thought we should get to know one another a little better since we're spending so much time together. So that's a no, I take it."

"No, as in it is none of your business."

"Come on Miss Bly, just cause it's none of our business doesn't mean you can't tell us. It's just a simple question," asked Matt.

"No, I do not have a boyfriend," she said looking rather annoyed at Jennifer.

"Aren't you going to ask if I have one?" asked Jennifer

"It's none of my business Jennifer," replied Miss Bly

"I don't have one either. See, we do have something in common," she said

Miss Bly gave her a fake smile and went back to her paperwork.

Jen continued to tap her pen on the desk. Miss Bly put her pen down and looked at Jennifer.

"Would you please stop that?" she asked.

"Do you want a boyfriend or a husband? Someone to come home to each night? Might make things a little better for you."

"Jennifer, I do not need a man in my life to validate my existence. I am perfectly happy the way I am," she said.

"You just don't seem very happy."

"I don't think you know me well enough to really say anything like that," said Miss Bly

"I don't need to know somebody to see if they are happy or not. It's pretty obvious."

"That's enough Jennifer. No more talking for the rest of detention."

"You know you're going to be fired at the end of the school year, right?" she said.

"Well, we will cross that bridge when we get there," said Miss Bly

"I wouldn't want to be jobless around here. My mom lost her job last year. It's pretty bad around here. I hope you are just renting." she said.

"Thank you for your concern Jennifer," she said and went back to grading papers.

"Miss Bly, have you ever thought about being a stripper?" asked Matt

"Excuse me, Matthew?" she said giving him a death glare.

"Well, I mean if you lose your job, you have to pay the bills somehow. You definitely have the body for it. I know the Magic Hat near Fort Riley would hire you in a second. It's good money."

"No, I am not going to become a stripper," she said

"So, what then? You're just going to be an unemployed teacher in town? Collect unemployment? What's your plan?" asked Matt

"Students....I realize that many of my peers consider you to be their equals and say things they really shouldn't. No one is going to be laid off. I fully intend to be back in the classroom next fall. I would ignore the gossip and fear-mongering of others. It is not productive."

"They say up to five teachers are going to get the ax. Mrs. Cavanaugh told Mr. Henderson last week. I heard them. They were both pretty upset. I don't think it's fear-mongering Miss Bly." said Matt.

"I think you would make a great stripper Miss Bly. Who knows, it could be your true calling," said Jennifer.

"That's enough Jennifer."

"What? I just wish I had a body like yours. God gave it to you for a reason." she said smiling.

Miss Bly put down her papers and looked at Jennifer.

"So, you believe that God gave me this body to be a stripper?" she asked

"Yeah, I do."

"Well, then Jennifer.....might I ask why God gave you your body? What does he intend for you to do with it?"

"Damn," said Zane, who tried not to laugh.

Jennifer was slightly overweight. She had been battling with her weight for years. It took every bit of strength she had not to lunge at Miss Bly.

"I really don't know Miss Bly," she said with tears in her eyes.

"I guess you can think about it for the rest of detention."

Matt and Stacey said nothing while Jennifer wiped away her tears and smoked a few cigarettes. Matt didn't want to get involved in this battle, but he knew somehow, he was going to be a part of it, whether he wanted to be or not.

"I'm going to get her. I don't care what happens. She's done."

"Jennifer, you did kind of walk into that one," said Stacey.

"Shut up. I can't stand her."

"Jen, we're going to be out of here soon. Just let it go. She's never going to change. She'll still be the same prude when she's fifty."

"Matt. I'm going to make it simple. You drop some ex in her coffee pot and you can have me and Stacey at the same time." she said.

"Um, what?" said Stacey.

"Oh, stop, you told me last night you would do him, so what's the big deal?"

"Jen....I did not," said Stacey getting red in the face.

"There it is, Matt. Both of us at the same time. That's my offer. All you have to do is put the shit in her coffee."

"Jennifer.....I don't know about this. I could go to jail if we get caught." said Matt.

"Don't be a wimp. It's not like your fingerprints will be on it. All we have to do is deny any involvement. They won't have any proof. They might suspect it's us, but really, the whole school are suspects."

"Can't we just have the three-way and not put anything in her coffee?" asked Matt.

