

PORTLAND BLOOD SLAM

by NICK ZAGONE

CHARACTERS YOUNG MAN

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PORTLAND BLOOD SLAM

[A young man, center.]

YOUNG MAN: Ran her debit card for purchase
Flaming haired young thing
tats on the side of her face
and spikes up and down her ears
Ran her debit card for the purchase
Her books: Ditta Von Teese
and the newest young adult Twilight schlock
I'm unfazed, how Portland ubiquitous
Ran her debit card for purchase
Thin waif, seemed tall but must have been the heels,
pale against her black tank top
Ran her debit card for purchase
Pretty tough but pretty and the look seemed to fit her
and she was comfortable in it— Some aren't
The confidence might be what made her... well...
"Please enter your PIN"
(Not your PIN number—that would be Personal Identification Number-Number BTW)
She leans over the counter now close, into my... area
Holding the pad (not many do)
Mentions (like many do) that the keypad was unusually loud
(It does have an annoying little "beep!")
There's reason for that:
And I give her my patent one liner:
"Yeah, but during Christmas in here?
You can't even hear it."
She looks at me quizzically, lets that sink in,
I smile, she coyly volleys a smile back:
And. There. They. Were.
Full reveal, there they were:
Fangs
She had Fangs
Pearly white and brilliant against blood red lipstick
She had Fangs
Made her entire mouth gleam red and full
She had Fangs
About a half an inch long. Bicuspids. Canines?
I don't know I'm not a dentist,
And I wasn't about to go Google it either because I was too busy
being stunned into zombie like silence.
Fangs. This is new.
Of all the tats spikes henna piercing scarring branding and kidyounot

even devil horns,
 Of all the book stores in the city your insecure show-your-
 independence-body-mutilation had to come into Powell's
 Forget that. Of course she would whatwasIthinking
 In the seconds seemed like minutes seemed like hours—
 I was trying to think... fake or grinded or implanted? Or maybe...?
 Now starting to, really becoming conscious of how:
 "Stirred" I was.
 Stirred was I.
 Deepdown. Deep doowwn
 Abdomen. Thighs. Loins.
 Seen women with Fangs in the movies hundreds of times
 but see real ones Grotesquely beautiful ones up close
 You suddenly realize the allure
 I was turned on and off simultaneously
 My Catholic physiognomy simultaneously made me believe yet
 crushed my instinct Yin yet Yang
 Simultaneously
 I don't really know what I'm saying.
 Basically, to be base, my John Thomas didn't know whether to pull a
 Frampton Comes Alive or shriek and shrink into my pelvis: "Closed... But Please,
 please, please, call again."
 Because frankly what if her mouth came anywhere near my...
 Oh god:
 And She knew it: What she was doing
 She'd seen it before And she liked it. What she was doing:
 She had fangs.
 I guess that's why you'd get Fangs.
 And like a zombie automaton mouth agape, staring, I put the receipt
 in the books the books in the bag put the bag in her hand and then
 stopped, we played a little tug of war, she raised an eyebrow and I
 said:
 "I'm sure you've um.
 Been asked. But... um,
 I guess what I want to inquire is um—
 Why?"
 "Why?" She says "Why? That's new. Usually I get 'how?'"
 No, I'm just like, ya know... Why?
 And she says "Well, I guess, so I can do this:
 [He hisses, loud, like cat, teeth bared and evil.]
 Oh. And I let go of the bag.
 And she smiles again.
 And as she leaves, as she struts, as she moves across the store
 she keeps her eyes on me... all the way, out... the door.
 And then... in the window, because I'm still watching, she pauses and
 she does...

