

# The True Price of Bed and a Bath

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So it's me and two other girls: a brunette with very white skin and creepy empty blue eyes, a blonde just the meth side of chubby (that would be me), and a skinny Chinese bitch who never stopped smiling and who apparently didn't speak any English.

And Carl, of course, always Carl, with his stolen digital cam and swastika tattoos ("in prison you ain't always got a say about shit" was his explanation), and one of those telescoping batons for keeping his bitches in line, that you flick out sideways and it opens out into a metal stick for you to whack someone in the head.

That, and his always-too-small but seemingly neverending supply of crank, or meth like they call it up here in Oregon (back in Jacksonville FL we called it crank, back when I was still snorting it and having a great time).

To the creepycunt Brunette he said, "Put the bags on the stand, girl, not on the bed, that's how you get bedbugs," as she huffed and puffed and got ready to dump her luggage on the bed farthest from the window (there were two beds in this room at the Budget Inn)--

And to the Chinkybitch he said, "Go in the bathroom and get ready," real slow like she could understand English but only if you said it retard-slow, and from his nods and motions she at last understood that she was to change into the schoolgirl costume, because she went in the corner (not in the bathroom) and did so right in front of us.

Meanwhile Carl is making calls on his burner phone, going in his ALICE pack, and finding his methpipe which just last night at the strip club he'd made by unscrewing the metal from a stolen lightbulb.

The three of us flock to him like a sudden family, me at his feet so my bare legs are on his boot tops, Brunette and Chinkybitch either

side, he holds his lighter under the black spot on the glass and passes the vaping smoking meth around to the three of us, his girls, without having any himself. From his for-now self-denial I can tell we've got a long shoot ahead of us.

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After taking the stupid flower paintings off the walls, I guess so you can't tell in the video where it was shot, and stripping the black-streaked bedbuggy sheets (replacing the bottom one with a pink satiny one he'd had Chinkybitch steal at Wal-Mart while Brunette had a screaming fake argument with him at checkout) from the bed nearest the window, opening the curtains enough for light to come in but not so the whores down in the parking lot could see in, Carl set up his interior lighting by taking the dented paper shade off a lamp and throwing it in a corner. The Chinese girl, smiling, watched the lampshade sail and flop through the dead air and land on the stained flat carpet.

He nodded at Brunette, and she smirked and lit a cigarette and gave him the finger when he turned from her. He said right away: "I saw that" but his voice was bubbling with laughs underneath, like, which told me finally he was fucking her, and not just on video. I hated her and hoped (again) she'd get AIDS and die, or Carl would bang too much coke and meth one night and throw her down some metal stairs. For now, though, she stripped down to a thong. Chinkybitch came over to her and, as Brunette held her arms up high, bent close smilingly and shaved with an electric razor Brunettecunt's armpits. Good thing you can't smell the skanky bitch in the video, I was thinking, the pot calling the kettle as my mama used to say but she's dead so who cares.

And the same old same old: Brunette fucking Chinky with a double-headed strap, Carl in sunglasses dandling Chinky while Brunette (her creepy blue eyes dead yet smirking) kept the girly plaid skirt lifted for the camera, a double BJ starring Carl, Chinky, and Brunette, and several variations too boring to mention.

I kept my eyes on the part of the display window where it showed the time elapsed, signalling to Carl by lifting my left foot every time

seven minutes approached, because Carl was an idiot and even if he hadn't dropped and broken the latest stolen laptop he was too burned out and prison-cruel to edit anything worth a shit. So I just held the camera until my shoulders ached, until the Chinese girl said something no one could understand, but Carl got the gist enough to turn away from cumming in Brunette's face and raise his hand to the Chinese girl, who cowered, somehow still smiling.

Like all three of us, pretty soon I was coming down and hungering for the pipe. I pretended to check the camera display (lens now aimed down at the floor but still rolling, still recording) as the two other girls got dressed. No need for me to get dressed since I'd never undressed. It was hot this week in Salem and I wore cut-off camo shorts and a pink T-shirt Chinky had given me with a cartoon goose or some shit and HAPPY LIFE LUCKY!!! on it in squiggly unmissable writing.

"Whose fucking feet stink?" Carl wanted to know. Someone turned on the A/C for the first time, which growled and shook the scratched plastic window in its frame. Brunette was on the cell to the guy at the adult video store two miles down the road, glanced at Carl like he didn't matter which he didn't, he doesn't (I was thinkin) and Chinky just smiled at him, holding an open Styrofoam cup of instant noodles in her hands and studying the microwave with the busted door. I felt a giggle rising in my throat: would she go in the john and get water and use the thing anyway, frying her uterus with radiation in the process?

"Mine probably do," I announced. I was wearing those foam rubber flipflops which had a way of developing a white yeasty scum when my feet got hot, like they were now, which in a regular person with half a brain would be a, like, nonignorable signal to get the fuck out and keep running, never stopping, just keep going no matter what. And don't look back.

"Well how bout taking a bath for a change if you want to smoke some of this shit in about ten minutes, bitch?" I hated Carl as he spoke to me like that in front of these other two, whether or not the Chinese chick could even understand. Brunettecunt chortled at me

and tossed her damp smelly face towel at my feet, as she settled down on the bed next to Carl. Who grinned at her as she stroked his shoulder. He had the baggie of meth in his thin white fingers, white but for the X tats on his kuckles, the single cross on his fuckfinger.

"Fine," I said, in my quiet voice, the voice I used to use back home in Florida when my dad used to make his voice hard, he was tired from the worksite Mom used to say, but Daddy was the only one who could hurt my feelings and all he had to do was sound like he was even a little bit mad at me. "Don't y'all start without me," I said to no one, to these new people who filled up my life, people I didn't even count as real, people just like I was. They were me, not real, and I was them now.

I went in the bathroom and closed the door as far as the broken hinges would allow. Flipped on the lights and looked in the mirror. And there, looking back at me, was the monster I had let my daddy's girl turn into, with the empty staring white eyeball that was mostly scar, and the long white twist of reminder-flesh under my eye, my former left eye that Carl had taken from me one night in a fit of rage, after I'd told him what a piece of fucking shit he really was. I grinned at my monster face in the mirror, at the unforgettable price I'd paid for telling that motherfucker the truth about himself. He'd called me Snuff Girl for a whole year after that until he realized I didn't care if he killed me or not. I'd told him, I'd told him what he was, told him the truth about himself, even if I was the starring attraction up until then and couldn't, afterwards, go in front of the camera.

I raised my feet over the tub faucet and rinsed them off, walked wet all over the floor of the john, muddying it, found a small grey soap, washed my feet in the toilet, rinsed in the tub. Outside, in the motel room, back there in my life which for two minutes I had escaped from, Brunette and Chinky and Carl were bantering about nothing, the two girls trying to find favor so one of them, maybe, would get bigger hits from the former light bulb. I walked back and forth on Brunette's hand towel, which I'd carried in here with me,

like walking on her dirty cum-towel was as good as stomping on her face.

"Hey Cindy!" Carl called, in his rough-and-tuff voice which didn't scare me anymore, not really. My scarface glanced back at me from the mirror to let me know I'd been scared enough, my fear gland was burnt and gone by now, baby.

"Coming!" I called. "Wait for me!"

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