"No....I want her so screwed up, she makes a fool out of herself. I'll record the whole thing and put it on the internet. Then maybe she'll know what it feels like."

"What feels like?" asked Matt

"To be humiliated and made fun of. She's a bully and she has to be taught a lesson."

"Right. I go and spike her coffee. You two run to the cops and I go to prison. Sounds tempting Jen, but I'm going to have to pass." said Matt.

Jen got right up in his face and kissed him passionately.

"We will give you a night you won't forget Matty. You'll be on your deathbed and still remember it," said Jennifer.

There it was. Matt would have to come through. He didn't care so much about Jen, she was kind of fat, but Stacey was hot. Every guy in school wanted her. What she was doing with Jennifer, he had no idea. They were kind of like the odd couple. He quickly realized that Jennifer was the brains of the operation. Stacey pretty much did whatever Jen told her to do.

"You guys better not back out. I think we should all do it. That way we're all responsible. That way we all go down together if we're caught." said Matt.

Jennifer and Stacey looked at one another. He could see the apprehension in Stacey's eyes. She knew they were about to open a giant can of worms with unpredictable results. She knew better. Matt knew better, but they decided to along with it anyway. What's the worst that could happen?

Matt was in bed trying to go over the whole thing in his head. As much as he wanted to back out, he also wanted Stacey. He could always just ask her out on her own, but she never did anything without Jen's approval. There were only forty seniors in his High School and a handful of girls worth dating. This might be his only chance to lose his v-card. He didn't want to blow it. He also didn't want to go to jail. If something went wrong, the cops were sure to investigate. As long as the other two didn't say anything, he would be fine, but he didn't trust Jennifer as far as he could throw her. He also didn't want to get in the middle of this bizarre chick fight between her and Miss Bly.

He would only put in one hit of ex. Just enough to cause her to get light-headed. Any more and they were asking for trouble. He usually took two hits when he wanted to get a good high, but they would be putting it in coffee and he had no idea what would happen if someone were to drink the coffee. Another thought occurred to him: *What if another teacher drank the coffee? What if he got someone else screwed up too?*

There were just too many unknowns at this point to go through with it. He should have just backed out. He could get Stacey on his own. She wasn't worth going to jail over. No one was.

The next day, it was down to only three of them. Zane was not in school. They were barely in the room for five minutes before Jennifer and Miss Bly went at it. Jennifer was tapping her pen on the desk again. Miss Bly stood up, walked over to her desk, and grabbed the pen out of her hand. Jennifer seemed very surprised. Miss Bly went back to her desk.

"Did you read the paper today Miss Bly? It said that job cuts at the high school were almost a certainty at this point," asked Jennifer

"So I hear."

"Better dust off the old resume. Sounds like you're going to be out of a job soon," said Jennifer who continued to smile at her.

"I guess we'll just have to wait and see."

"Our janitor Fred said he is retiring this year. They're offering to buy him out. Maybe you could take his job. I'm sure you'd be a great janitor."

"I had a rather different job in mind. I'm sure you have all heard that Mr. Ramsey will not be with us next year. He is going to be teaching English in Japan. I was thinking of applying for his job. I think that would be a much better bet than a janitor."

"You.....you're like what? 25 tops? They aren't going to let you be the new vice-principal. You're too young."

"Well, that is exactly what the new superintendent wants, youth. Since he and I did our Master's work together, you might say I know him quite well. Turns out I am the only one who has applied with the necessary credentials. It closes next week. It's between me and someone from New Jersey. I wonder who will get it?"

"You're going to be the new Vice?" asked Stacey

"Well, don't all act surprised. As much as I enjoy teaching, the real money is in administration. I know you were looking forward to me leaving but, I think I might just hang around for another decade or so. Get my P.H. D and move onto a large city. So many, many possibilities." said Miss Bly

"There's no way you are going to be the new Vice, Miss Bly. No one likes you."

"As long as the search committee likes me.....that's really all that matters," she said.

Jen was stunned. She had lost yet another battle with Miss Bly. This was getting serious. She couldn't let Bly get that job. She'd make life miserable for everyone. She had to stop her, no matter what the costs.

