

Police And Thieves

by Damion Hamilton

Chapter one

I was sitting in the doctor's office. For weeks, my nerves had been on edge, and I had been feeling like he was going to have a nervous breakdown. I needed the help of a professional. It was hard for me to admit this. I was taught that a man handled his own problems, and people who sought drugs, and saw shrinks were weak-minded. Truth is told, I wasn't really cut out for police work, but my father was one, so I decided to become one---I couldn't think of anything else I really wanted to do with my life. I believed in two things: right and wrong. The cops were right and the criminals were wrong. But I didn't really have the stomach for police work, that innate feeling that most cops and soldiers had—a sense of calmness under duress. This was why I was at the doctor's office. The nerves weren't really a mental thing with me anymore, but a biological thing now. I could feel it in my hands and in my feet, and arms, and over my face.

A nurse took my blood pressure, and I was relieved to find out it was normal. I had a family history of hypertension. He left and about ten minutes latter a middle aged brunette appeared, and looked at my symptoms on a sheet, as she introduced herself.

“It says here Mr. Anderson that you feel nervous and anxious.”

“Yes maam.”

“Well are you having any family problems? Any problems at work?”

“Just the usually family stuff—wife bitchin at me. You know how that goes? As he smirked at the doctor; but she didn't return a smile back.

It's mostly the job though, he stated soberly.”

“What kind of profession are you in Mr. Anderson?”

“I'm a police officer.

“Yeah, I hear it's a very stressful occupation.”

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"You see a lot of things out there in the streets. And the news reports you receive through the wire on other crimes throughout the area. The violence and the inhumanity that goes on out there, is something hard to deal with. And every morning you put on that badge, you really don't know if it will be you will make it home alive. They teach you to be stone faced and stoical at the academy at all times. But it's a difficult thing to do. Not to mention how much we are hated by the average citizen. But we are the ones who have to get mangle bodies out twisted metals cars. We are there at the gruesome murder scenes. The kind of stuff that would make most decent people puke on themselves. We have to digest all that shit. Most people do not have to take their work home with them every night. But we do. And some of the nightmares you have at night. It's enough to take its toll on a fella."

"You sound depressed Mr. Anderson."

"No, I'm not depressed, weak people become depressed. And I am not weak. I'm a man."

"No, I'm not saying that Mr. Anderson, it just seems like anxiety and stress is taking a toll on your mind."

"Well, can you give me something for it? A lot of guys I know are taking Valium; can you give me a prescription? The drinking is starting to take a toll on me. That's why I need Xanax or Valium of whatever the stuff you want to put on. Look, a lot guys don't talk about it openly at work; but I know for sure more than a few are taking this stuff."

"But these medications are very addictive, and I can treat you without giving you and an antidepressant first."

"Look lady, I don't need any anti—depressants I'm not depressed—I just feel a little on edge from time to time."

"The anti—depressant is used to treat the anxiety disorder as well. It sounds to me as if you may have GAD."

She paused briefly.

"That's General Anxiety Disorder. "

"I would like to ask you a few questions before we go on."

"Do you often feel restless or keyed up very often?"

"Yeah."

"Do you have thoughts of suicide?"

"No."

"Do you worry or obsess over things; to point were it interferes with your social, family or job capabilities?"

"Yeah, but I'm around sickos and murders and mayhem all the time. And the criminals are becoming younger. There was a case last week about a young boy—twelve years old who stabbed a young girl around age of thirteen—teen in a bad neighborhood in the city. She was beautiful and a great student—she had a real bright future ahead of her. And when you hear of stuff like this happening, how can you not...worry? There was also the case of this sicko junkie guy—who injected his own children, of various ages with heroin. When you hear stuff like that, how can not be depressed?"

"May I continue questioning you Mr. Anderson?"

"Yeah, go ahead."

"Are you easily fatigued?"

"Yeah. On my off days I don't have the same kind of energy like I used to. I used to play softball, go fishing, and work out. Now all I do is watch television. My wife often complains about me not taking her out like we used to do."

"Do you have an excessive fear of social situations?"

"Yeah, recently- it's not a mental thing, it's more of physical thing, I think. Like my muscles feel more tensed, I feel aches in my back, hands and feet. And I would rather stay at home and watch the tube, than go out anywhere."

"Any disturbances in sleep--- like you have a hard time falling asleep?"

"Yeah... I don't really have problem falling asleep—it's just the nightmares that bother me.

"Do they occur on a frequent basis?"

"I don't know, but it occurs enough."

"Well Mr. Anderson, I would like to prescribe this anti—depressant called Lexapro. It is also used to help people with anxiety problems—which you suffer from."

"I don't want to take an antidepressant... I'm not depressed. I just need something for my nerves."

"But I really can't prescribe you Valium to treat your disorder—it's highly addictive, and is not treatment for anxiety."

"Well I guess I will have to take the damn pills."

"I have plenty samples that should last you a couple of months. Be sure to come back for a follow up visit."

She handed me, a small bag that contained the pills, and wrote a prescription for Diazepam.

I took a couple of days off work. I kept staring at the package of white pills—I didn't want to take them. They suggested weakness and mental problems. I knew a couple family members who were in asylums, and people treated them as if they had leprosy. I was a real head case. I summoned up enough courage to take the pill, and waited. I waited about fifth—teen minutes and the drug kicked in. It was the most powerful drug I had ever tried. I felt every muscle in my body relax, and a tingling numbing sensation swept over me. I felt a smile come over my face—a smile that had not been there in months. I sat down on his couch and began reading. I lost track of time, as the hours passed quickly. Everything felt alright; it was like how could anything ever feel bad? I had been neglecting his wife, and he wondered how he could have ever neglected her? I felt that oppressive and wearisome gloom leave my being, a feeling I haven't felt since childhood. My wife seemed more beautiful then ever, and the two girls were very adorable. I decided to take them to the zoo. It was a nice day outside, and in St. Louis one didn't get too many nice days. The girls really had a good time there; watching the animals, that he nearly forgotten existed since he had been a child. I held hands with my wife, and bought everyone ice cream. The zoo was really a place for families to be. There were so many other fathers and mothers there with their children. I just wanted to enjoy this day, and if this day would be my last, I would die a happy man.

"What's that daddy? Look at how big that thing is? Why is he asleep daddy. Why do the elephants smell so bad daddy?" The girls

went on and on. And the way they ran around the park, I knew they would be very tired on the ride home.

By the time we made it half way home, the girls were fast asleep, and I nodded and smiled at his wife. When we reached our quite suburban residence; I carried the little girls over my shoulder.

We took both of the girls to bed, and I did something, that I had not done in a long time---I made love to my wife.

