

HARPIE

by

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They come at you. They come right at you.

Okay.

Like, uh...

Like?

Like harpoons. Like harpoons. They get in there and they never get out.

Where?

In you. They're in there. They're in there for good, until you die. Until they kill you.

Can you give an example?

They won't let go. They'll never let go.

Like who? Who you talking about?

Like Gloria. Gloria is an example.

The redhead?

Yeah.

With the small tits?

Yeah.

They're like not even there.

Right.

She could be a boy.

She's not a boy. Believe me. She employs her female charms.

You talk about her a lot.

No, I don't.

Well, before maybe.

It's that thing she has, she zeroes in. Kamikaze. Dives at you. You're the target. Down you go. Eventually, you go down.

What happened?

I got sick, you know? I don't know what it was, whatever it was, I got sick.

Right.

So I'm sitting there around the table and I'm not feeling well, so she goes, "I'll help you. You need help." You were there. Remember that?

No.

It was quite a moment, I'll tell you that.

I had my own problems.

"You need help," she says. Eyes like lasers. Beaming. But I resisted. I don't like too much help.

You're a recluse.

Call it what you want. I never thought I needed help. So I said that. I don't need no help. "Yeah, you do," she says, "you're sick, you're a sick man, you need help, I'll help you." No, I says, I'll be fine, no problem. Everything will come up roses.

Everything will come up roses?

Right.

Quite a saying.

"Let's have lunch," she says, "let's have lunch and talk it over." Then right there is another moment. Meaning: Who was I then? Who am I then? At that moment. To answer the question. And she won.

She won?

The bitch won. I let her win.

All women are control freaks.

I don't mean that.

They want everything to go a certain way and that's the way it goes.

I'm not talking about that.

What are you talking about?

I told you.

Tell me again.

It's a kamikaze operation. A kill. They zero in and come at you until you holler Quit or lay down on the ground and die.

Gloria?

Gloria. The bombshell. She flaunts.

A little bit, yeah.

She flaunts. There's no pussy there, really, there's only an anti-aircraft gun. A weapon.

Yikes.

Imagine, she holds me up finally for three days a week she'll see to my needs and buy my food and keep me company, whatever --

For a price --

For a price, and meanwhile she's philandering bits and pieces here and there and laughing at my jokes and drinking my vodka and having one catastrophe after another with her guys.

I heard about that.

Yeah, Dirk and Dick and Deadhead. A joke.

So then what happened?

So finally I get pneumonia and go to the hospital in an ambulance. I told her, do not let me go into a hospital, I am a damaged person with serious claustrophobia issues. But there I am in the hospital. Drip, drip, moan, moan, ding, dong, I break out of there in a fit of anger and I find myself strung out on the lawn in my hospital gown and here she comes in her weird little red car and she rescues me.

Well, that was good.

It was not good. I did not want to be rescued by her. But I get a ride and I put some clothes on and I sit in my chair and have a drink. When you're under fire, you shoot to kill.

Say again?

When you're under fire, you shoot to kill. And then another moment happened. One of those moments, you know, when your life is on the line. The harpie is coming at you. She's into you, and you have to decide, YES or NO. Like, get that harpoon out of me, baby, you're not very nice, you're a hard-assed nickel-plated hustler from the Wild West, you just threw up all over the bar, you're from some carny shithole American town on the border, and there's a switchblade where your heart should be. And so on. "You're an old man," she responds, "I've saved your fuckin' life. You owe me." The moment passed. I remember it really well. One of those crucial moments. And I realized that I couldn't stand up without help. I couldn't stand. I looked around. Like the final shot in a movie, I hungrily took

in my surroundings, while she glared at me ferociously, as though for the last time.

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