She looked over at Matt. She didn't have to say anything. He knew exactly what she was thinking. Matt knew he was this till the end. It wasn't just about getting into Stacey's pants at this point, he couldn't let her run this school. It just wouldn't be fair to the kids coming after him. She'd make everyone as miserable as she is. He turned to her and nodded. Jen smiled.

They were really going to do this.

"Jen, I know this might seem like a good idea right now, bad ideas usually sound great at the time, but we could get in serious trouble here. Just cause I'm the one with the ex, doesn't mean you guys won't get blamed also," said Matt.

"I'll be there, right alongside you, Matty....we both will. Right, Stacey?"

"Sure Jen....whatever you say," she said looking at Matt uncomfortably.

"There's no telling what she might do when she's high. She could end up being a total freak, who knows?"

"She'll probably just puke. Most people do the first time they take ex," said Matt.

"Maybe, maybe not. Alright, I will admit: Miss Bly is hot. I'm not going to lie here. A hot woman has needs, just like any other person. This could be your big chance, Matt."

"Last year, a few of us took some ex at a party. I wound up sleeping with a guy I wouldn't even have noticed had I not been so screwed up. That stuff does weird things to a woman's body.....very weird things." said Jen.

"Yeah.....I have seen some girls do some really weird shit on ex," said Stacey.

"Matt, she might not even remember what she's done. I didn't. I blacked out."

"You really think she would hook up with me?"

"Well, if we don't do this, you'll never really know, now will you?" said Jen.

They had maybe five minutes at the most. This had to go like clockwork. They knew that if anyone saw them, even another student, they would have to abort the mission. The last bell rang at 2:45. No one was ever in the teacher's room from the last bell till detention began. Problem was that the lounge was right next to a classroom. Mr. Bell was usually doing bus duty before he left. Bly would make sure the coffee pot was going, then leave for a few minutes, come back to fill up her mug, then head to detention. If she stayed for some reason, it was off. Matt didn't like the fact that he was trusting the girls that the cameras weren't working. If they caught them anywhere near that coffee pot, they were done. He met the girls near the second-floor bathroom. They all walked quickly down to the first floor. Just as Mr. Bell was about to come out of his classroom and down the hall, Matt grabbed the girls and pulled them against the wall. Thankfully, Mr. Bell went in the other direction. Matt looked around and darted into the lounge with the other two in tow. The coffee was already brewing.

"Remember our deal," he said looking at Jen.

He dumped the ex into the coffee pot. They walked out of the lounge and down the hallway. They were in the room for less than thirty seconds. Somehow, they had pulled it off without being seen. Matt was sweating bullets. *What in the hell had he just done?* He hoped it would just give her an upset stomach, maybe a headache. He didn't want this stuff to work, cause when it worked, *it really worked. You don't need a spaceship to go to the stars. Ex will get you there a whole lot cheaper and faster.*

The three of them were already seated when Miss Bly came in. No one said a word as she sat down at her desk. Matt was very worried. He wanted nothing to happen. Maybe she would let her guard down for five minutes and actually act like a real person. *Maybe he could get a look at those giant tits of hers.*

She had been working for about ten minutes when Matt noticed that she seemed uncomfortable. She stood up and took off her jacket. He looked over at Jen, who just looked at the clock.

"Students.....I'll be right back. No talking while I'm gone," she said. She walked out of the classroom. Jen got up and looked down the hallway.

"Do you see her?" asked Stacey

"No, she just went to the women's room. She'll be back."

"You better be in your seat when she comes back in," said Matt.

Jen sat back down at her desk. About five minutes later, Miss Bly came back in. For the first time since he could remember, she had her hair down. Matt thought she looked beautiful. She put up a good front, but underneath that coat of armor, there was an amazingly hot woman. He figured Jen was just jealous of her. She could have any guy she wanted and she didn't want anyone. The big question was: *Why not?*

He watched her out of the corner of her eye. The ex was working. It was loosening her up in ways he never imagined.

"Are you alright Miss Bly?" asked Stacey

"Of course Stacey.....I'm just not feeling like myself today. I don't know, I don't know how I feel."

"Well, you only have another half hour with us, then you can go home and puke your guts out," said Jennifer who was smiling a little too hard. She could barely contain herself.

"I'm sorry class, I'm not feeling well. I will be back shortly. Remain seated until four o'clock, am I clear?" she said as she hurried out the door.

