

Filled To Empty

By Pete Malicki

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Junior – an attractive, intelligent and athletic male. 35-45. Passionless and empty

Scene

Junior sits facing the audience.

JUNIOR: I can't sleep. It's four AM and I've been up all night, thinking vivid thoughts as I sit on the edge of the bed. My girl's hair is curled around my fingers and I think of something sharp. Something that could slice through bone like butter. My gaze is fixed blankly on the wall as I picture a knife so fine it would disappear if you held it sideways. The girl makes a noise of contentment and I look down at her.

We stayed up talking until midnight. I'm good at talking. I always say the right thing, whether it's a poignant remark or simply nothing. I even understand women. At eleven forty-five I decided I wanted her and it took me all of fifteen minutes to make her want me back. I started undressing her while we talked and it was as if I was passing her cutlery for all she reacted. After five years of platonic friendship you'd think she'd be reluctant to have some benefits, but nope. I kissed her neck and pulled her close and she came willingly.

As I play with her hair I decide I love her. I feel this incontinent need for her. She's so sweet and sincere. Honest and vulnerable. I lean down, my breath on her face, and I'm inches away from waking her with a kiss.

But I'm more in love with the girl who's coming round tonight. She has passion which my friend here can't match. The way she holds my eyes until we're both smiling so hard we want to fucking eat each other. I'd marry that one if it wasn't so damned easy to have every other girl, if the feelings were for her alone and not spread out among many. I want them all like a drunkard wants drink: intensely but emptily.

See, I played football at school and realised I could make a good living from it. I had that lucky cross between athleticism and intellectualism, getting the best grades in class and hammering all the big dumb bastards into the ground every time I was on the field. I was every nerd's wet dream. I went pro easily and made millions. I retired at the top of my game simply because I was bored. What's the point of sticking around at the top of the ladder? You get sick of the view.

Everything in my life has been there when I wanted it. Women. Bam. Money. Bam. Fame, admiration, food, cars, "stuff." I'm forty now and I've had everything for a decade. Everything! And you know what? It's all worn off. The joy of success is dead. The finest wine is my tap water. The most delicate flavours my staple diet. Beautiful, lovely women are mine whenever I want them. Fast cars are old bombs and my friends' pride in me is a dead emotion I'm no longer moved by. People are always talking about the cup being half full or half empty. Mine's so full it might as well not be there.

My girl rolls over in her sleep and presses up against me. I could wake her and have her but I'm thinking about that knife again. There's nothing as sharp as I'd like but maybe maximising the pain wouldn't be too bad. Maybe I should use something dirty and raw and blunt and hack a hand or a foot right off. I should probably gag her first. I couldn't stand the screams. The blood will be bad enough but the screams might make me wonder

if this is as screwed up and disturbed as it sounds in my head. Why worry about something as transient as the pain given what I'm about to do?

The sight of her nipples and large areolas fights for my attention. Maybe I *should* wake her and have her. But no, this love for her I feel is some useless, false thing. I don't really love her. I don't really love anything.

I slip out of bed and go to the kitchen. A chef would admire my kitchen. I wonder what's the best thing to sever flesh with. Here's something sharp. Meat-cleavery type thing. Might take a couple of hacks. I wonder if I'll have it in me to strike more than once.

I'm getting excited now. I've done a lot of things in my time but never anything quite like this. Think of the repercussions! I might have to *struggle* after this. I might not have everything I want anymore. I can't imagine anything more blissful than a giant, fuck-off spanner in the works.

She's still asleep. As I look at her I have a moment of doubt. She didn't sign up for this. All she wanted was some human comfort. Should I really be dragging her into my own personal hell?

No, Junior. Be strong. I *will* do this. I sit down on the stool beside my bedside table, a foot away from her. Maybe I won't gag her. What difference will it make? Yeah, screw it. Let's do it.

My heart is pumping. My breathing heavy and oral. Adrenaline is surging through my arteries. I look at her, tingling, and bite my lip hard. Hard enough to make my eyes water. She's so innocent, a sleeping child. Her arm is hanging loose over the side of the bed. My facial muscles are twitching. I look away.

No! No more weakness. Let's do it. Three breaths per second. I'm shaking. She's right next to me, asleep and unaware. Almost four breaths per second. I'm shaking so hard I don't know if I'll be able to strike properly. I grit my teeth and raise the cleaver above my head. Faster. Faster! My vision is darkening. No! I can't pass out now. I have to do this. I have to do it right the hell NOW!

I slam the cleaver down like a car crash. It only cuts through half the forearm. She screams so loud I think my ears are going to bleed as the thud and splatter wakes her up. My radius is completely halved, the ulna shattered and the distal half of my forearm hanging loose. My hand looks like it could come right off like a Band-Aid. The cleaver has fallen from my hand, staining the carpet where it landed. I'm bleeding like the walls of Hell and beginning to doubt I'll get in another hack. I collapse against my bed and slide onto the floor.

I'm zoning in and out of consciousness. As I lie there on the carpet, my arm a mangled, bloody heap, an image appears before me. It's her. She's crouching above me, wanting to help but impotent with fear. I look into her eyes and see such rich emotion I wish I could stare at it forever. It's beautiful. I finally have something new. Something horrifyingly real. I see that pure awfulness which gives the good things context.

My vision is fading. The light dims. The volume is turned all the way down and I know I'm almost done.

Right before I feel nothing, I at last feel something.