

BURN THIS

PALE

Annie, hey Annie- Just go fuck yourself, fella. Get laid, do you good. Annie. Hey. Come on.

Anna turns on light.

PALE

Come on. Come on. Jesus.

She opens door. PALE comes in.

PALE

Goddamn this fuckin place. How can anybody live in this shithole of a city? I'm not doin' it. I'm not drivin' my car in this goddamn sewer. Every fuckin' time. Who are these assholes? The fuckin' guy thinks he owns this space. Like the city's got this space specially reserved just for him. Twenty five fuckin minutes I'm drivin around thisgarbage street; I pull up to this space, I look back, this baby shit-green Trans Am's on my ass going beep-beep. I get out, the fucker says "that's my space" I showed him the fuckin' tire iron. You want this space? You're gonna wake up found out you slept in your car. This ain't your fuckin' space if you treasure your pop up headlights. Am I right, or am I right. That shit? There's no talkin' to shit like that.

ANNA

I'm sorry, do I know you?

PALE

How's that?

ANNA

I mean, you're obviously some relation of Robbie's- you could be his double- but-

PALE

Double, Shit. With that fuckin' nose of his? Sure you know me- do I know you?-we met. I'm the one who saved you from the ferocious butterflies.

ANNA

You have such a large family, I didn't really catch any names.

PALE

Jimmy. You know, I was listening to all that molasses you were pouring over mom and all the cousins and neighbor bitches. I had to go take a shot of insulin.

ANNA

I remember now. You're the older brother.

PALE

Twelve years, so what? What's older? Older than what?

ANNA

Older than Robbie.

PALE

I said, didn't I. Twelve years. You hear me say that? He lived in this dump? I mean no personal disparagement of the neighborhood in which you reside, honey, but this street is dying of crotch rot. The only thing save this part of the city is if they burn it down. So'd you get the stuff together?

ANNA

The what?

PALE

The things, the things, the stuff, Robbie's shit.

ANNA

Wait a minute, you've come for Robbie's things?

PALE

Didn't I say?

ANNA

It's been over a month. I called your mother. She gave me some numbers where I could reach you , but-

PALE

Ya, sure. Listen. I don't want you bothering my family, okay? I don't like messages. The first one you think, okay, fuck, I messed up. I'll take care of it, my fault, something came up, no problem. Then you get, you know, a couple of days and here's another fuckin' message. And it's like, I heard you the first time, okay. I don't need the pool hall and the bar where I go and the aut repair man on my back saying some bitch called and giving me a little piece of paper.

ANNA

Saying what? Some bitch called? You were the one was-

PALE

That's they way he talks. What are we talkin about? A fuckin' bartender, what does he know? He works some dark hole, listening to the dregs of the race vomit their life all over the bar six nights a week. He's got a low opinion of humanity, ok? I don't like little pieces of paper. You put 'em in your pocket, you got six or eight little pieces of paper all over you, it ruins your clothes, you know? I don't read 'em. They're nothin' you don't already know. Somebody wants me. Big fuckin' deal. Take a number. I said I'd come. I'm here. There's a certain satisfaction in being thought of as a man of your- there's something wrong with these shoes, my feet are in boiling water. Look at that, oh man. I never had that before.

ANNA

Are they new?

PALE

Yeah, first time I put 'em on. Don't worry about stinkin', I'm clean.

\$500 and they're fuckin' pinchin' everywhere. That fuckin' pisses me off. Oh man. What a fuckin' neighborhood.

ANNA

Actually, we like it.

PALE

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's supposed to be arty, I know. It's quaint. Look at it- you should make auto parts here. It's a fuckin' factory.

ANNA

Listen, Jimmy, Robbie's things are in the basement. No way I could get them tonight without waking up the whole building. I've already called the Salvation Army. I hadn't been able to reach you.

PALE

So what's the rush? They on fire or something? Spontaneous combustion or somethin'? This room is a fuckin' oven, bake a pizza in here.

ANNA

It's cold. It's the middle of winter.

PALE

I got like a toaster oven I carry around with me in my belly someplace. I don't use heat. I sleep with the windows open, no covers, I fuckin' hate things over me. Ray'll tell you. Here comes that dumb fuck Pale with a radiator up his ass. What'd I do with my watch?

ANNA

Actually, I've got to get back to-

PALE

Actually, would you just hold it a second? What'd I do with my- no it's cool, I got it. Jesus, it's a fuckin- you could pass out. How long did he live here?

ANNA

About three years. You want some coffee?

PALE

Sure, whatta you got to drink?

ANNA

Coffee.

PALE

Sure. I'm not difficult.

ANNA

You're Pale.

PALE

V.S.O. Pale. That's me.

ANNA

Robbie mentioned you.