Jen got up and checked on her to make certain she was out of sight.

"Holy shit, this is awesome! She's so screwed up, she went into the men's room!"

"Man, what the hell have we done?" asked Matt.

Jen walked over to Matt and kissed him on the lips. They remained like that for nearly half a minute.

"What you did was like the hottest thing I've ever seen. You're a legend, Matty. I will make sure every girl in school knows that too."

"I just hope she's okay," he said.

Miss Bly came back into the room a few minutes later. The three of them were seated, trying to ignore her. Miss Bly let out a massive fart from her chair, then she started giggling.

"Whoopsie!" she said as she started giggling almost hysterically. The three of them just started laughing as well. They all had their heads down, trying not to burst out laughing.

"Feeling okay, Miss Bly?" asked Jen

"I'm fine Jennifer, thank you for your concern. You will have to excuse me, class, I'm not feeling well today," she said.

"Maybe it was the coffee," said Jen

The three of them burst out laughing. Miss Bly looked at them somewhat puzzled.

"Jennifer, come up here please," said Miss Bly.

Jennifer got up and walked over to her desk.

"Do you have a lighter?"

"Um, sure."

"May I have it please?"

"I didn't know you smoked."

"I don't," she said

Jen gave Miss Bly her lighter. Miss Bly took it and lit one of her papers on fire.

"Feed me crap, I return crap. Simple as that," said Miss Bly.

"Miss Bly, what are you doing?"

"Getting rid of this rubbish. A high school senior who can't even compose complete sentences. His mother must be so proud."

"Miss Bly, are you feeling okay? You don't seem like yourself today." said Matt trying not to laugh."

Miss Bly watched the paper catch on fire. She threw it into the trash. Jen ran over to the water fountain and filled a cup with water. She poured it on the fire and quickly doused it.

"Miss Bly, I think you have officially lost it. Hey, how bout we see those giant boobies of yours. Let all the boys and Lesbos know what they've been missing." said Jen as she pulled out her camera phone.

"You first Jen," she said as she started laughing.

"Oh, no...I insist Miss Bly. I've got nothing on you. This is your show, not mine." said Jen

They could see Miss Bly was now very screwed up. She could barely keep her eyes open and was slurring her words as if she were drunk. It never did occur to the three of them that Miss Bly was on prescription drugs and mixing them with ecstasy could be fatal.

"Go Miss Bly, take it off," said Jen with the camera in her face.

Miss Bly was now seductively stripping in front of the three of them. Matt could not believe what was happening. Even Stacey was in shock.

"Miss Bly, you are a closet freak!" said Jen.

Miss Bly fell over and onto the floor, clutching her chest. Matt and Stacey ran over to her to try and help. She was gasping for air.

"Oh, Jesus.....what have we done?" said Stacey.

"What do you mean?" said Miss Bly with a very weak voice.

"We put some shit in the coffee pot. I'm sorry, it was stupid," said Matt.

Jen smacked Matt in the head.

"Idiot.....what happens if she lives?" she asked.

Miss Bly closed her eyes and went limp.

"Holy shit....we killed her," said Stacey starting to cry.

"No....she still has a pulse," said Matt.

"This is just great. Right when we were about to see her strip, she craps out on us. Typical Miss Bly." said Jen

Miss Bly suddenly opened her eyes and looked directly at Jen. It was the strangest look. It was as if she was neither awake nor asleep but in some in-between state of consciousness.

"Goodness child, you are a vile little thing, aren't you? If EVE had fucked that serpent in the garden, you are what would have come out," said Miss Bly

The three of them were stunned. Matt nearly shit himself. What the hell did she just say.....and why did her voice change like that?

"I'm sorry.....what did you just say?" asked Jennifer.

"I didn't say anything," she said quickly standing up.

"The hell you didn't. We all heard you."

"Jennifer, I didn't say anything," said Miss Bly

"Right....okay Miss Bly.....you know, I can't stand you either, but I would never say anything like that," she said with a blank look on her face.

"Nothing good will ever pop out between your legs. You are always going to be one cookie or ice cream sandwich away from happiness. Some women have grace, some have beauty.....you have nothing but cellulite. Too bad the obese can't just eat their fat away."