[with index finger, a come hither motion]
...this.
Well, I'm on the clock, working, but hey I also got a girlfriend and
that didn't stop my ass either.
I darted "Takin' a ten!" To whoever leaping the counter
Through the door the crowds
Out past the spare-a-dimes,
The Beevo kids trolling for pot
The Greenpeace voter registration clip board-ers
She was already shakin' her can clear down Burnside.
Far and weeeeeee
Her face, turns back with a smile
And I almost get hit by a truck and I look back up
and she's even farther, down past Broadway
Turn back and smile
I look both ways and look up and she's past Big Pink,
Turn back and smile
And I'm running now, and coughing and hacking and she's like Fucking Peppy LePew
springing along,
Da-dup Da-dup
I'm almost to where she is and she's farther away,
Like she stretches time, like a space jump,
Past the old Theatre Paris, Voodoo Doughnut, Berbatti's Pan
And I feel like I'm slogging through heavy mud
And bums with cans
And tourists and Old Town pushers:
"What do ya need bro? What do you need man?"
And my feet are weighted with lead now and my joints feel rusty, Then I catch sight of
her heading back toward the Burnside bridge! Our eyes meet and she's gone as a streetcar
goes by, I dash and dance
and ache and the streetcar is past and
There it is: Another Full Reveal
The glorious Saturday Market, In full tilt
Throngs of undulating crowds and oh shit.
The music and the noise and the guy juggling garbage cans and
cleavers and shrunken heads and oh Christ I'm never ever, ever
going to find her and there she is! In the booths! and I run and it's
patchouli and pot and stinky candles and bam I run smack into the 7
foot tie dye guy and I smell the wet leather and Birkenstocks and I'm
high and I can't fucking get through all the strollers! My God! The
strollers and the strollers! The kid's got legs! Let the kid walk for
gods sake! Why won't the kid sleep at night? because the child's
been in your damn stroller all fucking day! He's atrophying for
God's sake and how does that stroller even fit in your car!
And There she is! Oh my God! By the Handmade Organic Hemp Dream Pillows, (I could
really use one of those) and she's licking her

lips now and her eyes gleam like that yellow reflection your
headlights catch—and suddenly she’s a pussy cat raccoon a opossum And she’s gone
and I trip over the Cat in the Hat accordion player, Jew’s harp, ukulele, banjo and the
violin player is playing the same

damn Irish jig over and over again BADLY and (take me to the
bridge, where is that confounded bridge) and there!

She stands among the glass blown bongos and she slowly melts into
mist and is sucked into the carb of the tallest sweetest bong surely
used by the girl with kaleido-Lennon eyes by the turnstile and don’t
call me Shirley. And there! She’s hanging by her skin in Dean’s
Original Ear Nest in Gory Jesus Christ Pose earrings piercing her
entire body blood running down her face and her breast and her
nipple and she’s smiling

(And dipshit clipboard guy asks me if I have a few moments for the
“ethical treatment of people who need my money” and I take his
clipboard and toss it across the cobblestones)

And there she is!

In the elephant ear booth and I stumble to her and she’s in a red
checkerboard apron with her hair up sugar and powder on her cheeks
and nose and she’s cute and I say “there you are” and she says “first
an elephant ear” and I look down and she’s really handing me an
elephant ear ripped from the side of an elephant’s head, blood and
flies, and hay, and black curly hair and she laughs at the sky and her
Fangs are bared and the sky’s all purple there were people running
everywhere (and why no Prince T-shirts? They’d sell better than
Neil Young for fuck sake)

And I step back

And fall ass over teakettle into the Skidmore Fountain and the taste of
the water is McMenamin’s Hammerhead Ale which I believe is an
IPA and a horse is licking it from my face and some ancient English
bobby on the horse taps his billy against the fountain and says:
“Sir? Sir? You there! The fountain is not for bathing in I’m going to
have to ask you to leave Huphup cheerio”

And there’s a beat a beat a beat

I look across the silent market where all the crowds are gone now and
the Nike urban tumbleweed plastic bags blow across the tracks but
there’s no wind

And the bobby is now on a people mover and he quietly slides across
a vacant Waterfront Park and there’s nothing, nothing

And she stands in front of me now

And the quiet of the Willamette is lapping against the retaining wall

And she’s closer now,

And the Rose Festival Sailors are saluting me,

As she’s closer,

And the strippers on the Morrison Bridge throw roses in the waves

As she puts her lips to mine,

And she's got fangs
And reaches into my hair
And she's got fangs
And The Couv is burning to the ground in the distance
And she's got Fangs
And she pulls my head back and sideways and I see through her red
hair an image, a man's face,
And I lock on the eyes of a Plaque of Bud Clark
And I reflect his sweet curly mustached St. Nick smile as I now look
up to the clouds the lovely ubiquitous clouds breaking open a drizzly Portland
ubiquitous rain and her ubiquitous Fangs pierce my
ubiquitous flesh.
And after my ubiquitous Portland nightmare of the ubiquitous
vampire girl, I reach and put a hand upon my tender neck
And I feel the two bumps
And I feel light headed
And in the mirror I sure look pale...
Like I've seen a ghost
And the wounds are fresh
And I think to myself...
Well. That's new.
[smiles]

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