PALE

Yeah? He mentioned me? Well, I'm very mentionable.

ANNA

He didn't talk about his family much. You were the one he liked.

PALE

You pay for a view of that? Maybe there's people find that fascinating, that's not what I call a view.

ANNA

Are you high?

PALE

How's that?

ANNA

Are you high? I mean, I know you've been drinking. I wondered if you were high, too.

PALE

Yeah, I did maybe a couple lines with Ray. It don't affect me.

ANNA

No, it doesn't affect you.

PALE

It don't affect me. This is the way I am, what you see little girl. Straight or high. So what? You dance here?

ANNA

We use it as a studio, yes. We try to keep it as spare as possible.

PALE

This ain't spare. This is an empty fuckin' warehouse.

ANNA

Look, if you wanted to come back at 7:00 or 7:30 we could go to the basement and-

PALE

Seven thirty I am long outta here. No good. I'm a worker. Part of this country's great working force.

ANNA

What do you do?

PALE

What do I do?

ANNA

It doesn't matter.

PALE

I do anything. On call. Twenty four hours a day and night. We never close. I deliver. I'm a water deliverer. For fires. I put out fires. I'm a relief pitcher. Like Sparky Lyle. If anybody needs relieving,

I'm a roving fireman. Very healthy occupation. I'm puttin' out somebody else's fire, I'm puttin' out my own. Quid pro- something. Symbiosis. Or sometimes you just let it burn, ya know?

ANNA

Oh God, I'm sorry. What did you say? I'm sorry.

PALE

Now, see, that I can't take. I can't stand that.

ANNA

I'm sorry, really, but-

PALE

Well, see fine you got like these little social phrases and politenesses all they show me is this like giganticness of unconcern with your "I'm Sorry's" man the fuckin world is goin down the fuckin toilet on I'm Sorry's I'm sorry is a roll of toilet paper they're growing whole forests for people to wipe their asses on with their I'm sorry's be a tree for one day and know that that tree over there is gonna be maybe music paper the Boss is gonna make forty million writin' some poor slob can't get work song on this tree is gonna be ten dollar bills get passed around buy things mean something hear stories we got sketch pads and fuckin' I don't love you anymore letters pinned to some creep's pillow something of import headlines box scores some great book or movie script Jack Nicholson's gonna mark you all up say whatever he wishes to anyway out in some fuckin desert you're supposed to be his text he's gonna lay out this line of coke on you tree over there is gonna be in some four star restaurant they're gonna call him parchment bake pompano in him and you're stuck in the ground you can't go nowhere all you know is some fuckin' junkie is gonna wipe his ass and flush you down the east river go floating out past the statue of liberty all limp and covered with shit get tangled up in some Saudi Arabian oil tanker's fuckin propellers you got maybe three hundred years before you drift down to brazil somewhere and get a chance to maybe be a coffee bush "I'm Sorry's" are fuck man. How long did he live here? How long did he live here?

ANNA

Three years. Did you know he was studying, Pale?

PALE

Robbie? Didn't do much better than me. I was popular, I don't think he was too popular.

ANNA

Dance, I mean. Did you know he wanted to be a dancer?

PALE

Shit. I don't know. Whatta I know? He was seven. I was outta there. Who knew him? I didn't know him.

ANNA

Actually, I was thinking that.

PALE

Oh, beautiful. I love that. You're gonna be a cunt like everybody else? "You didn't really know him Pale." Deeply, you gotta say. Did you know him deeply, honey? Because neither of you strikes me as the type.

ANNA
Fine.

PALE
What the fuck does that mean? Fine?

ANNA
It means I'm tired, it's 5:30 in the morning; if you don't want to talk about him, I certainly don't. You're completely closed. You knew him, I didn't. You don't want to hear what I have to say, fine. It means fine.

PALE
What? I don't have feelings? I'm not capable of having a talk here?

ANNA
There's no doubt in my mind that you have mastered half the art of conversation. I'm tired. I'm sorry. I miss him. You remind me of him.

PALE
Shit.

ANNA
Completely aside from any family resemblance, just having his brother here reminds me. At the- whatever that wake was after the funeral- it was obvious none of your family knew anything about him. Had you seen him dance?

PALE
No.

ANNA
Well, see that's impossible for me to understand... Pale, I can't stay up until the building wakes up, I have class at nine, I have to get some rest. Then I come back here and work till six, so I've got a long day... what?

PALE
Awww, shit. Fuckin' drinkin' and thinkin' man. Worse than drinkin' and drivin'. Drinkin' and thinkin' man. Aw, shit. He wasn't dark, you know, like...

ANNA
He worked really hard.

PALE
Aww, Jesus... feed the fish, man... Jesus.(sobs enormously and long)