

**Day On the Edge
of the
Nexus of the Universe**

I remember waking this morning relieved that I just got over a nasty bug that tore through my lungs. It was a stack of days filled with spitting hunks of phlegm and garbage from my lungs. This morning it was over, and the night before helped things out a bit. The night before, I took a Salsa class with a gal I work with and had a nice make out session to boot. The only hitch was that it was a married woman. But, I was willing to rationalize my way into making this a victory. I just got out of a vicious relationship with a just sainted lesbian girl. So, I needed a bit of lovin' and if it came from a conscientious married woman, I was going to take it. And that I did.

So, the day of sun began with a new body. As noted, I went through this fucking cold shit for about 4 days prior. I woke and went down for a pot of French roasted coffee. Yea, it's a gig I pull. Takes some effort, but the cup is phenomenal. It was one of the more endearing gifts from the ex-girlfriend. Over the cup of coffee, I decide to deposit a check for \$4,888 dollars into the bank before going into work. I got the check from an IRA account I set up for a 401(k) roll over from years ago. It had been sitting in an account accumulating interest.

After a talk a week earlier with some cat on the scene named FC, I decided to take some action. As I was having a good swill of coffee with several blokes, the guy known as FC sat next to me and started talking. He's a bit effeminate, but I hear he's completely straight and just a bit fucked out of his head. That's fine. I like kids like this. I can relate in my own way. So, FC mentions that he recently filed for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy. He's about 25 and already went down for the count. He was talking about some high bills against him and it was time. Without real fear or resentment in his eyes, he just flat told me that he was done and threw in the towel. After a couple more questions, I started pondering my own debt.

The only real debt I have is two credit cards at about \$5,500, a student loan at \$8,000 and about 700 bucks left to pay off a new 1985 Jeep. But, I thought I would do something to get rid of the fucking credit cards. Done with coming up with ways to pay them off, my only viable way was to pay them off in lump sums. With my broke ass and sprawling interest rates, there's no way I can do anything other than blot them out of existence by paying them off in one shooting match. So, over my French squeezed blend that morning, I was writing one of two checks that would pay off my credit cards for good. The deposit slip ready and the check filled out, I was ready to fly out into the hot grass of the day ahead.

I run around and get my shit done. Once at work, I feel the profuse sweat of my pits in a cold ass basement I work in. There's some opposite inverse principle that works with the basement at the YMCA I work at. When it's hot outside, it's colder than fuck. When it's cold outside, it's hotter than fuck in that dungeon. As such, I have to go outside every once in a while to get the feeling back into my face and fingers. As I approached the lower door downstairs, I notice a flashy motherfucker across the street at the Kansas City Kansan paper machine reaching for today's news. I stop, unlock the alarm system and go outside to watch this character.

The man is an older black fellow with a bright orange Hawaiian shirt, sweat band around the head, black cowboy boots, flooded jeans and hop in his step. He was playing with the boys like it was no one's business. So, as I was at the door trying to figure what the fuck I'm looking at, I see Mike sitting on the bench. Now, Mike is one of the sanest guys that lives in the dorms for the YMCA. In a collection of over 70 guys living in cheap single rooms, Mike is the one you can count on for some sane talk and good laughs. Most of the other boys in the dorms come from various mental health hospitals and wards from around Kansas City. Some are harmless, others are nuttier than a fucking Christmas assortment no one wants to eat.

Now Mike has a story. He's an older Italian guy with a honest, friendly demeanor. A stocky guy with gray hair and a thick gray mustache. I always see him out on the bench in front of the Y looking at the folks going by and waking every thirty seconds at someone passing by. Currently, he makes a living by betting on the horses out at the local race track. He does the remote for all the horses at the Southern California tracks. I met Mike one day when the warden of the dorms brought him down to my computer lab. He wanted a sure fire computer program that would help him catalog his horses and picks for the day. I told him I didn't think I could do anything like that without a lot of money and specialized help. He understood and shook my hand. We remained friends from that point on. He's always there to give me the straight dope on what's happening in the dormitory. The insane bin for the YMCA in a growing town in Kansas. Truly, some unbelievable shit goes down everyday right below or news sniffing noses.

