

Punkboy vs. Planned Parenthood

by Ryder Collins

Punkboy brought Homegirl water and she drank it fast and deep, so fast and deep that all of a sudden she was coughing and all of a sudden it was coming up out her nose. Punkboy grabbed the glass from her and put it on the nightstand — yes, even punkboys have nightstands — and then Homegirl was crying and shaking and Punkboy was holding her and trying to comfort her.

It was the day after the day Punkboy'd found her tied to the bed in the house his roommate'd said she'd be at.

Punkboy didn't know who'd done this to her, but he knew he'd find out. First, he wanted to take care of Homegirl and make sure she'd be okay. Of course.

Punkboy said, after she'd stopped shaking so much, We need to get you to a doctor.

Homegirl just nodded.

Punkboy said, Ready?

Homegirl leaned against him and then pulled away. Yes, she said.

Punkboy helped Homegirl up and then he supported her down the hallway and down the stairs and out the door of his house and he was so goddamned glad he didn't run into the creepy creeper of his roommate cos he was afraid he would try to take out his anger on that big motherfucker and that motherfucker was big and mean.

He was also afraid if he ran into his roommate he would get pissed that that dumb creepy creeper motherfucker hadn't done anything to stop this.

Cos that creepy creeper'd been following Homegirl around town for weeks & that was the only reason he could tell Punkboy where to find her.

He put Homegirl into the passenger side of her car. He was gonna drive again and he wasn't gonna care this time that he didn't have

a license or never formally learned to drive cos he was just stoned enough and it was daylight and he had to get Homegirl to a doctor and make sure she was gonna be okay.

He wanted her to be okay, like I said. Like I said, he was gonna make sure.

The Planned Parenthood he took her to was only about five blocks away; the same distance he'd had to drive last night when he rescued her, when he'd found her bleeding on that bed, but in the other direction. Planned Parenthood was in what looked like the beginning of a strip mall — there were three stores: a sub shop, a closed-up shop with boards and everything, and Planned Parenthood. There was a check into cash kiddy corner to this little strip, and a rundown apartment complex next to that.

He parked and then helped Homegirl out of the car. They walked up the stairs, Punkboy's arm around her waist. He opened the outside door for her and then tried the inside glass door; it was locked.

There was a telephone with a notice saying something about everyone's protection and how to get in you had to call the front desk at all times.

This pissed Punkboy off. Seriously. What kind of fucking country did they live in that people who needed help, especially the poor, the downtrodden, the fucked up and abused people, had to go through this kind of shit to get it? It was another reason to add to his list of why he would always and forever be punk rock and why he might one day join the black balaclavaed anarchists smashing the corporate windows of the world. & he knew this was nothing, really, this having to call to get access to help through these glass doors was nothing compared to other people's things. It was just symbolic and it started a whole bunch of rage and exploding things and deep thinking things and he was imagining the lead singer of Judas Priest sticking dynamite up his half-brother's ass and calling it a hummer, cos his half-brother and Judas Priest and abandonment and hatred would always be united in his mind, he was imagining doing worse things to whoever did this shit to Homegirl and Homegirl musta

sensed this cos she grabbed his free hand with her hand and squeezed and said, Please.

He picked up the phone. It rang. He could see the woman at the desk and she was not answering and he was trying not to get pissed at her now. It rang more.

It rang more.

Finally, the woman, without looking at the door, picked up and said, Yes?

Punkboy took a breath and said, Hello?

Deskwoman said, Do you have an appointment?

Punkboy said, No, I called earlier. They said I didn't need one.

Deskwoman said, Are you here for men's health?

Punkboy said, No. I think my girlfriend was assaulted.

There was a buzzing sound and the door opened immediately.

Punkboy hung up the phone and walked Homegirl up to the desk.

Deskwoman said, Do you want me to call the police?

Homegirl said, I wasn't assaulted.

Deskwoman clicked her tongue.

Deskwoman said, Do you want a rape kit?

Homegirl said, I wasn't assaulted. I do want to see a doctor, tho.

Deskwoman said, Why?

Punkboy did not like Deskwoman's bedside manner or whatever you'd call it. Bitch was curt.

Homegirl said, I think I've miscarried. I think I've lost my baby...

Homegirl pulled away from Punkboy and started crying silently.

Punkboy felt like someone'd punched him in the gut. He knew that was a cliché but that's what it motherfucking felt like, a-ight?

Deskwoman said, I need you to fill these out, and thrust a clipboard with papers at Homegirl.

