

# drug story

*a novel*

*this system's gonna fall soon, to an  
angry young tune  
and that's a concrete cold fact.  
- Sixto Rodriguez*

## Prologue

i come to my senses shivering in the cold night silence, starin throo yellery eyes an i've bin blowin shit up my nose for the last 5 years or more, waitin for the inevitable, an i've not just got a broken face i got a broken soul. life had bin nuthin to me for Christ knows how long, nuthin but endless mind-numbing teevee an chronic masturbation to alleviate the desperate tedium of the dripping hours an dripping days an dripping years w/no pleasure in life no more, it's just the involuntary ejaculation of the hanged man.

i am alone in the world an i'm sweating out a fever like i got sumthin crawlin beneath my skin an though i'm not exactly loused i got the dart still stickin out my wrist, i torn the vein an it's comin out a me like the blud a fuckin Christ on the cross. bombed out my head i wake up

slumped at the wheel a the hired Dodge pick-up skidded to a halt in a ditch by the side a the road on the 110 comin west or east or north i dunno which way from Pasadena, just outside a Los Angeles. i flick on the interior light. my watch says 2:10 a.m. dash lights burnin red, i fire her up an pull back onto the freeway, tyres peelin all over the road. radio tuned to 95.5 KLOS FM, dj crankin out Mudhoney's *Touch Me I'm Sick* an i'm all out a donkey an all i am thinkin about is where the fuck i'm gonna score some more an now the hire company gonna be tryna sting me like a 1000 \$\$ or sumthin stupid for the scratches running right down the passenger side a the Dakota V6. i turn the radio right up an stare transfixed out the windscreen dead ahead, big city lights sparklin like diamonds in the distant night.

it's May 1990 an last 3 months i bin workin illegally, sum shit job at sum orange farm in Redlands, just kinda east of L.A, picking oranges, just tryna scrape together enough cash-in-hand for a plane ticket home to get away from this insane goth chick called Lilian. Lilian was originally from sum where in San Fran, who i'd met an ended up shackled up together in East Hollywood in a rental on Yucca Street, couple a blocks away from the Capitol Records building while she was in Hollywood waitin tables at the Blue Monkey bar an dreamin of movie stardom like just about every

other girl waitin tables in Hollywood. she was totally mad, always accusing me of completely off the wall stuff. 1 of her best ones was accusing me of trying to put thoughts in her head.

half the street was a building site, with signs up offering luxury accommodation in Spanish villa style apartments. Lilian had black hair down to her waist an despite the fact she looked like Vampira an i was gettin sucked-off to death, she was kind a skinny an all body dismorphic fucked-up in the head an wound up 1 day up on the roof garden a the apartment in the blazin California sun cranked up to the max on sum shit or other, havin another 1 of her freak-outs, the mad bitch screamin she wuz gonna jump. an the thing was the stupid bitch probably wouldn't have even killed herself, she'd a just busted her legs or sumthin stupid.

i wasn't gonna fuck around no more, i was just about done, man. i walked out a there an carried on walkin.

after spending 3 days sobering up in a shuttered motel room just off the 405 i abandoned the damaged Dodge in the motel parking lot an cabbed it over to LAX at 5 a.m on a clear blue-skied Monday morning.

my flight home was at 10.

# 1

i never usually know what day it is. i navigate time by gig dates on my tickets. right now i'm lit up like fuckin gelignite. i'm at a party at somebody's house an i don't even know whose house it is or where it is or how i got here an the DJ's blastin out Led Zeppelin's *Communication Breakdown*. still got the ticket in my pocket cuz i ain't even bin home yet. it's August 22nd, 1991 an last night i was at the Mudhoney/Hole gig at Goldwyn's on Suffolk Place an i wish i could remember more about it but everything is a blur an i barely remember nuthin w/all the whiskey an speed pulsing throo my blood an permeating my muscles an sinew.