The three of them were speechless. Matt had no idea what to say. Ex wasn't supposed to do this. One minute Miss Bly was passed out, now she was in some kind of weird trance-like state.

"FUCK YOU, BITCH!" screamed Jennifer.

In what seemed like only seconds, Miss Bly knocked the chairs out of her way and grabbed Jennifer's neck, picking her up out of her seat and flung her against the wall. She was now pinned. Miss Bly had her by her neck against the wall.

"Jesus, Miss Bly, calm down, what the hell is wrong with you?" said Matt as he went to pull her off Jennifer.

"You think life is going be any better in Hollywood, with all the freaks and faggots, boy? You're going to do things for money you could never imagine. Your brother doesn't own a moving company, he makes his living in the company of other men....and so will you, 'cause that's who you are, deep down inside. A little fag....a little fag with a big appetite for drugs."

Matt pulled her off Jennifer, who collapsed on the ground. She got up and punched Miss Bly as hard as she could. She barely flinched.

"Ow, sweetie, your husband is going to hit you harder than that. When your hubby finds out you are barren, he doesn't take it very well," said Miss Bly

The three of them looked right at Miss Bly. Her face was different. Her eyes were different. This was not the same Miss Bly.....this was something else entirely.

"She's got crazy eyes," said Stacey.

Miss Bly somehow had the three of them cornered in the back of the classroom.

"Miss Bly, I think we're going to leave now," said Matt

"Yeah, we're out of here."

"Where are you going to go children? What are you going to say? I put drugs in Miss Bly's coffee and now she's crazy? It would be terrible if something were to happen to her, now wouldn't it. It wouldn't be too hard to figure out. How long would it take you three to crack? You wouldn't last a week. If she dies, you'll be charged with her murder? Is that what you want?"

"Why do you keep saying she? Who are you?"

"I'm just a close and personal friend of Pamela."

"You mean you aren't Miss Bly? Holy shit, this is getting really weird. I'm out of here." said Stacey.

"Leave now bitch and Pam dies."

"Why is your voice different?" asked Jen

"Because whatever this thing is....it isn't Miss Bly," said Matt

"Very good Matthew. Sit in your chairs. You will leave when I dismiss you." the thing said.

The three of them sat nervously down. Matt couldn't believe this was happening. What the hell had they done? He had seen people wig out on ex before, but this was something entirely new.....and entirely horrifying.

They sat in silence. Miss Bly, or whatever she now was, sat down at the desk and took off her panties. She threw them at Matt. They hit his face. He didn't even bend over to pick them up.

"Are you Miss Bly?" asked Jen nervously.

"I am her very special friend. We were best friends when she was younger. We used to play together all the time. We would play for hours. Sometimes days, uninterrupted. She is my most favorite person in the whole world." said the thing.

You could have heard a pin drop in that room. Matt could actually hear Jennifer breathing. He knew he should just run out the door, but what if that thing followed through on its threat?

"So, you are not Miss Bly? Who are you?"

"Pamela created me and in some ways, I created her. I live inside her. She lives inside me. I help her sometimes when she is troubled. I do the bad things for her, so she doesn't have to."

"What do you mean bad things?"

"Pamela has gotten so much attention from men because of her overpowering beauty. Some of the men abused her, so I had to stop them."

"You mean you killed somebody?" asked Jennifer

"I made them stop hurting her. You may call it what you like."

"Do you have a name?" asked Matt.

"My name is Olive. I am the fruit of the Olive tree."

"Where is Pamela right now, Olive?"

"She is resting. When she awakes, I will leave and go back to my world."

"Where is your world?" asked Matt

"Right next to yours. Pamela is the only one who can see my world. My world is in between kisses and tears."

"Olive...can you bring Pamela back now?"

"She will come when she is ready. She is not yet ready."

"What did you mean when you said my husband will hit me harder?" asked Jennifer.

"I can see into your future. I can see into your past. You are all going to lead troubled lives. Pamela wants to help you avoid the pain she has experienced. Your souls are not yet wise enough to accept her assistance."

"You know the future?" asked Matt

"I know many things."

"When am I going to die then, Olive?" asked Jennifer.

"You will perish when you are 54 years old from Ovarian cancer. You will have no children because you are not fertile."

"When am I going to die?" asked Stacey nervously.

