We Want YOU! To Take Over The Planet

I woke up to the sound of water rushing from a faucet, slowly realizing that the sound was very close to me. Lying there, I took an inventory of what lay in my field of vision: floor, bathroom rug; toilet, seat down; wall, behind toilet. The steady hiss of the water spewing from the faucet created the drunken-hazed illusion that I was watching yet another rerun of "This Is Your Fucking Life." I stood up slowly and steadily, using the sink to pull myself up. I couldn't recall turning the faucet on as I twisted it off, casting a sudden silence in the bathroom.

Staring at my wretched reflection in the mirror, I went through the usual checklist:

Clothes: No.

Blood: No.

Vomit: No.

Vulgar writing on body: No.

Missing patches of hair: No.

Missing teeth: No.

Unexplainable bruises: No.

I opened the medicine cabinet and pulled out a bottle of mouthwash. I took a swig and began swishing it in my mouth when I heard rustling in the kitchen. I live alone. Looking at my puzzled face in the mirror, I quickly swished the mouthwash a few more times and spat it out.

I stepped out of the bathroom into my room and stopped dead in my tracks. Staring back at me from my bed was an ass, a bare ass. I squinted. It was a hairless ass. Relieved yet concerned, I crept slowly towards my desk and

slipped on the pair of pajama pants that were slung over my desk chair. I crept slowly back towards my door, and arriving in the hallway, picked up the pace into the kitchen. I arrived to yet another ass, this time in boxers, bent over at the fridge, atop a pair of long, hairy legs.

"Um," I said, breaking the silence.

"Oh, hey," the man replied, turning quickly to me, shutting the refrigerator door behind him. "I was just, uh, scrounging for some food."

The man had short brown hair, blue eyes, and a short goatee. He was scratching the back of his head nervously.

"Well, is there any food of mine that you were looking for in particular?"

"I don't want to be rude or anything."

"Well shit, I would be the rude one for not offering food to random, half-naked strangers—obviously hungry strangers—who are standing in my kitchen."

"Oh, shit, I'm sorry," he said, stepping forward and extending his hand, the one he had just been using to scratch the back of his head like an itchy deer caught in the headlights. "I'm Pete. You…I'm sure you don't remember."

"Good morning, Pete," I replied, shaking his hand, then looking back down the hallway towards my bedroom. "Pete, I have a problem. There is a naked ass connected to a naked body in my bed. Would you happen to know who that body is?"

"Oh, that's Vicky," he replied, matter-of-factly.

"And who is Vicky?"

"That's my wife."

I stood there in silence for a moment, deep in thought, trying my damn hardest to recall what happened last night. The monkeys pounded away diligently at their typewriters, occasionally filling the rhythmic clatter with their wild monkey calls. I stood at the far end of the room, which was completely white: walls, floor, ceiling, tables, and chairs. I wore a white suit with a black tie. Before me was the final section of a long clear plastic tube, which extended to the other end of the room, terminating at the desk of the head monkey. The sound of a canister whizzing through massive tube ended with a thunk as the canister landed in my waiting hands. I opened the canister and removed a rolled up piece of paper. I unrolled the paper and brought it to my face. The white piece of paper said:

"…"

"Stupid monkeys. They're fuckin' useless," a female voice said.

I looked down the hallway, down at Vicky, who was walking towards the kitchen. Vicky, with her naked ass wedged between a long, smooth pair of naked legs and a perfectly shaped torso that one would trace with invisible lines in the air, containing breasts that appear to have been plucked from the goddess of love herself, breasts slightly covered by her flowing midnight-black hair, which happened to be the only hair on her body. She met my drunk-with-beauty stupor with her extraordinary sky blue eyes.

"Um," I blurted, otherwise speechless.

"She can read minds," Pete interjected, sounding as proud as a third grader explaining his science project.

"That's not the only thing he's shocked over." She turned to me. "It's no big deal; we've already fucked. Don't worry, it was consensual."

"You—you and me? We've fucked," I repeated flatly.

"Oh, we can't forget Pete. He was there too."

I looked over at Pete, who was grinning ear to ear. I felt dizzy.

"You better sit down. You're not doing so well."

Her bare feet clapped against the linoleum floor as she walked towards the kitchen table—my kitchen table—and pulled out two chairs. I felt powerless as I wandered over to one of the chairs and plopped down. My stomach growled, and I thought about breakfast.

"Pete, we need three bowls of Kaptain Krisp, stat. It's in the left cabinet above the sink."