Beyond betting on the horses, I'm not sure what Mike's story is. As the sanest guy inside, there's a story that we all don't know about. I know that he's been through Vietnam, did some serious drugs over there, has owned a bar in the past and his father is still alive. Other than that, I'm not sure while he's there. Either he's been in the penitentiary and it's hard to adjust to the outside world. Or, he truly bets on the horses to make a living and wants to hit the big bullseye someday and get the fuck out of Dodge. I don't blame him if this is his theory. I couldn't do it, but then again I am too law abiding to take that bite out of crime.

So, I go out to verify a story that happened over the weekend. Apparently, a hooker came into the dorms on Saturday night demanding a guy pay her for a fuck she gave earlier in the night. When the drunk resident refused to come downstairs, she took out the windows of his car. This is as far as the story was explained to me. So, I knew that Mike would be reputable enough to give them the rest of the story. I sit on the slab next to him and we get the introductory pleasantries out on the table. I started by telling him about a fucked little event I saw the previous week. My partner and I, Phil, were stopped at a busy light in downtown Kansas City, Kansas when we noticed some motherfucker beating the shit out of someone in the passenger seat. As they drove by previously, I thought it was a little man sitting next to a bigger man. They were in a small pick up that had a badly smashed up windshield. Suddenly, we see the truck rocking slightly, then violently. The driver is a big guy and we hear a distinct female voice scream and the girl leap over the man to get out of his door. He throws

her back in her seat and starts pummeling her. He's not just beating or hurting this woman, he is killing her. So, Phil gets on the phone and calls the cops. Meanwhile, the everyone around is looking at this truck going through hell and not quite sure what the hell to do.

We go through the green light giving license plate numbers and location details. Hoping a cop shows soon, the truck veers off onto a side street and this man continues to beat the hell out of the girl. We drive past the road and the dispatcher tells us to stay in pursuit. So, we switchback around and try to find this guy. Suddenly, he passes us and we do a big U-turn in the street and try to follow the guy. But he's too much for us. He quickly shakes us and the beating in a long line of beatings continue for this woman. We tell dispatch this and they want us to pull over to meet a cop to explain our story. I said, 'fuck no.' Our involvement was over once the guy shook us. The cops had all the information they needed.

Mike nodded his head and threw out some words of wisdom I have since forgotten. Then, he went into the story of the prostitute at the YMCA. He said it was a Saturday night and it involved some stocky Indian guy that works construction. He's a real alcoholic and a piece of shit, according to Mike. I guess the guy is a real moron and all his colors came to full light on this night. According to Mike, this guy picked up a girl on Quindaro Blvd. and had his way with her. Likely he was so drunk he forgot to drop her off, so he took her in his car and parked in front of the YMCA. He got out of the car and went up to his room to sleep it off. The girl waited in the car for whatever reason and finally went into the secure lobby area of the dorms and demanded her money. The guy behind the desk rang his room and there was no response. They rang again and he finally told them to fuck off. He said that he didn't owe her anything and that she could go to hell. Well, this threw the hooker into a tirade. After a raw fucking, she was looking for some red fresh blood.

According to legend, she went out to his car parked below his window and started breaking his windows. Then, she got inside the car and started ripping through all his shit in the car. Well, this wasn't standing with him. Looking from his window, he came downstairs and started telling this whore off. Then, he pulled her from the car with force and hit her several times. By this time, the cops came and threw the cuffs on both of them. Mike was watching all of it from his room and was surprised by the final outcome. As it happened, the Indian was let go to return to his room, while the cops took the hooker away with them. Either through pity or they wanted a blow job, the girl was hauled and the Indian didn't get touched. Mike couldn't believe how fucking stupid this Indian fucker was for leading her to his car and where he lives. He thinks that she is going to come over and take the rest of his windows out.

As this story ends, a man walks down the steps and squints hard in the sunshine coming down from the sky. Mike looks up and says, 'Welcome to the daytime, Dan.' Dan smiles and nods a bit. He looks to be a docile man with a face of red welts. Immediately, Mike says in his most animated voice, 'Hey Dan, Joe here runs a youth program downstairs. Maybe this summer you can teach the kids how to shave.' A

deliberate dig on this guy. As it happens, this Dan man cut the fuck out of his face with one of those fancy three bladed shavers. He did it because he applied way too much fucking force to his face. It was a charred up with painful looking welts. I laughed with Mike and wondered what this guy was all about.