"Four years from now, you die in a car accident."

"That's impossible. There's no way anyone could know that," said Matt.

"Do you want to know your future boy? Do you want to know about the men? One of them gets you very sick. You die before your 30th birthday."

"What are you talking about?"

"You make a choice my boy. A very difficult choice. You choose to sell your body, rather than return home to Kansas. It is a decision that costs you your life."

"No way. You can't know something like that. It hasn't happened yet."

"Oh yes, it has. You just don't know it yet."

"What else happens? What else goes wrong?" asked Jennifer.

"Little boys playing with matches unleash the fires of hell across this land. So many perish. So many never smile again."

"What do you mean? Can you be more clear?" asked Matt

"It is created by scientists to impress other scientists, but it escapes the lab. It escapes the labs and kills billions. So many little children suffer. So many others do not care."

"When does all of this happen?"

"Two years from now. Two years and a few tears."

The three of them stared at Miss Bly in silence. Matt's heart was beating hard. He could almost hear it beating in his chest.

"Is that when the world ends? Does it end a few years from now?"

"By the year 2036, there are only about forty million people left alive on the planet. If that is what you call the end of the world, then I would say yes."

No one knew what to say. Everyone was silent. It was Jennifer who finally spoke up.

"Olive.....please bring back Miss Bly.....please don't hurt her."

The thing looked right at Jennifer. That's when she knew that whatever Olive was, it was not human. Not anymore.

"We will meet again children....till then, I bid you farewell," it said.

Miss Bly collapsed on the ground. Matt ran over to her and helped her into a chair. Slowly, but surely, she came too.

"My goodness, what happened?"

"You fainted Miss Bly," said Stacey looking nervously at the other two.

"Oh.....well, I do apologize students. I don't know what came over me. I suddenly felt very weak. How long was I out?"

"Just a few minutes.....Miss Bly.....do you remember anything in those few minutes?" asked Matt.

"Strange.....I felt like I was a little girl again, playing in my parent's house. I've got a terrible headache. I guess I'm fine now. Let's get back to the task at hand, shall we?" she said and lifted herself up.

She looked back at the three students, who had a very blank look on their faces. It was almost as if they were in shock.

When the clock struck four, the three of them got up and slowly made their way to the door.

"Students...I won't be here tomorrow. Mr. Bell will be doing detention. I trust you won't be late."

"No Miss Bly, we won't be late," said Jennifer.

"Yes, well, see you in class then," she said and went back to grading papers.

It wasn't until they were outside that Matt spoke up.

"Was that real? What the fuck happened in there?" he asked

"I don't know Matt. I really don't," said Stacey

"Was Olive for real? I mean that wasn't just Miss Bly playing a prank on us, was it?" asked Matt

"I don't think she's that good of an actress. I don't think she realized what just happened. I think she really did black out."

"Was that thing for real? Is the world going to end in a few years?" asked Matt

"She said I was going to die in a car crash?" asked Stacey

"She was I was going to be a gay prostitute and die from AIDs or something," said Matt.

"Come on you two. I think it was just Miss Bly having some fun with us. Man is that bitch ever strong though. I thought she was going to lift me off my feet. Hope I never have to throw down with her. Well, Matty....you came through. I guess we owe you a free fuck. So where do you want to do it? My place or yours." said Jennifer.

"To be honest with you Jennifer, I'm not really in the mood," said Matt.

"What, I thought this is what you wanted?"

"Aren't you concerned? You know at what age you are going to die! Doesn't that bother you?"

"What? Just cause some ghost says something, I'm supposed to believe it? I think we have seriously underestimated Miss Bly. She probably had use set up from the start. She saw us spike that coffee pot and decided to play it up. I knew she was onto us." said Jennifer.

"I'm not so sure Jen. Did you see the look in her eyes? It was like her eyes were rolled into the back of her head. I didn't even see her pupils. It was so weird." said Stacey.

"That wasn't Miss Bly talking.....it was something else."

"Of course it was. God, you two are so gullible. Do you really think there is some kind of a monster in her? Think about it for a second: if some kind of plague is going to kill all these people in a few years, then how do we manage to survive? Are we just special or something? She fell right into her own trap."

"Maybe we do survive, somehow," said Matt

"A monster that has killed people. Be interesting to see how many guys ended up dead when they were around her," said Stacey.