Pete turned and proceeded to open the cabinet and pull out a box of Kaptain Krisp. He paused for a minute with the box in hand and turned his head towards me and Vicky.

"Third cabinet to your right," she said, before I could open my mouth.

He stepped over and opened another cabinet, pulling out three bowls. He began to pour the cereal into the bowls as I turned my attention back to Vicky's flawless body. I couldn't believe I had sex with her. I cursed the monkeys for not having kept better records.

"Believe it," she said, her lips curling into a grin.

"Would you care to explain last night to me, since I obviously don't remember?"

"No doubt, man," Pete chimed in. "You were fuckin' *gone*."

He returned to the table and set two bowls of cereal in front of us, then returned to the kitchen counter for his. I spooned a heap into my mouth and crunched loudly. Vicky continued, her voice rising and falling with the intensity of my crunching.

"You wandered up to us from across the bar and began chatting me up."

"You obviously wanted to fuck my wife," said Pete, who was now sitting with me and Vicky at the table, munching away at his bowl of Kaptain Krisp. "We thought, 'Hey, why not?' We're down with that."

Vicky smiled and looked over Pete, who wrapped his arm around her shoulder and pulled her in for a kiss. I continued plowing into my cereal, undaunted. I felt like I was seven years old again, sitting at the table with my parents, who, unlike many other parents, were still in love at that time. Back then, however, we all wore clothes at the breakfast table.

"So we drove you back to your place, and, well, you pretty much tore into me."

"I gotta say, man, I was pretty impressed, with all that alcohol in you."

"God, I know. It was pretty, uh. Wow." She spooned at her bowl for the first time, loading a slightly soggy heap of cereal into her mouth.

"When you were spent, you got up and walked over to the bathroom. Me and Vicky were still game; we were too involved to check on you. We passed the fuck out afterwards."

"And I guess that pretty much leads us to where we're at now," Vicky said. I finished my bowl and slid it aside.

"So…where are we at now?"

"Now," she took a deep breath, "now we have a proposition for *you*."

"What kind of proposition?"

"We need you," Pete replied.

"For what?"

"To take over the planet—" Vicky said.

"Hah!" I shouted, which echoed through the kitchen. They were staring at me with deadpan faces. Deflated, I cleared my throat.

"You're serious, too."

"Let me finish—"

"You do realize that I'm sitting here, in my kitchen, in my pajamas, with two married strangers with whom I had sex with, one of whom is stark naked, and I'm being propositioned to take over the planet? Take over the *fucking planet*?"

"You know, I like the way that sounds," she replied.

"And to make it all the more interesting, you say you can read minds."

"You believe it, although you're still somewhat skeptical," Vicky said flatly.

I looked her square in the eyes.

"Okay," I said condescendingly. "I'm thinki—"

"Sixty-nine, come on."

"All right, how ab—"

"Nineteen sixty-seven."

"I—"

"Pink Floyd, Piper at the Gates of Dawn."

"Fav—"

"'Lucifer Sam, Siam cat. Always sitting by your side, always by your side,'" she sang, British accent and all.

Fuck, she really can read minds.

"Yes, I really can read minds."

This isn't going to be good.

"I respect your privacy. I can tune out."

We really fucked?

"Typical. I just blew your mind and you're thinking of getting blown. Here, if that's so important to you, close your eyes."

I had nothing to lose at that point. I closed my eyes. Looking back at me in the white room was my army of monkeys, who had since abandoned their typewriters and were watching the show just as intently as I was, and just as confused. I felt her hand come to rest on top of my head, and in an instant, the channel changed. I was standing in my bedroom, watching three naked bodies colliding with each other, skin on skin, sweating, moaning, nails digging in my back, heavy breathing, hearts pounding, lips smacking, thrusting, convulsing, I'm cumming, I'm cumming, I'm cumming, lights flashing, colors blending, teddy bears running free in a warm, sunny meadow. She lifted her hand, and the monkeys were back at their typewriters, pounding away, recording the show they had just seen.

"Wow."

"Happy now?"

"God."

"Not quite, but almost."

"What the hell was that, anyway?"

"That was your first threesome, honey."

"No, what you just did; the thing with your hand."

"I know," she laughed quickly, and then her serious face washed back over. "I can make people see things in my head if I touch them a certain way."

