

ACCESSORY, TO MURDER

by

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(Based on his original short story)

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FADE IN

INT. OFFICE RECEPTION LOBBY - DAY

And a hot and stifling day, it is. Sunlight's streaming through the lobby. Fans rotating in the thick, lazy atmosphere.

Behind the front desk, thinly-dressed receptionist BECKY, twenties, is battling the heat.

And multi-tasking.

Using a glossy magazine, to alternately fan herself, and the steaming slice of pizza she's gnawing.

Fielding calls, between mouthfuls.

BECKY

...and I'm happy to take your call. This is Becky, speaking. How may I help you? One moment please...

And mock-seriously ignoring the pizza delivery guy, CHAD (name tag person as well; sweat-soaked shirt), late teens, early twenties.

Chad's leaning suggestively over the desk top, leering down Becky's shirt, and grinning.

BECKY

No! Eww!! And where would you get the champagne, anyways?

CHAD

'Fraid that's classified. Anyhow, it's not the wine, that makes it. It's the whipped crea--

BECKY

Hmph. Chad. I don't want to be any part of your syllabus, all right? School's not in session.

Incoming call. Becky holds up a hand to Chad, traffic cop style.

BECKY

Hello. This is Becky, speaking. How may I assist...?

Chad shakes his head, as Becky teledrones on.

CHAD

SyllaBUB.

Still speaking, he turns, to scope out the lobby. Not exactly teeming, with life.

CHAD (CONT'D)

It's European. It's like, a....

His eyes light up. He's spotted something, at a table in the corner.

Shimmering in a million points of light, as the sun hits it through the window.

CHAD (CONT'D)

...suh-weet!

Quick glance back at Becky; she's still in receptionist mode.

Chad ambles over to the table.

Bumps it with his hip, and fakes a stumble, in case anyone's watching.

Uses this as a cover, to palm the object from the table into his pants pocket.

Sly grin, of satisfaction.

Chad backs toward the door now.

Shoots his hands out like twin pistols, while shooting a look at Becky.

CHAD

Hey, Becky!

Becky glances up briefly. Shakes her head; waves her hand. I'm busy, on the phone, doofus.

Fine with Chad. Still smiling, he exits.

EXT. OFFICE FORECOURT - DAY

Chad emerges from the office into the searing heat. Palming sweat off his brow. Blinking rapidly, in the bright sun.

But his eyes are scouring the forecourt, missing nothing. Predatory.

There's his bike, chained to a nearby rail.

An EXECUTIVE HOTTIE, twenties, approaching. Short-skirted power suit, sleeveless blouse, expensive shades.

Power suit jacket, draped over one shoulder.

Chad bumps her, on his way to the bike.

CHAD

God, I'm so sorry! Three left feet, and all this heat. Plus.

(grins)

Poet. You okay?

Elaborate show of concern; fussing over her. Charming smile.

The executive hottie buys it. Shrugs off the incident, with a winning smile of her own.

EXECUTIVE HOTTIE

No harm done. Really. Hey, I'm still in one piece, right?

Not entirely.

As she continues toward the entrance door, Chad holds up the money clip he's boosted from her jacket.

Strips it of essentials, quick as a flash.

Then drops it, nearby.

CHAD

She must've dropped it, right? Right.

Chad plucks his bike from the railing.

And pedals off.

EXT. PARK BENCH - LATER

The rest spot's in a busy municipal park, which fronts an

even busier intersection.

Chad's got his bike propped against the armrest.

He's seated on the bench. An open box of his employer's finest, beside him.

Chad lifts pizza slices (different one, each time) from the box. Munching, as he empties his pockets of his day's haul.

Cash. Credit cards. Assorted jewelry. Packet of condoms (Wha??).

And his glittering prize, from the office:

A tooled leather smartphone pouch, inlaid with rhinestones and silver studs. It was a bunch of these that caught the sunlight, earlier.

Chad holds it up. Admires the way the light glistens off the stones and studs - even out here.

CHAD

Wow. Thing of beauty.

He picks out a pizza slice. Bites off a chunk. Chews. Nods.

CHAD

Gonna get paid.

He turns the pouch over.

Notices something on the surface, leans in to peer closer. It looks like an insignia.

Eyebrows rising, Chad slides the phone out.

Nice phone.

CHAD

Ohhhh, yessss. Paid.

He spends a while, flipping through the desktop.

Chad's eyes go wide, at something he's read there.

CHAD

No freakin' way.

He sits back, stunned. Laughs, almost hysterical.

CHAD

All right. Okay. You want? Let's play.

He taps out a text message. A smile spreading across his face.

CHAD
(Reading aloud)
I have something you want. High stakes.
Call me, on it.

