

Graduation Gift

"The future is much brighter than any of you can see right now..." my favorite math teacher was saying to the graduating class of twenty-ten. He was wearing a graduation gown that was too large for him that showed his mismatched suit. He was wearing a pinstripe suit with black slacks. It didn't really matter because I was lost in something much more important. A woman's legs, more specifically Lydia's legs. She had rolled up her graduation gown to her waist because she claimed it was way too hot to be wearing a gown on a classic So Cal day. And I didn't dare argue with that logic because I had yet to see what else was lying beneath the gown.

"And when you step out there in the real world," he was starting to get enthusiastic about his speech, like he always did in class. "You'll find the lessons taught here will be the most invaluable lessons you'll learn in your life..." He continued with his speech about the simple stupid lessons we had learned from high school. The only lesson I really learned from high school was how to talk to girls, and here I was putting that lesson to good use. I was doing pretty well with Lydia consider this was the first time we met throughout our high school career.

Before the graduation commencement started my father and I went out to a small coffee shop in the Pacific Palisade overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The waiter gave us the table closest to the glass edge of the coffee shop allowing us to have a clear view of the crashing waves against the mountainside rocks. The sun was still pretty high up in the sky beating on the construction workers a mile up. I'm pretty sure they gave us the best seat in the house because my dad knew somebody who knew somebody kind of deal, I didn't really care to know either way. All I did was enjoy the perks. We sat down as the sun was slowly rising up over the clouds, my dad took off his Ray Ban glasses and asked the waiter for two coffees. I kept my glasses on and watched the waves keep their pattern on, they always started on the horizon slowly building momentum on their way in and finally crashing against the rocks, never really noticing that they limited in their options. And like the waves my dad in a man of patterns, he pulls out his wallet, sets his cellphone directly over it and two mm over neatly folds his glasses to put right next to it and rearranges the silverware so they're all parallel to each other. I'm pretty sure this reaction goes back to when he was a waiter.

"Son sit up properly!" My father says.

"Why?" I still stare out to the ocean, hearing the waves crash.

"And take those glasses off!"

"Sure why not?" I respond sarcastically.

"So today's a big day,"

"So what, you're finally proud of me?"

"I was always proud of you,"

"You just had trouble saying it at times,"

"Well today's pretty big, you're graduating from high school"

"Ya woopy do. Pops to tell you the truth it wasn't that hard,"

"But I'm still proud of you, that you actually finished. You'll be able to go to college and get a nice job and marry a beautiful woman,"

"Yeah I guess. I mean I'm really not that interested in marrying actually,"

"Well you can do whatever you want. Look what I did in my life..." And there it was one of my dad's famous lectures. My mom always told me to let my dad finish because if he didn't he felt like he wasn't be a true dad. Passing on his vast knowledge to his only son. I noticed a redhead walk in as my dad continued to talk; she had her hair in a ponytail and had a yellow sundress on. When she sat down alone at a table across from mine she quickly crossed her legs. I couldn't help but to smile.

“So if you somehow realize that this isn’t the end of anything. It is rather the begging of your life. And you may not be able to see it but you are just starting out so don’t do anything stupid.” Were the final words my dad was telling me, he always had this odd thing where he changed the tone of his voice to make sure you at least heard the end of his lectures. I quickly nodded at the end and watched the redhead greet her friend a muscle man that bore a huge resemblance to Brad Pitt.

“So did you hear me?” My dad asked.

“Yeah I did. I’m just starting out, and don’t do anything stupid.”

“Well you got the gist of it. Just if you remember one thing from today it’s this. Your young and can’t imagine or even comprehend the things that will happen in your life. So think before you act. And again don’t do anything stupid tonight.”

“Why? Cause I’m graduating you think I’m gonna be stupid only tonight?”

“No. I think you might be stupid because of this,” He then begins to pull out a small box from his coat pocket that looks like it contains a necklace. He then slides it over to me, I feel like he is actually treating me like an adult. I open it and notice a small horse galloping on the top of a key. I take it out of the box and look it closer; it’s a pair of keys for a car.

“So happy graduation, Son.”

“Is it really a key to car?” I ask quickly.

