

Ron Garmon

Headsman's Apology

Detainees in I-block weren't allowed to have music, so the vintage SanzaFuze device Jeezy took off a commodity trader the night before was a real find, or it would have been if he could get past the bourgie motherfucker's abysmal taste in music. "Who the *fuck*," the jailer pleaded meditatively to God as he slid a plastic key card into a metal slot for the first time in his shift, "is Red Sovine?"

God didn't answer, but a vaguely feminine, definitely prerecorded voice from the wall speaker cracked out the words "Ren-dall Double-you Hon-nicker. Detainee Class T. Processing complete. Proceed to Terminal Interview." The orderly up-thumbed to the turnkey far up the dank day-glo orange corridor and began to pull the detainee out as soon as the lockbolts snapped open. The wall section gave slowly and smoothly, taking the object of the exercise out with it. Gowned, his head crated in a steel restraint, limbs and torso wrapped in IV tubes and leather straps, Honnicker had been secured to the wall hours before by the nightshift. Jeezy injected thiopental sodium into the drip mix of LSD-25 and Ibogaine. The turnkey went back to the videogame on his monitor and an attendant began to push the interviewee to the processing room, hooking phones into his ears and cranking Dave Dudley's "Six Days on the Road" before the subject started to babble. Before all the banks failed, Jeezy had been an orderly in a large hospital in Norfolk, Virginia and, after the Crackdown, homeless in Philly and glad to have missed a berth in a Carolina deathcamp. After brief, but conspicuous, service in the general shooting, the Revolution gave him a \$150,000 Worker's Exploitation Bonus, four new back teeth, a studio apartment in Terre Haute's Debs Tower and this low-stress version of his old job.

Pausing at the glass double doors leading to the green room to light a jay, Jeezy could see the interviewee's jaws working already. Like most subjects (and how they *hated* the term "Federal prisoner" around here), he was male- another white guy well into squishy middle age. *Fuck, this one looked like beef gone to tallow, with not enough muscle to hold up the old-*



skool white power tats on his massive guns. It's been a longish while since we'd had one of these jethros, Jeezy thought, the interview base being mostly econocrime these days. He remembered being part of a Cadre team years back that flushed out a nest of them in the woods near Lynchburg- six fat starchy fucks who'd squatted in a limestone cave for months eating Gulf War I era MREs and awaiting orders that never came. They gave up when the first sniper round pulped their Grand Dragon's head all over the rocks.

Jeezy slid the wall section into a slotted space at the end of the corridor, locked the bolts into place, perched in a chair and resumed playing with his new toy when the red light on the wall-panel came on. Processing seldom took long.

Inside, Honnicker stopped talking and squinted at the pink shaft of light that was the only illumination in the room. Its source could've been six inches from his eyes or a thousand yards, but the voice clearing itself of obstruction seemed to come from inside his skull and its sudden appearance seared his neck with pain, as he briefly fought the head restraint. *Fuck it, he*

thought and went back to relaxing. Life was too good at the present moment.

“You are Captain Honnicker, formerly of the Second West Virginia Volunteers, Supreme Order of the White Race,” said the voice, its smooth, indifferently male tones making Honnicker think of margarine, “and this is your Terminal Interview. I’ll bet you’re pretty relaxed right now, huh?”

“Hell, yeah!” Honnicker agreed. Anything, including this head-rig, the IV and the dope-sucking wetback that pushed him into this closet, was better than another trial. Or Federal prison, once they let all the niggers and terrorists out and put real Americans in.



“Just a few questions, then you can make a statement,” the voice chimed, “After that we’re done. Remember, you’re being recorded.”

Honnicker was one of those rare archived subjects upon which the latter statement seemed to make no impression whatsoever. At sixty, his blunt features weren’t so much lived-in as trampled-upon, coarsened by dec-

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ades of resentment, temporarily bloated by a few years of opportunity and high living and now puffed by a decade more of boozing in solitary mountain cabins in the Blue Ridge. Watery eyes, bulbous nose and lantern jaw all squeezed into brute contempt like a fist.

“Can I ast you something?” Honniker began, “Who ratted me out anyway?”

“No one,” the voice countered, “You were picked up by Cadre authorities after a census worker noticed you passed out on your front porch in Beckley and saw your forearms.”

Shit, he thought, giggling. “That’s what I get for moving anywhere near town.”

“Mr. Honniker, when did you start-“

“Hatin’ niggers?” he finished, high as the kites he used to fly back home in Indiana, a few dozen miles from where he sat now. “Shit, I can’t remember a day I didn’t and them fuckin’ spics and gooks is what made it to where a white man can’t hold a job and every shit-colored half-a-monkey they let come over here besides. I joined the Marines in ’01, right outta high school, and never gave a wet crap for any of ‘em, officers included. I went in to kill rag-heads and did.” He smiled, suddenly remembering the parties in Baghdad’s Green Zone and the payback raids they used to stage after car-bombings. “Son, have you ever fired a Bushmaster APR on rock ‘n’ roll into a roomful of people? You can hear them ol’ bones bust to pieces as the bullets tear into ‘em and blood hangs in the air like red spray paint.” Laughter seemed to peal inside his head like church bells.

“You couldn’t have done much of that working for Mailed Fist Security,” lead the voice, “After you were fired from Blackhawk.”

“Pussies,” he spat, the bulk impressively scoring on an already-splattered lens. Dramatically effective and certainly a keeper. The establishing shot of Honniker’s face before sitting there strapped and dripping was already honey on the video monitor and would look fantastic in good old 70 mm. His partially caged face was flooding one end of the negative gauge to the other, like some Cretaceous fish hauled up live from a stagnant ocean and now boiling in its tank.

“MFS was a righteous outfit once, too!” Honniker’s eyes narrowing in calculation. “You think the fuckin’ riots in L.A. and Cleveland back in ’17 stopped *themselves*?” he snorted, “We just went back to kickin’ in doors with Predator rounds. Oh man,” he continued, memory winding a stem inside him, “It’s pure joy to lay into niggers who speak *English*, homey! All that screaming and cussing *meant* something, dawg, and that something was White Power jamming a handheld rocket through the front door of your shitwad Ape City tenement. I can’t see your ass and don’t give a fuck if you’re nigger, spic, kike, slant-eye bugeater or one of those slicked-up rag