I sat back in my chair, and looking up at the ceiling, let out a heavy sigh. The room fell silent, save for the clock ticking on the wall behind me. I closed my eyes; the monkeys continued scratching their heads, staring at me in my white suit. I brought my hands to my head and violently scratched my scalp, taking in a deep breath. I clasped my fingers together behind my head and left out another heavy sigh.

Tick. Tick. Tick.

"What do I get out of it?"

"What do you get out of life now?"

"Nothing."

"Then we promise you something."

Tick. Tick. Tick.

I opened my eyes and stared up at the emptiness of the ceiling. I realized at that moment how much the blank ceiling and I had in common. I brought my arms down onto the table and directed my attention to Vicky's waiting eyes.

"This is too fucked up, you know," I declared. "But what the hell else do I have going for me? That wasn't the first time I woke up on the bathroom floor."

"I believe it," Vicky replied.

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. The monkeys debated amongst themselves in their monkey language. The head monkey hopped up on his desk

with his hands clapping in the air above his head, calling out over all the other monkeys.

"I'm in."

Vicky looked over at Pete with a big smile on her face, then back at me.

"Wonderful," she exclaimed.

"So uh, what's the plan? Where do we even start?"

"We've already started. We will fill you in with all the details later."

She and Pete stood up from the table.

"You'll need to get some things together first."

They spilled their bowls out in the sink and Pete turned on the faucet.

"Pack a bag full of clothes. Make sure it's not too big of a bag. We don't have a lot of extra room."

Pete turned off the faucet as Vicki walked from the kitchen to the bedroom. She continued talking in a louder voice from the bedroom. I leaned forward and looked down the hallway and saw her putting her clothes on. I caught one last glimpse of her sweet, sweet breasts.

Pete joined her in my room. I closed my eyes and sat there pondering the absurdity of the entire situation. Perhaps the gravity of the situation hadn't fully set in, or perhaps I was still hung over, but for some reason, I believed and trusted those two. I was about to follow along with some insane plan to take over the world. My life seemed to have crossed over into the realm of fiction. I opened my eyes and looked once again up at the ceiling, then through the ceiling, past the clouds, into the eyes of The Puppet Master. I imagined Him pulling the strings attached to my arms and legs and head, bringing me to life. I

imagined Him making me wave up at Him, and thought about how self-absorbed He is.

"You trust us because you know I can read minds."

"Huh?" I inquired, having just been pulled back into reality.

"I said, you trust us because you believe that I really can read minds," Vicki said, now fully clothed, now standing in the kitchen again with Pete.

"Yeah, I guess. But just to make—"

"Three thousand eight hundred and fifty-nine."

"Dammit. All right, so I walk away from my life. Then what?"

"Then you meet us at our apartment in Westfield tomorrow at three. Here's the address and some cash. This should be enough for cab fare." She handed me a twenty dollar bill folded over a folded piece of paper.

"I don't need your—"

"Yes, you do."

"All right," I replied, defeated.

"I guess we'll be seeing you tomorrow, then," Pete said happily.

"Yes. Tomorrow at three in Westfield. Got it." I unfolded the paper and looked at the address before folding it back up and placing it on the table beside me.

"We'll see you then."

With those final words they walked out of the door to my apartment. I continued to sit there alone in the kitchen, basking in the silence of my empty apartment, save for the clock ticking above my head.

Tick. Tick. Tick.

♦ ♦ ♦

I checked my watch. It said 3:05. I knocked on the door once more. This time, I heard a few footsteps followed by the doorknob jiggling and turning.

"Why hello hello," Vicky greeted me. "Come on in."

I stepped in and set my bag down. I surveyed the apartment and concluded that it looks rather normal for such an odd couple.

"Nice place."

"Thank you." She paused and looked around the room herself. "Can I get you anything to drink? Coffee? Tea? Soda?"

"Tea would be nice, thanks."

"Tea it is. Have a seat; make yourself at home."

I wandered over to the leather couch and sank down into the farting glory of leather. I shuffled through the magazines on the coffee table and settled on a copy of Rock N Roll Monthly. I flipped through the pictures of all the awful new bands when Vicky returned to the living room with a large cup of tea.

"I cooled it off with an ice cube so you won't have to wait for it."

"Oh, thanks." I closed the magazine and tossed it back onto the coffee table. Vicky set the tea down on a coaster in front of me and sat down on the adjacent leather chair, which let out an accompanying fart.

I put the cup to my lips and took a sip. It was just cool enough to enjoy and incredibly delicious. I took a large gulp.

"Damn, this is really good. What is it?"