“Why don’t you go out to the parking lot and figure out which one it is.” I then push my seat out from pure excitement like a kid and run out to the parking lot situated facing out onto Pacific Coast Highway. And there it is, my car, a classic sixty-five mustang. It’s parked right in the middle, it bright forest green with two gt white stripes going down the middle. I run over to the side of the car and fumble with my keys to figure out which one opens the door. I finally unlock it and jump in as my dad is walking out of the coffee shop whispering something to one of the workers. I then quickly turn it out and it purrs right under me. My dad walks over and asks me what I think.

“I’m speechless,”

“Well again. Happy graduation. I won’t be able to make it I have to meet with a client. But I hope you enjoy the car son.”

“Don’t worry I will.”

“And again don’t do anything stupid. So I’ll see you later.” My dad says as he walks over to his Mercedes and then drives off to god knows where. I sit and enjoy the roaring engine as the redhead walks out with her boy toy. I then throw my car into gear and almost hit a car on my way out. Damn, well I then floor it as I drive down PCH. The sun was starting to lower and the sounds of the waves crashing were getting fainter. My dad has rarely been there in my life, and he always entered into my life when it was at his convenience. But one thing he never faltered on was his gifts. I guess all those long days in tight small compacted office paid off at one point or another. Why would anyone want to ever grow up? Work so your wife resents you, your son despises you and you hate your job. Why would anyone want to ever grow up? I didn’t want to think about it, I then floored it as I shifted gears swerving in and out of lanes. But I still wasn’t doing anything stupid, yet.

When I had arrived to the graduation ceremony they began seating us by our last name, so I was put near the middle. I was just minding my business when I felt Lydia was walking over towards me. Before that day I had never met, which was not surprising because our graduating class was about a thousand students. She was smiling as she walked towards me, long brown hair, a pair of gray eyes that could kill any man. And the most importantly she had a smile that could light up a room, how was it that I had never noticed this girl before? I was known as the player, I had been in bed with every pretty girl in the school at least once, something I learned from my old man. But this girl was new to me, it was like being discovered for the first time in a giant toy store. I was going to walk away out of the toy store with this toy. As she sat next me and then quickly turned her head to smile, I couldn’t help but to have a smile that extended from cheek to cheek. She then began to hike up her gown, slowly, all the way to her

waist. I was lost in her legs, she crossed them quickly. They were a bright shiny mocha brown from long days of tanning. I began wonder what they would feel like, it's amazing how you can have had the same experience with dozens of women, but at the end of the day you still seem to forget how they feel.

"Why so high?"

"Cause it's a sunny day!" She said with excitement as if it were something special.

"You're not from around here are you?"

"How did you know?"

"Cause it's always sunny here in So Cal, but to you this is special,"

"Yeah, I'm from Boston. Name's Lydia,"

"Well Hey. Welcome to Santa Monica,"

"Thanks, yeah I actually just transferred this semester, I don't really know anyone,"

"Well let's see if we can change that,"

"Okay. Lets see." She giggled as she relplied. That smile was going to be the end of me.

We continued to exchange words throughout the entire ceremony as teachers talked about how this was only the beginning and what not. She continued to smile often and I eventually invited her to this party I heard about. She said yes as the principal walked up to the podium.

"And so I would like to announce the graduating class of twenty-ten!" the principal yelled out as I was getting lost in her grey. Everyone then stood up including Lydia to throw their hats in the air, I took a second longer to allow myself to process Lydia's gaze. I was lost in her in so many different ways.

When everything settled down and all the parents began hugging their kids I whispered a couple sweet nothings into Lydia's ears. She then slipped her number and I walked off. All the parents were taking pictures with their kids, saying how proud they were of them and I just got into my new car and drove off towards my house in the hills. The house was dead quiet; I figured my dad was still entreating one of his clients. Probably some old rich hag. I slipped under my covers and enjoyed my dreams; it often felt like a way for me to enter my mind, besides most parties didn't start till eleven. Well the cool ones started at eleven.

The clock read ten-thirty as I tried to remember my dreams. Lydia and my car were involved somehow just couldn't remember exactly what happened. I went over to my closet and choose my favorite dress shirt, a pink shirt with a white collar and white French cuffs. I also choose my favorite pair of cuff links a pair of playboy cuff and pinstripe slacks with wingtip dress shoes. I made sure to take some of my dad's favorite liquor on the way out. I walked out of the house over to my new car and stuck in the key to hear the engine roar. I sent a text to Lydia that I'd be over in fifteen. She responded quickly with a happy face, I was in.