My time on the bench was supposed to be brief, so I didn't expect much face time with this Dan guy. But he started talking and I just couldn't resist the shit that came tumbling forth. A second or two from heading back down to my job and away from the Indian hooker story and the shit came out. Apparently, Dan knew me from somewhere and told Mike this. Then, Dan really started talking. And from the time he started, I noticed the insane blank look flanking his eye balls. He started by telling us about how he was a psychiatric ward on the other side of town and they made him into the data man off Star Trek. With a huge needle, they injected him with the data and put him up on trial. At one point he tried to lift his shirt to show us the scar and Mike quickly stopped him. He asked what the fuck people were going to think if a grown man starts shoving his naked belly into another man's face on a public bench. I was almost at tears at this point.

Dan the data man or neutron man, continues to tell us that he was found guilty of all charge, but poppa bear was in charge of things. They, just they, were after him and what he knew. Ultimately, he said he held the key to the truth. Then, he really starts bounding around quickly. He tells us that his birth stone is the ruby and there were several women with ruby's that he had to make a decision about. He didn't pick neither of them and warned us to stay away. It was in our best interests to stay away from these women. And how he was buying all this bullshit. It was going along so well and with such a straight face he delivered his talk, I didn't catch many details. And by this time, I had to get back inside. And I did just that.

Once inside, I told Phil about this guy. He didn't believe me. I assured him that this man was completely out to lunch. Not just out to lunch for himself, but out to lunch for everyone. A truly insane case walking the street wondering less about how much money he has left to his name than whether his fictitious world is going to find an persecute him. A grown man playing with cereal box stories and dungeons and dragons figures. So, Phil had to meet this guy. Not before I notice a woman walking around our secure area in our teen area. She's some gal with an armload of shit. I asked how she got in and she said the back door. Well, I wasn't supposed to have the door opened and I wondered what she wanted. She had a bunch of crap from 'As Seen on TV' products she was selling cheap. I was done with her and sent her upstairs for the other kids to deal with.

Back downstairs, I lead Phil out to meet the data man known as Dan. At this point, there are several more people gathered around. Plumes of smoke are rising and Dan is sitting comfortably next to Mike, while some other guys from the dorm gather around. At this point, Phil and I approach. Dan finishes a story and looks in our direction as Mike continues egging on the crowd. Mike is famous for egging these metally ill guys on, in a safe way, and giving everyone a good show. So, he looks up

and tells me that he has a great idea for Dan. He says that he should go door to door selling douches. He could be known as Dan the douche man. Some laughs go up and around. I look over and mouth to Mike, 'Is this guy for real?' He gives me the side glance and nods a full 'yes'. And the talk with Dan continues on.

He starts telling Phil and I that we need to watch out for Mickey. He doesn't tell us what Mickey it is. Either Mickey Mouse or Mickey Mantle. It's a secrete, according to Dan, and we shouldn't know about. Then, he tells us that he knows where the Stargate is. It's off 75 street. Furthermore, he's been through the Stargate. He has traveled back in time to ancient civilizations and been up in space as an astronaut looking at the planets. Also, he has been through something called the core. A sort of time machine vessel and his body his in bad shape. He has a plastic eye, bad hip, bad knees and nagging body pain. And when he's not feeling good, the weather will always reflect the mood and condition he's in. Then, he started getting into religion. He knew the face of God and various other specialities. This guy was throwing all of it out with a straight face. There was nothing waning him away from believing it was all absolutely true.

It was right around this time that the messenger came by dressed as an old man. As Dan continued to delight the crowd and we looked into his eyes wondering if he was really insane or pulling us all on a ride, the religion talk started hitting a note. This Dan man was as calm, assured and patient as one could be. While he talked, I looked up the hill and an old timer with old man clothes, a stylish hat and a handful of thick architectural or engineering plans comes down the hill our way. As he comes closer, I look up at him and he looks over at our group and says, 'Christ is coming back soon.' That is all he says. And, he continues ambling down the sidewalk as I look on at him and laugh until nearly in tears at all of it. It was the moment I had been waiting for. I was firmly planted on the crack known as the urban continental divide. There was no more insanity to interject and everything nuts came completely into line out there on that random hot sidewalk. This is the reason why I don't pay for tickets to see entertainment. I wait for it to happen.