"It's a special blend. I made it just for you." Her voice seemed either sinister or sarcastic.

I took another big gulp. It was as if I couldn't stop until the cup was empty. Before I knew it, it was. I set the cup down onto the coaster.

"Thank you, that was—"

I stopped suddenly as her hair began to melt over her face, onto her shirt, onto the chair. The ceiling began to drip and the sound of the central air switched from a distant woosh to a menacing ocean roar, crashing against my head. A faint smile broke through her melted hair and stretched down slowly into her lap.

"I'm sorry," she said in a demonic low growl.

I slumped over into a monstrously loud sea of farting leather.

Goodnight.

♦ ♦ ♦

I woke up to the sound of water rushing from a faucet. I opened my eyes in time to find a pair of hands splashing water onto my face. I jolted quickly, pushing back against someone. I felt breasts, luscious breasts. I looked up into the mirror and stared back at a wet-faced me, standing in an unfamiliar, what appeared to be public, restroom, with Vicky behind me.

"Good, you're awake."

"Awake? How about alive?"

We spoke via the mirror.

"All right, I know you're pissed. It's absolutely understandable. Can you just listen to me for a minute?"

"Why the fuck—"

"Just listen," she demanded.

I listened.

"We're in the employee restroom in the back of Planet Los Angeles," her voice dropped to a whisper, "and we're here to rob the place."

I let her words seep into my ears. I let the monkeys clatter away at their typewriters. They were formulating something, but I didn't quite have the full story.

"Planet Los Angeles," I repeated into the mirror softly. The canister slowly made its way across the tube before stopping.

"You almost have it," she whispered. "Think."

The canister shook loose jolted forward and slowly gained momentum. It sped faster and faster with a woosh, and with a thump, the canister landed in my hands. I unrolled the piece of paper. It was a script. I read it:

PETE
We need you.

YOU
For what?

VICKY
To take over the Planet
Los Angeles restaurant
in Westfield.

"Fuck!"

"Shh! Don't be so loud."

"Why didn't you finish the sentence?" I inquired, hushed, angered. "Why the fuck didn't you—"

She placed her hand on the back of my head and the channel flipped. My wide eyes focused on a reel of the three of us soaking in a sea of sex, money, open highways, sunny beaches, expensive hotel suites, a revolution. Her hand lifted away and I was once again staring at myself in the mirror.

"I see," I uttered, defeated. I paused for a moment of reflection. I returned with this: "Why the fuck didn't you just say 'rob'?"

"Dramatic effect. That was the plan, really, until your little rant. Then it got me thinking."

"Why the hell did you drug me?"

"Dramatic effect. I could tell you're a bit gun shy unless you're drunk. You would have folded otherwise."

"Jesus fucking hell." I paused. "How the fuck did you even get me in here?"

"You were barely conscious enough to walk by the time we got here. We came in through the back. Pete let us in. He's a waiter here. Any more questions?"

"Now what?"

"Now we dry your face, exit the bathroom quietly and exit out of the back door. We enter the restaurant like two innocent customers, and you use your good looks and charm to get the table that I point out to you. If all else fails, use this."

She slipped a fifty dollar bill into my right pocket.

"Are you ready?"

I was already in the sailboat, slowly drifting away from the shore. The gun was already to my head.

"Sure, why not."

"Follow me."

She walked to the door, unlocked it, and pulled it open just enough to peak out. She waited for a moment before turning to me and waving me forward.

"Come on," she whispered.

We walked quickly through the kitchen, through the clamor of dishes and pans and the sizzling of gourmet meals cooking over giant blazing stoves. We approached the back door and headed out. Brushing ourselves off, we rounded the building towards the main entrance. I held the door open for Vicky.

"Oh, such a gentleman," she purred.

I followed Vicky into the lobby of Planet Los Angeles. We were surrounded by all the fanfare of Hollywood: the bright lights, the rumbling of hundreds of voices, the tourists taking photos of the walls. The walls were lined with memorabilia from various movies. I spotted the babysitter's costume from "Zombie Babysitter" on one wall, and another wall had the sign to "Jack's Diner" from some lousy independent flick, of which I couldn't remember the name. We pretended to gawk at the scenery for a moment while Vicky located the table.

"That one," Vicky whispered into my ear and pointed to a table across the restaurant. "The one next to that hallway there."

"I see. All right."

We continued forward, up to the host.

"Welcome to Planet Los Angeles," the host greeted us. "How many this evening?"

"Two."

"Smoking or non?"