The theme of the party was the end of the world party. Though it didn't really mean anything cause for everyone this was the end, it was live today cause tomorrow is too far away. I ran around with all my friends and began to introduce Lydia to all the rich stuck up kids. She was nice though throughout the entire evening. I sometimes slipped away to the bar and picked up a vodka sprite for the both of us. The house was giant, more like a mansion in the pacific palisades that over looked the ocean. I told her that we should go outside to watch the waves, as an excuse so we could be alone. As we walked over to the edge of the mountain and could hear the waves crash against the rocks again. I reached over with my right hand so we could hold hands, while I sipped vodka from my left hand. I felt like a kid again, hoping that somehow the stars aligned and this girl liked me. When we finally started to hold hands she smiled at me. Finally we reached the edge of the mountain and saw the moon shine against the crashing waves. I turned to her and she gave a quick glance, I then reached over for the kiss. Our lips interlocked and her pink rose lips felt like pure ecstasy. She then nibbled at my lips as we started to part, this wasn't her first time doing this. I then spilled some vodka on her dress, man it was like I was doing all this for the first time. She giggled and I apologized as a couple of my drunk kids walked out in suits.

"Dude, I stole this Cuban cigar from dad. We totally gotta smoke man," Tom said.

“Totally dude,” Rick replied.

“You in man?” Shawn asked me.

“Sure man, I got time to kill, fuck I’m only eighteen I got the rest of my life ahead of me like my dad says.

“Well I’m going inside sweetie. To clean up and get more Vodka.” Lydia whispered to me. I smiled as she walked towards the house with her perfectly shaped ass, she was siren. Men have probably died trying to get her, I have no doubt.

“So you tapping that man?” Tom the horny asked.

“Not yet,” I replied entranced by her curves.

“Well good luck,” Rick said.

“Shut up guys lets smoke, hell we might die tonight anyways.” Shawn yelled out to the guys. Tom lit the cigar and we began to pass it around. As it was passed from Tom to Rick to Shawn I felt like I was living a movie for a second. All of us in our tailored suits smoking a Cuban cigar while holding some vodka between in our hands, it felt like at this very moment we were growing up. All of us exchanged stupid stories about high school and the girls we had throughout our adventures. I understood why men bonded so closely, because at moments like these being a man meant telling stories while enjoying ourselves as we smoke and drank our way to death. The cigar was finally passed to me, and I took a huge drag. Why do men love things that can kill? Men love drinking, men love smoking, men love fire, men love guns and knives and fast cars and a million different things. I took another drag as Lydia walked out of the house looking sexy as hell with her pink rose lips and gray eyes. And men love women. Why do men love things that can kill?

I was drunk as hell by the time party started to die out. Tom thanked me for coming and asked I was fine to drive, I lied and told him I was. I walked Lydia to my car and opened the door like a gentlemen. I enjoyed staring at her in the passenger seat of my sexy new mustang, it felt right. The engine roared, Lydia smiled.

“So what’s the plan for tonight?” She asked.

“Well there is small invite only after-party at my place,” I replied.

“So you going to hook me up with an invite?”

“I’ll see what I can do,” I said with suave as I threw the car in gear and began speeding down the mountain. She smiled and reached over and began rubbing my legs. I shifted gears and floored the car once again. She giggled, and I enjoyed the rush. We began to catch speed on the way down as she unbuckled herself to get closer to me on the bench seat. We started to get near the bottom of the mountain, I turned to here as I shifted to fifth gear, I started to get lost in her eyes. Those big grey eyes, the car was turning from side to side, the mountains began to curve and I kept my cool. She gave me a quick kiss on the lips, and when I look forward again I quickly corrected the steering wheel. Almost my second time crashing the car, she smiled, she was too drunk to know what the hell was going on. We finally reached the bottom of the mountain, and I knew these streets by heart so I kept my foot on the gas pedal while staring into her big grey eyes. I ran through a stop light and noticed this huge blinding light coming from behind her head. She looked angelic as if God was shining a spotlight on the one thing I cared about most in my life. Why do men love things that can kill? Then the truck came plummeting through the passengers door, then the horn sound came, then her smile, then her eyes all smashed into me. Her entire body thrust onto me for a split second, we were one for a second. The truck kept on going. I was dead. Why would anyone want to ever grow up?