the smoke machines are pumpin out clouds a rollin fog an derz a black girl layed out on the kitchen table gettin finger-raped. she's mostly naked, tits exposed, skirt up around her waist, bunch a dumb-looking, dipshit grunge rock kids standin around watching an sum gimp in a Monochrome Set tshirt got his fingers pushed in her cunt an he's ramming them in hard but she don't move at all she's like comatose an then i see the empty bottle a spirits on the floor an the makeshift disco lights propped up all over the place are goin blam blam blam like gun shots in my eyes while sum other wasted kid leans into me, he looks

outta place like he's just sum college disco type in a Liverpool football shirt, you know his eyes all wide like he's absorbing the whole scene, but he's like twenny yrs old or sumthin, a skeletal pale face smokin a cigarette an he's got the shoulder length wavy brown hair as if he thinks he's Jim fuckin Morrison or sum one, acting all languid an detached cuz he's on sum chickenshit lizard-king trip. an the kid is absolutely pissed up out his fuckin face an he goes: "i been there like that though, know what i mean? i mean you get a girl, man, an she just lies there an lets you do it. an you don't even think about it at the time but you kinda know she's not really into it but she just lies there an let's you do it anyway. she just lies there an totally let's you do it an next day bitch calls it rape."

i don't even know what this douche-bag college kid's talkin about all i can really hear when he opens his mouth is wah wah wah wah wah, i mean this kid's a real dipshit but i just nod an repeat "yeah yeah, they just lie there an let you do it" an then i walk away w/my empty glass back to the cabinet where they keep the drinks to reload.

i snorted a couple a rails w/my girlfriend Amy in the bedroom earlier an i've definitely reached escape velocity. i use the term girlfriend loosely but whatever she is to me, now i've gone an lost her sum where an it don't even

occur to me that the piece of bar-room trash that she is mighta fucked off sum where w/sum fuckin guy as per her usual m.o an like a dweeb i'm wandering about the crowds a people from room to room in this huge Victorian 3 storey town-house so blitzed i feel like i'm strung out across the heavens an i could crush the gods themselves between my hands.

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everythin is a haze an i don't remember leaving the house an when i do i'm so wrecked i don't even recognise what district i'm in, sumwhere up Handsworth. but i remember the ride home. kind of. bits of it anyway. sitting alone in back a the taxi an still totally fuckin wired, lookin out the rear winnder like i'm seeing the world in cinemascope w/everything spinning round me like a grainy video tape running on >>FF. the deserted streets all grey an cold, an all pervading sense of everything colliding w/the moon beautiful an massive, hanging low on the horizon like a pale blue skull between the angular tower blocks an the haze of orange phosphorescent street lights reflected on the glistening wet streets as dark clouds drift across a fathomless sky in their irreversible succession.

we stop at sum red lights where on the corner there's sum kinda whore-drama going

on, a whole bunch a dime-store hookers all screamin an bitchin at each other an they're all decked out in their high heels an hotpants an big hair like bitches in heat an i'm thinking to myself they don't look half bad. but they're all screamin an shoutin an i turn to the driver an i go: "what the holy fuckadoodle is goin on here, man?" an the muslim taxi driver in his little white cap turns in his seat an says: "you stay away from them type a dirty girls, you know? they're bad, man. bad bad girls, eh?" he points down at my crotch an says, "you wanna ketch sum bad thing down there, eh? ha ha ha... you wanna ketch crabs, eh? you stay away from them girls." an then the traffic light changes to green an he shakes his head an half smiles at their antics an goes tut tut tut w/his tongue as we pull away. it starts raining an he switches the windscreen wipers on an i am hypnotised by their back an forth motion as we shift throo the empty night.

but i am the lonliest man in the world, i am the one you will see in the cafés staring into his coffee or up at the sky, i'll be watching all the people go by w/their expressionless faces, disengaged from my surroundings. but it's all just images. images are everything. i watch not like a human being but like a Super 8, capturing tiny moments in time, replaying the f-l-i-c-k-e-r-i-n-g images in my mind over an over, trying to make sense of the world. an so far i can't make

none at all.