"You guys are being ridiculous. I got to hand it to her, she is good. I mean she is really, really good. She even had me fooled. She should be an actress after that performance. Come on guys....none of that was real. You have to know that."

"Knowing it and believing it isn't the same thing Jen.

"Guys. You didn't really buy that act, did you? Come on Matt. Everyone knows you're as straight as an arrow. You wouldn't bang other guys for money. What kind of a lowlife does that?" asked Jen

"I'm never getting in a car again. Not ever."

"Oh, Jesus Stacey, you too? Do you really think you're going to die in a car wreck? We had a golden opportunity to bust Miss Bly and we blew it. We almost had her top off for God's sake!"

"Yeah....almost. Jen, we could have killed her," said Matt.

"But we didn't. She's fine. She just passed out, that's all. She probably doesn't even remember anything. I can't believe you two idiots ratted us out? What if she does remember? Then we're screwed. We confessed!"

"I was so scared. I thought we killed her," said Stacey.

Jen just shook her head and walked away. Miss Bly never said a word about it and neither did they. What little video Jen had of Miss Bly undressing was quickly deleted. She didn't want to be caught holding any evidence. A few weeks later, the three of them had pretty much moved on and were looking forward to graduation.

The three of them parted ways after High School. They all left town, but Matt never did go to Los Angeles. He got a job in Kansas City working for a paving company. Stacey and Jennifer went to work in Texas. Matt had pretty much forgotten about that afternoon until one day, two and a half years later, when his phone rang. He was in his apartment which he shared with two other people.

"Hello?"

"Matt? Is that you? It's Stacey Miller, from school. Remember me? I got your number from your mom. I hope you don't mind me calling."

"No, not at all. How have you been?"

"Fine, I guess. I work in Dallas. Nothing glamorous, but it pays the bills. The reason I'm calling Matt, is because...well, have you seen the news today?"

"No, no I haven't. I just got home."

"You might want to turn it on. The government has quarantined some big lab in Atlanta. They work on viruses. They have also closed a hospital nearby. They aren't allowing anyone out. They are soldiers in masks everywhere down there."

Matt turned on his TV. Sure enough, the national news did have a story about a lab being quarantined. The other channels carried the story about the hospital being closed as well. It seems two workers from the lab were brought to the hospital by ambulance. The EMTs were being quarantined as well.

"Matt.....it's been two years and five months since that day. You don't suppose that thing was telling the truth, do you?" she asked.

Matt felt like someone had just punched him in the gut. It all came flooding back to him, all at once. He remembers everything. Especially that weird voice and the way Miss Bly's eyes looked. It was like he had stepped into something horrible and only now was it finally beginning to catch up to him.

"I wouldn't worry about it Stacey. Remember, it said I was going to become a gay prostitute in LA, remember? I think Jennifer was right. Miss Bly was just having a little fun with us, that's all. I wouldn't worry about it. Some worker probably dropped a beaker or something and now everyone is panicking. I'm sure it will be history in a few days or so."

"God, I hope so Matt. I really do. You know, ever since that day at school. I never have been able to get into a car. I have to take the bus everywhere. It sucks." she said.

"Really?"

"Yes. I have tried over the past few years to get over it, but I just can't. I don't want to die and I'm afraid if I get in a car, I'll die."

"It was a weird day, that's for sure, but it doesn't mean anything. None of her predictions have ever come true."

"No, not yet anyway."

"Somebody probably farted in the lab and it set off some kind of alarm. This will be over in a few days."

"You always were an optimist Matty. That's why I always liked you. No matter how bad things got, you always looked on the bright side of it."

Only it didn't just blow over. Within a week, dozens were infected and dying. A scientist had somehow infected himself and other lab workers with a highly contagious flu virus that had no cure. They were like children playing with fire, ignoring mother natures' warnings not to proceed any further, only now it was too late. The sick and dying were piling up everywhere. The flame had been lit. There would be no stopping it now. It was like trying to stop an avalanche with a piece of plywood.

She called him one night, terrified. Her roommate had contracted the flu. Stacey didn't want to go back to their apartment and risk getting infected. She was crying as she called Matt, who had been unemployed ever since his crew had stopped working on the highway. Too many workers were calling in sick. Each day the news got worse and worse. The flu was spreading and people were beginning to panic. In some areas, it already was a full-blown panic.

