

Tuesday Night

by Robert Salley

She comes in with her white bag with its floral patterns scattered, almost accidentally, all around it. The washers rumble as she makes her way toward me, head peeking, searching, from side to side, for one that's available.

I'm folding a crew neck when she wisps by me, her bag bumping me in the leg. "Sorry," she says looking back. "It's okay," I turn, watching her walk toward the machines in the back. Her shorts had the word PINK imprinted across her ass and I turned back to my folding. She's always wearing something that I would imagine she'd sleep in on a hot summer night, with the windows open, begging for a breeze.

Two more t-shirts folded and I glance toward the back where she wrestles with the change machine that's underneath the television. Her early twenties legs are tan and her tits beam. I wonder how old she is, how mature. I wonder what the tattoos on her arm mean to her and does she have any more, hidden. She looks back at me and I look at the television.

"Cuse me," she says politely with a smile.

I look at her with raised eyebrows. I try my best to look like an aloof 42 year old (I think I even pretended to be chewing gum).

"You wouldn't happen to have two dollars in quarters," she laughs.

I smile, "Machines being fussy again?"

"Isn't it always? Just ate my five... the fucker."

I toss a shirt into my basket and walk over to her, "The guy who owns this place taught me a little trick." I take the quarter slide and start pumping it in and out of the machine. On the sixth thrust, five dollars in quarters pours into the dispenser.

"Holy shit," she laughed backing away slightly.

"Works every time."

"You just gave the coin machine an orgasm," her eyes glowed.

“Shhh... not too loud. I happen to know it's been getting pretty serious with the pay phone,” I joke scooping the quarters out and drop them in her cupped hands. She turns and lays them out on the counter across from the washing machines.

She smells clean and edible, like fabric softener. And then I remember where we are and I turn back to my world, my ring-finger, my Tuesday night, with a smile.