driver got the radio on, sum obscure channel or other, i don't understand the constant babble, they're talking in Urdu or sum such language an there's no music, it just sounds like a 100 voices all jabbering at once even though there's only probably 4 of em. driver turns to face me again an waves a weary hand at the radio an sez: "ahh, they're saying Britain is a bastard becuz every time there is conflict between India an Pakistan both countries buy weapons from UK." i'm not really interested in all that politics stuff but i reply gleefully anyway: "hey, they can't say things like that in this country can they?" an the driver eyes me in his rear view mirror an laughs, "same in any country, man. you can say what you like... as long as it's what they want you to say."

driver flicks over the channel an there's about 5 seconds of *Should I Stay Or Should I Go* by the Clash before he knocks the radio off altogether.

"see, here you got your black people," the driver says. "nobody likes them, right? me, i'm from Pakistan. if i go to India they think i'm a nigger. over there, Pakistanis are treated like niggers. customer i had in my cab other day was from Estonia, she told me Russians are their niggers. every society got to have sum body to call nigger. makes them feel better about themselves, you know what am saying?"



it's abysmally sad that most people's lives amount to nuthin. eat sleep fuck piss talk. mostly talk. an they talk shit. their lives don't mean anything, their whole existence is nuthin more than a fleeting anomaly on a radar screen sum where. that's all everyone does, eat sleep fuck piss talk. but mostly talk. everybody's so fulla shit an in the end people always lose. in the end people always lose everything becuz their lives are hopeless an they're all so stupid they swallowed all the bullshit that's been shovelled to them. but there are no empirical truths, an every human thought, every ideology is flawed sum where, sum how. we are each of us alone, no one truly knows anyone else an becuz we are all egocentric we're all always talking about different things an simply assuming we understand each other.

"yeah, the Jews daynt kill no Jesus," i tell the driver, "it was the blacks." an he looks an he laughs an sez, "nah, nah the blacks didn't kill him. but you get what am sayin, brutha. you get what am sayin." an he stares at me in his mirror an goes: "i like you, kid. i like the cut of your jib."

"yeah," i say. "our drums are beatin to the same tune."

we head towards the city centre, faux glamour of the city lights reflecting across the dark windscreen like sum kinda strange an beautiful bright night flowers.

must a got home totally zonked out bout like 4 a.m. i wake up at like 1 in the afternoon an fumble around in the bed for the bottle of whisky that i passed out drinkin, it's poured out all over the bedsheets an the place stinks a whisky fumes. haul myself outta bed w/a face like Mick Hucknall eating a jar of Swarfega. hard reality of hitting baseline now, muscles all stiff like rigor mortis is prematurely setting in to my living tissue, an i go to the bathroom to douse my face in cold water to try an assuage the hypersomnia an derz blud in the basin all pretty bright red against the white porcelain an i mean like a load of it like sum body's throat bin cut but i got no idea where it's come from till i look in the mirror an see the congealed blud round my mouth an realise i've coughed all that shit up w/no recollection of doing it. i'm as good as dead, no feelings left for anyone or anything, just a dead-eyed stare in the mirror. i go to the refigerator an get a can a Coca-Cola. ice cold an oil-slick black, effervescent on the tongue. euphoria.

i live in a flat above a closed down take-away joint called the Pilot Burger Bar on Hill Street an i can hear the rain against the winnder above the constant throb of traffic an trains makin that slow laborious clatter in an outta New Street Station. resounding noize of police

sirens. same cycle of events every day, the whole city like a clockwork toy or as if we all got a script to read an we're all just riding the carousel round an round an i feel like i'm crashed back down in a world that don't really fucking exist. none of it seems real to me, seems like everything just runs on automatic an 1 day i will be gone but the circus will simply carry on an on, an endless amorphous shifting mass of meaninglessness.