Still grinning.

CHAD
Hold, or fold, people. Which is it?

He sits back. Looking at the phone. Waiting.

Bombastic ringtone, a moment later.

Chad puts the phone to his ear. Listens, then

CHAD
Intersection, opposite Diamond Park.
Fifteen minutes. And all I want to know
from you is, how much?

His eyes narrow, as Chad hears the response.

CHAD
Really. Well, here's my counter-offer.
Can you say "Edward Snowden"?

Chad listens to the phone, some more.

Cheshire-Cat's-got-the-cream grin spread across his mug.

CHAD
And, fuck you, too. Pleasure doing
business with you, though! Really! See
ya, in fifteen!

Chad hangs up, still grinning.

Points both index fingers at himself, pistol-style.

CHAD
Dude!! Dude. Going... to get... paid.

He picks up a pizza slice, from the box. Takes a bite.
Chews. Screws his face up.

CHAD
Uggh! That is disgusting!

Chad hurls the slice back into the box.

Looks at the cooling pizza, for a second. Then the smartphone pouch, in his other hand. He shrugs.

Reaches into his pocket. Takes out some of the cash he boosted, earlier.

CHAD

Hmph.

He peels off (just) enough to pay for pizza. Puts the cash in his company money pouch. Righteous.

Chad rises from the bench.

Leaves the half-eaten pizza mess just sitting there.

Flips his bike from round the side. Hops on.

CHAD

Paid.

And pedals toward the intersection.

EXT. DIAMOND PARK INTERSECTION - DAY

The busy pedestrian walkway with entry to the park, opposite.

Lot of strollers, shoppers, and workers sweating in the midday sun.

Chad's propped his bike against a street lamp.

He leans up against it, scoping out the crowd.

And twitching. Uncontrollably. As the people shuffle by.

Resisting his natural urge to relieve them of their wallets. Just.

Chad slaps himself, on the cheek.

CHAD

Dude. Behave.

(laughs)

S'like, what they call a champagne problem, here. I--

Oh, come on..!!

This, as he spots an irresistible mark, approaching.

There's a PUNKETTE BABE, twenties, sashaying toward him. Spiky hair, wraparound shades, sleeveless T-shirt. Hot.

Cracked leather jacket, draped over one shoulder - in a similar attitude to that executive hottie, from the office. But the punkette's skirt is like six inches shorter. And her spike heels maybe six inches higher.

[Author's Note: This could very well be the same girl - sent back to retrieve the smartphone she'd left at the office, earlier. Hmmm....]

As Chad moves to bump her, the punkette catches a heel on something.

She trips, and bumps him...

CHAD

Oww!!

...catching Chad on the arm with several of the many sharp studs, on her leather jacket.

The studs look like silver, twinkling in the sun.

The punkette is all touchy-feely concern, as she fusses over Chad.

PUNKETTE BABE

Dude, I am so sorry.

CHAD

S'no problem, really. I mean, I'm still in one piec--

But the punkette's on the move again.

And there's a sly grin, on her face.

PUNKETTE BABE

Wouldn't be too sure, of that.

As she holds up the precious smartphone case she's just boosted from Chad.

Who's looking at her leave, as realization hits.

She's not done, yet.

There's a nondescript government SUIT (thirties, maybe?)

ambling towards her.

The punkette mock-stumble-bumps him, this time with her unjacketed side. Then, she melts into the crowd.

Chad's been watching all of this. Disgusted.

He shakes his head, at the injustice of the world.

Checks his pockets, to confirm; no smartphone.

CHAD

Great. Work of genius.

But that's the least of his problems.

As a sudden spasm hits him.

CHAD

Oww!! Fu--!!

Chad clutches his heart.

And sees the livid scratches on the back of his arm - from where the punkette's studs got him.

Look of horror, as the truth dawns.

CHAD

Seriously?!?

He looks up.

Sees the Suit, ambling toward him. Smiling.

Yep. Another spasm.

CHAD

Ohh!!!

Chad doubles over.

The Suit is level with him, now.

That smartphone, pressed to his ear.

SUIT

(to Phone? to Chad?)

Pleasure, doing business with you.

Chad's vision starts to blur, as the Suit strolls by.

And another spasm hits.

CHAD

Aargh!!

Mild curiosity, but not much concern, on the faces of
PASSERSBY. You know; big city.

Just some other schmuck, having an exhaustion event on this
sweltering day. Or heat stroke. Or a coronary.

Not their problem.

Spasm.

CHAD

Aagh!!! Not fair! Not frickin' f--

Chad's vision begins to fade...

And the pavement rushes up, to meet him...

As we...

FADE TO BLACK