

## Friends

It was my favourite kind of day. A day to laugh and be loved. Me and Matty were tearing it up in customary fashion. Taking the town by storm and we didn't care who knew it. It was nice to feel welcomed, god knows I had spent a considerable portion of my adolescence on the fringe of social acceptance begging to get in. But now I had one, and I wasn't going to let him go.

The world was unfair on guys like me, I may not be the sharpest tool in the shed but I'd say I more than made up for it in eagerness. It's true, I'd do what anyone would tell me. This caused a bit of friction in our household when I'd come home with a face-full of bee stings, or with two policemen at my collar. But they didn't blame me usually, my parents, I didn't really want to do those things in the first place; I was always so eager to be accepted. But those days were behind me. Now I had Matty.

Have I told you about Matty? He's one of the cool ones. And I think that made me one of them too. It had to. He's had four girlfriends this year alone and rumour has it he did it with at least two of them. He tells me if I'm lucky he'll tell me how to 'do it' later, and he may even fit in a few 'fight lessons' too. I didn't like these, he just spent the whole time wailing on me and even though we were friends it really hurt. But I don't think he did it on purpose because afterwards he would put his arm around my shoulder and we would throw rocks round the back of school.

Today we did whatever Matty wanted to do, we usually did, which meant stealing a couple of bottles of my parents wine and heading out to the pier. We had a spot under the rafters where we would drink and Matty would give me some 'formal education on how the real world works'. I didn't like the stuff, the wine, but I had learned to keep drinking or Matty would hold it to my mouth and make me chug until I couldn't any more.

"Billy?" Said Matty.

"Yes?"

"Do you wanna know what it's like to fuck a woman?"

"I do." I didn't, but I had learned to indulge him.

"Okay, I'll tell you. You know I've been with four girls, right?"

"I heard it was two."

"Who told you that?" He shot.

"Oh—no-one. Kyle. Kyle told me it was Hannah and little Tracy.

"Kyle doesn't know shit. No—listen. It's four. And if anyone asks you, what do you tell them?"

"You've slept with four girls."

"Right—okay. So on with your formal education. Have you ever heard of a tit-job?"

"A tit-job?"

"Yeah, with the tits. A tit-job."

"No Matty."

"Of course you haven't. Well I like to start off with one of those. They love it, really gets their juices flowing if you know what I mean. In my experience if you give 'em one of those for a few minutes they're raring to go."

"And then what?"

"And then? Then you stick it in 'em. Try to go as deep as you can go."

"Okay Matty. As deep as I can go."

"Yeah-right. That's what I've learned in my professional experience."

"You know a lot."

"Damn right."

I didn't know what a tit-job was or where exactly I had to stick it—I mean, I had a vague notion—but I learned to just nod and agree with whatever he said. If I did a good job he would stop hitting me and give me good hearty pats on the back instead. I assumed he knew what he was talking about.

I had been tasked with procuring condoms and gum from the local newsagents, the cashier smirked and asked me, 'busy night?' But by this point the wine had taken its effect and I was having trouble understanding much of what was happening around me. The allure of a sexual relationship baffled me, but it was all that Matty and the other boys in our year seemed to talk about. One thing I didn't tell them was the thought of doing that with a woman nauseated me as much as the wine, scared me even. I appreciated women from a distance, I loved to look at their dresses and their hair and often I would daydream about cuddling up close to one. Romance was much more appealing to me, a relationship built on laughs and kisses. A previous time where me and Matty had been discussing women I brought this up, and offered my thoughts on the subject, to which he called me a 'fucking faggot'. My parents looked a little shocked, or even concerned when I had relayed this to them, and seemed very reluctant to tell me what it meant. I could tell it was a bad word by the way Matty had said it, but it had piqued my curiosity. Mum wouldn't say anything other than, 'It's a bad, bad word,' repeatedly, while shaking her head in a stupor. Dad took me aside after and told me what it really meant, and to stick up for myself in the future. He said he didn't mind me getting in fights, if it kept the boys from calling me that. It meant I was gay. Matty was calling me gay. Homosexuality was another subject that I couldn't entirely get my head around, but it didn't seem to bother me so much. I was happy for two men to cuddle and kiss, but I didn't think it would be for me. Any time the subject of two guys getting it on came up however, I made sure to call them 'fucking faggots'.

The rest of our day wasn't entirely eventful. We snuck around the back of the catholic girls school and tried to get their attention, without also alerting the teachers. But even if one did notice us they didn't seem to want to stick around. Matty kept telling them about our wine drinking and the condoms in his pocket but they were having none of it. Sex didn't seem to interest them nearly as much as it did him. After a few failed attempts this one rough looking girl seemed to linger for longer than the others. She had frizzy, black, dyed hair and tights with big ladders up them. Matty introduced us as 'Big Matty' and 'Billy the Kid.' Which was an affectionate nickname I think, my dad called me it a few times.

"Abbie." She responded.

"What are you doing in a prude school like this?" Matty asked.

"My whore mother felt guilty and stuck me here."

"That's a drag. Wanna smoke?"

"Sure." She fished her own pack from down her bra before Matty could offer her one and extended it to us after taking one herself.

"I didn't think any of you girls smoked."

"None of them do." She flicked her head toward the school and her hair shuffled about her face, resting back in the uncombed mass it lay in before.

"What about him?" She nodded to me.

"Don't worry about him."

"He queer or something?"

"You queer Billy?" Matty looked to me.

"No."

"See—don't worry about him."

"Why doesn't he talk?"

"Because he hasn't got anything good to say. Not like me. You let me take you out and I guarantee you'll have a good time."

"Okay, where are you gonna take me?"

"Why don't you come back to my place?"

"Hmm."

"No wait, not my place, my parents are home. His place." He nodded to me.

"You can't Matty, my parents wouldn't allow it."

"Who gives a shit what your parents would allow?"

"I'm sorry Matty, they've told me a couple of times now, I'm not allowed people back when they're not there." The girl looked unimpressed.

"Well it looks like it's not your day." And she trotted off, looking just as bored as when she'd walked over.

This seemed to upset Matty quite a lot, and he didn't seem to want to talk to me on the walk home. Things like this had happened before though, he just needed some time to cool off and we'd be back to being the best of friends.

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"I heard you had a fun day with your buddy Billy." Chris said.

"That retard? I only use him for his parents wine cellar. That faggot cost me a girl today."

"I'm sure he did. What are you gonna do about it?"

"What do you think? What I did with the last one. I'm gonna bash his fucking brains in. Teach him the true price of friendship."