Homegirl took the clipboard and started walking over to a chair in the lobby without Punkboy; Punkboy was still kinda sagging against the wall by the window like he was the one who'd been assaulted, like he was the one whose body'd been messed with. Deskwoman gave him a look; he didn't move.

Deskwoman said, Can I help you?

And Punkboy thought, Yes, I'm gonna take out all my anger and hatred on your fugly bureaucratic face. I am gonna pound you face through that plate glass protective door until everyone who needs help can get in without your judgy face looking at them.

But Punkboy knew better than to say this cos he wanted someone to help Homegirl and he wanted to be there when someone helped her and made sure she was all right.

But... a baby!

He'd never wanted kids, but a baby...

Punkboy said, No. He went and sat down next to Homegirl in the small empty lobby. Some movie was playing on the VCR/TV combo attached to the wall but there was no sound and all Punkboy could think was, Babybabybabyexplosionsmotherfucker

babybabymotherfuckeriwillfuckyouupkillingababybabyidontwantbabiesneverwanted was that my motherfucking baby?

Homegirl kept writing things on the clipboard as Punkboy thought these things and the soundless movie — it might have been *Caddyshack* or it might have been the tot inappropriate *For Keeps* or it might have been Goddard's *Breathless* or it might have been Sartre or Yahweh or some other deity revealing the reason for existence, who knows cos no one was watching that shit — played on the TV attached to the wall.

Homegirl got up and returned the clipboard to Deskwoman.

Punkboy tried not to think about what she'd been through and what she'd lost.

They waited and did not talk. They waited in hard plastic chairs next to each other. They waited and did not touch. They waited and neither of them found anything to focus on. Not even the movie.

Which turned out to be the 1990 *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Maybe it was supposed to be calming.

Nursepractitioner came out and called, Homegirl and Homegirl got up and Punkboy got up.

& Homegirl said, You wait here.

& Punkboy said, But...

& Homegirl said, Please wait here for me.

& Punkboy didn't say anything but he knew this was a mistake on Homegirl's part and he knew she would need him and she would need him even after this and he didn't know if he was up for that and part of him wanted to say, hell no, I'm coming with you, and part of him wanted to say, Okay, and wait for her to get in the examining room and then somehow get through the next locked door and then knock on her examining room door like he was the doctor and then she'd have to let him in, and a big part of him wanted to say, Okay, and then wait for her to go down that locked corridor, wait for her to be out of sight and then he'd get the fuck out of that place as fastfuck as he could and just keep going. Walk as far and as fast as he could from that place. Walk to the nearest dive bar and commence drinking and to drink as fast and far as he could.

He'd walk cos he wasn't a complete dick and he couldn't strand Homegirl here, not after what'd happened to her.

He'd leave the keys with the judgy bitch there.

Of course he stayed and of course he waited and Homegirl came out and he could tell she'd been crying again and when she saw him she kinda fell into him and she started bawling and she said, I'm most likely infertile now.

Okay, she wasn't that eloquent cos she was bawling and shit.

She said, I prob...

She said, I can't...

She said, They think...

& they were still in that teenage mutant yellowplastic chaired lobby and judgy Deskwoman was there at the desk watching and not even pretending not to watch and Punkboy wanted to go up to that glass partition and bump against it with his body and be all like, What? What, bitch, what? What, bitch. I will FUCK YOU UP. I will FUCK YOU UP if you don't stop staring with your little beady judgy eyes. I will sodomize you with a mangosteen dick and grapefruit balls. I will earfuck you with a steamroller and I will

eyefuck you with a steamshovel. I will not touch your moldy vag, judgy bitch.

He didn't, tho, cos he couldn't let go of Homegirl cos she woulda fallen to the floor.

Homegirl said, No babies.

Homegirl said, I can't.

Punkboy held her and stared at Deskwoman who was still staring at them. She was probably thinking judgy thoughts about pierced tatted people who don't love god and who don't have jobs and who are a drain on the system and how she only had a couple more weeks left in this den of sin before she went to work for the pharmacy where she'd never have to prescribe ru-486 cos it was against her new principles.

Bitch kept staring back; Homegirl was crying crying and Punkboy, well, Punkboy kept his cool better than I'd expected.

Punkboy said, What the fuck are you looking at?

Then Punkboy said, What. The. Fuck. Are you. Looking. At.

Deskwoman didn't say anything; she pretended she had to answer the phone.