I leaned in close to his right ear and whispered. He shifted slightly in discomfort.

"Look, here's the thing. It's our anniversary. We would very much like to sit at the table that we sat at on our first date."

"Sir, it's a Saturday night. We're extremely busy—"

"It would mean a lot to both my wife and I if we were to sit at that particular table."

"Sir—"

I reached into my pocket and pulled out the fifty dollar bill. I looked around to make sure no one was watching, then grabbed a hold of his hand and placed the bill in his palm. I held the bill there and looked square in the eye.

"Are you sure there's nothing you can do?"

A shit-eating grin began to form on his face before he readjusted himself and cleared his throat. He closed his hand and leaned in to me.

"Which table was it, sir?"

He turned around and looked over the restaurant. I pointed out the table.

"That one, next to the hallway."

"Very well. That party has been here for some time and should be leaving shortly. What's the name?"

"Vicky," she interjected.

"All right. I'll call for you when the table becomes available."

We turned and walked over to the wall with the celebrity photos and pretended to look them over.

"See, that wasn't so bad," Vicky said, talking to the wall.

"I must still be drugged. I'm normally not that calm."

"Yeah, I'm sure that's an after effect," she laughed.

A solid fifteen minutes passed before the host called out.

"Vicky, party of two."

We turned. He winked. We walked to his podium and followed him to the table.

"Here are your menus. Pete will be your server, and he will be with you shortly. Enjoy your meals."

"Thank you very much," I replied.

"What time is it?" Vicky asked, unfolding her menu.

I checked my watch. "Seven thirty."

"Perfect. Here's how it's going to work." She spoke into her menu. "Pete will take our drink orders. He will then proceed to disable the security camera in the main office, where the safe is. He will return with our drink orders. An umbrella in my drink means we're good to go. We'll have a good fifteen minute window to do the job. The manager will make a drop in the safe at eight o'clock sharp. We'll sit outside his office and I will read the combination from his mind. When he leaves, we sneak in, grab the money, and return to our table as if nothing happened. He won't check the safe again until after we leave."

"Sounds easy enough."

Pete approached the table with a smile.

"Hello, my name is Pete. I'll be your server this evening. Can I get you something to drink?"

"I'll have a diet soda," Vicky replied.

"Regular, please."

"All right, a diet and a regular. I will be back shortly with your drinks," he winked.

We sat there, waiting Pete to return, waiting for that umbrella. I began to feel slightly nervous. The monkeys clattered away on their typewriters, recording every detail surrounding us. At least one small subsection of monkeys was typing up my last will and testament. Vicky looked at me and rolled her eyes.

"It will be fine."

I looked over in time to catch Pete returning to our table. The umbrella sat proudly atop Vicky's drink.

"Here you are. One diet, one regular." He set the drinks onto the table. "Are you ready to order?"

"We'll both have the chicken parmesan," Vicky quickly responded. "And take your time." She winked.

"Very well, two chicken parmesans," he scribbled onto his notepad and stepped away without another word.

"We have to keep it professional," Vicky explained.

She took the umbrella from her drink and twirled it between here fingers. I took a sip of my drink.

"What time is it?"

"Seven fifty-eight."

She looked to her left and spotted a man walking in the direction of our table.

"And there he is."

My heart leapt in my chest. Showtime.

"Count to ten, then follow me."

Ten. Nine. Eight. Seven. Six. Five. Four.

Three.

Two.

One.

♦ ♦ ♦

We sped along the highway underneath the light of the full moon. There were few cars on the road. Vicky sat next to me in the passenger seat, looking into the darkness outside of the window. Pete sat in the back seat counting the money.

"So that was it? All that build up, and here we are, driving on the road. Where the hell are we even going? What the hell do we do now?"

Without a word, she placed her hand on the back of my head. My depth of vision soared as I saw miles, hundreds of miles away. I saw the lights of the big city, faces creased in laughter, eyes drenched in tears, balloons, confetti, funeral processions, mountains, cars and planes leaving here and going there. I heard children calling out, birds cawing, cats mewing, screams of pain, anguish, the final gasps of air of the elderly. I felt the wind blow past my face, I felt the ground tremble and erupt, the heat draw sweat from every pore of my

body, and the cold chilling every bone and muscle. She lifted her hand, and as if sucked in through a black hole, everything disappeared, and I was once staring ahead at the road.

"Oh," I said, emotionless.

Her lips began stretch, forming a wide smile. "This is just the beginning."