

Sean  
By Dan Marek  
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Monday night, I walk to a man known only through work, he reaches out his large hand in an act of gesture. A handshake firm with a smile revealing dimples and teeth separated in front. His shoulder length curly brown hair streaked with blonde shimmers in the moonlight. His attire simple, a cream polo-style shirt with collar curled at ends from multiple washings but no iron. Green kaki's cuffed at the ends cover his worn chocolate shoes with their soles separating by threads. The smell of Right Guard, cat urine and marijuana overseen by his Arizona sky colored eyes filled with a sense of wonder and exploration.

I step into his 1981 Ford station wagon with wood paneling tracing the sides. I move over a pile of empty cigarette boxes and crumpled up fast food bags lying on the passenger seat. He starts the care and the radio begins, "My tape deck don't work, but it ain't too bad for my first car," he says turning the radio knob to speakable levels. The ride to his apartment goes by quickly listening to Coltrane with the cool night breeze whispering along our hair. "It's good to hear Jazz again, they don't have many stations worth listening to in Germany," he said.

"I used to hear a band or two play in the park where we bought hash, but they were just kids trying to support their habit," he said shrugging his shoulders and focusing on the police car driving by.

"That's how a lot of Jazz musicians started," I said calling his attention away from the squad car.

"Yeah, I guess so," again shrugging his shoulders.

We soon pulled over next to a sidewalk and parked the car. A dark endless night, quiet, only the bustling of the palm tree leaves by the breeze could be heard behind the squeaky car door. We began to walk to his apartment, hidden away in the blackness. His front door seemed to be at the end of a dark, cold and mysterious cave. Two men were sitting on the stairs out front, they appeared to be his neighbors. "It's about 4:20 isn't it?" the tall lanky kid said as he saw us walking up. "Not now, give it an hour or so," Sean answered. We walked to his door and entered his domain. A large black and gray cat

appeared from behind the door rubbing against my leg. The smell of cat urine and marijuana covered by incense lingered in the apartment.

A girl lay on the couch with her legs resting over the end. She seemed motionless as we entered; more concerned with the porno she was watching.

“Alicia, this is Dan, a friend from work,” Sean said as he turned off the T.V. Her attention broken, she turned to me and smiled.

“We met in college while in Germany. She’s still in classes but I have to pay the bills,” he said while motioning me to follow him.

We proceeded into a small dark room and he turned on a dim light to reveal a nursery. “This is Jeromiah, my son,” he turned to me smiling, The child lay sound asleep curled under a baby blue blanket in the corner of his crib. “I should let him sleep, I don’t get to see him as much as I’d like, I have to bring him over to Alicia’s mom when I leave for work.”

He looked down at the child with his hair falling to the sides of his face framing his square cut jaw. Looking at his son with the look that only a father could give his son, of pure love and devotion. Working all day to put his girlfriend through college and to provide his son with a better life than his cold cave of a home. He kisses Jeromiah on the head and turns of the light as we leave this sacred room.