"Matty.....please, I need you now. God, I need you so bad. I just want things to be like the way they were."

"I don't think things are ever going to be like they were Stacey. Let's meet up and go back home together. Are your parents ok?"

"I don't know. I haven't been able to reach them in over a week," she said sobbing.

Matt met up with Stacey at a rest stop outside of Texarkana. They threw their arms around one another and kissed for what seemed like an eternity.

"Jesus, Matt. I'm so scared. I'm so fucking scared."

"Easy baby. Did you get a hold of Jen?"

"Yes. She's on her way back right now. Matt, there are roadblocks everywhere. How are we going to get back home?"

"Take the back roads. There's a lot of room between here and home. Let's just hope that Jen makes it back alive.

They drove back home, stopping only twice for gas. Matt made sure he wore nitrile gloves when he touched the gas pump handle. Stacey held his hand for most of the trip. She hadn't been able to reach anyone else in her family since the government cut off communication when they declared an emergency a few weeks ago.

Their town was almost empty. The school had been closed for weeks. Food was scarce as well. They only had cell phone service and even they didn't know how much longer that was going to work.

"We'll never get near the high school. We have to go to her house. It's the only way." said Matt.

"I'll tell Jen to meet us there. She hated her so much, she even followed her home one day."

"Let's hope she's still alive."

They pulled into the cul de sac at the edge of town. Six months ago, this was home to some of the most well-to-do people in town. Now it was empty, just like the rest of the town. Matt wasn't sure if the virus had wiped them out, or the panic. Either way, they saw very few people on the streets.

They stopped outside Miss Bly's house. There was a note on the door, saying that she would be staying at the high school and anyone who needed her help could find her there.

"That seems very risky. The virus can remain active for days. All it takes is one infected person to sneeze and she's dead." said Stacey.

"Something tells me Olive won't let that happen."

The three of them met in the empty parking lot. He gave Jen a quick hug.

"I'm ready for that threesome now," he said jokingly.

They walked into school. For some reason, the front doors had been left open.

They walked into Miss Bly's classroom and saw her sitting at her desk. There were a few other people in the classroom as well, whom he did not recognize.

"Do you have the ex?" asked Stacey.

"Right here in my pocket," said Matt.

"Welcome back students. It's so nice to see familiar faces again. Please, take your seats. The class will begin shortly." she said.

"Jesus, is she really serious?" asked Jen

"Just play along Jen, we have to get Olive to come out."

"Then what?"

"I don't know, but Olive is the only one who can tell us what to do. We just have to be patient.

"Do you guys have any smokes or food? I'm starving."

"That's enough talking Miss Hopkins, please take your seat. Today's lesson will be on the New Deal. There will be a quiz after the lecture so, be prepared to take notes.

"Miss Bly?" asked Jen, raising her hand.

"Yes, Jennifer?"

"I think we should get some coffee. I'll go and make us a pot in the teacher's lounge. With your permission of course.

"Permission granted, just be prompt about it, we have a lot of ground to cover today," said Miss Bly, who was hanging onto her sanity by a thread.

"Yes Miss Bly," said Jen as she got up. When Miss Bly had her back turned, Matt gave her the ex. Jen stopped by her desk and grabbed her coffee cup. She looked over at the other two. The

kid sitting across from Matt had clearly soiled himself. It was forming a puddle underneath the desk. Matt tried not to gag when the smell reached his nostrils. This kid was clearly in shock. They all were to some degree. In a world gone mad, this ultimate act of insanity was their only chance for survival. Nothing made sense anymore.

The three of them looked at one another. Matt smiled, then he started laughing. Miss Bly stopped the lesson.

"What's so funny Matthew? Care to share it with the class?" she asked

"I was just thinking. It's true what they say: you never really do leave High School, now do you?"

Matt was laughing so hard, that the tears started running down his cheeks. Before he knew it, his laughter had turned into something else. He was crying so hard he could barely control himself. He needed to talk to Olive just one more time. Just one more time, before the disease took Miss Bly and everyone else. They were running out of time. He hoped Jen knew how to make coffee. Their lives depended on it.