setting aside moral or political leanings, setting aside your learned moral indoctrinations, notions of right an wrong, i am more interested in how an why human minds come to fruition in the universe - an it don't matter if it is the mind of Hitler or the mind of Henry Kissinger or the mind of Leo Baekeland or the mind of Philo Farnsworth or anybody else that changed the world - an how those minds dissipate again. i wonder how all our minds slot into the supreme universal mechanism.

i pick up the phone, try to call Amy but there's no answer so i roll back into bed feelin like i could sleep for a 1000 years, wanting to wake up in a different time an a different world.

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at about 4 p.m, i slot an old porno tape in the Panasonic vhs player an ff>> it past all the

credits. i sit on the sofa an stare at the pieces of flesh shifting about the screen like little string puppets. premise is this: blonde in black catsuit is sum kind of assassin. she's come down the building on ropes, prized open the winnder an climbed into this hotel bedroom where this guy is sleeping. as far as porn goes, this is big budget shit. she's sposed to kill this guy but she pulls back the bedsheets, Beretta M9 held in her hand, an sees his cock an whimpers "oh my god, it's so big." she drops the gun an falls to her knees in worship an takes the vile lookin oiled-up thing in her mouth. there's sum kinda camera triggercut an next thing you know she's out of all her clothes an the guy flips her down on the bed an fucks her senseless / another triggercut / an sum other naked girl, a skinny freakish brunette w/big fake bazooka tits comes outta nowhere, prob from behind the camera or sum shit an starts watching what's going on an she leans against the doorframe, lickin her lips an rubbing her clit, going: "oh...oh...oh my pussy is so wet."

they're all talking this synthetic rhetoric shit like oh yeah fuck that pussy, fuck my tight little pussy an like oh yeah baby suck that cock an the assassin is sucking the guy's cock again as he stretches out on the bed gettin ready to deliver the big-ass money shot. she opens her mouth - rocket-red lipstick lips - an tells him: "gimme yr cum, spray me w/yr cum hmm oh

yeah i wanna taste yr cum" as he masturbates in her face. he grabs her hair an violently yanks her head back hard an says "open yr fucking mouth here it comes ya little bitch" an then smooth jazz muzak kicks in, killin the scene like you're in an elevator or hanging on the telephone on hold to British Gas an the assassin sticks out her tongue an licks his cock an takes the blast of cum in her mouth an in her hair an she rubs it on her tits, her body jerking as the brunette pounds her from behind w/a massive veiny pinkflesh strap-on that she musta pulled out her ass or sum-fucking-where becuz it was nowhere to be seen before. she pounds away w/the strap-on yelling "yeah yeah yeah yeah" until the assassin screams "i'm coming" an collapses, pussysquirting what's clearly piss all over the guy who lies there an takes it, going in a deep, thick voice: "oh fuck yeah gimme yer juices, bay-beee."

i haven't even managed to masturbate, i've fallen asleep on the sofa when i'm woken up by the phone. it's gone dark an i turn on the table lamp an extinguish the cigarette i've dropped on the carpet in the ashtray. i pick up the cordless handset an walk over to the winnder thinking it must be Amy as i press it to my ear. pasted on the billboard across the street above the NCP carpark is sum army recruitment ad that's got a picture of a soldier in full battle dress takin aim

w/a rifle an it says: ...**OR PERHAPS YOU FIND A NIGHT IN FRONT OF THE TV MORE EXCITING?** over which sum commie pinko bastard grafittied in black spray paint:

Ⓐ **aristocracies have to convince us war is glorious because they expect us to die protecting their finances** Ⓐ

an then in big red letters sum body else added:  
**YOU GOTTA FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT TO PAAAARTY!!!**

but it ain't Amy, it's Superfast on the line an he says, "glue yourself together, gringo. i'll be round in bout twenny minutes."

an that is that. click. he puts the phone down.

**END OF SAMPLE**

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