

# UC Merced

## The Vernal Pool

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Nothing Good Happens After 3 A.M.

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## Nothing Good Happens After 3 A.M.

“You know what they say, ‘nice guys finish last’. I wish I could say otherwise. I was at a single’s bar earlier tonight, hoping to meet someone. Well, anyone really. I just want a girl who understands me, one who’d listen to me and all my troubles. And I guess so I could have sex with her. It’s been a really long time. Twenty-three long fucking years. Anyways. I was at the bar, right? The faint smell of cigarettes and booze was wafting in the air. Neon blue lights flew around, bouncing from wall to wall. It made me fucking sick. But I really wanted tonight to be the night. I wanted something good to happen so fucking bad. Just when I was about to call it quits, I saw this girl across the room. She was absolutely beautiful. Her cobalt hair contrasted the translucency of her skin so well. Even from far away, I could see the sparkly lip gloss shimmering under the blue lights. I imagined myself just *licking* her lips, devouring the cotton candy flavor from her Juul. She was so *fucking* hot.

“Needless to say, I’m not the most confident guy when it comes to the ladies – excuse me, I mean *Queens*. I was trembling as I was walking up to this girl and somehow, I gained the courage to ask for her name. She gave me a weird look. As if I were repulsive or some shit. After I bought her a drink, she told me her name was Ana. We got to talking and whatever and at the end, I asked her if she wanted to come with me back to my place. This LADY – *after* I bought her a drink – had the AUDACITY to say no. ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME?! I’m going to literally punch something. I hate everything about my life.”

My toy poodle, Princess, looks at me like I’m a psycho. She doesn’t even fucking realize what’s going on. She’s so fucking stupid. I thought finding her in that old alley downtown, scavenging through the garbage cans, would help me become a better fucking person, but I guess not. She whines and walks over to her food bowl.

“Oh, fuck off,” I tell her, “You’re getting fat. Stupid dog..”

She looks at me again, almost like she wants to say something. I can’t tell what it is, but as soon as I bend down to pick up her water bowl, she runs out of the room.

“Goddamnit,” I mumble to myself. The fucking front door was open. I half-run to the front door of my lousy apartment. To my surprise, Princess is just barely outside. She’s staring at the neighbor’s door but staying seated inside my apartment.

“Good. At least you know what’s good for you” I tell her. I shut the door closed and walk to the filthy kitchen counter to fix up something to eat. There’s nothing like a nice, warm clam chowder at midnight! I fucking hate clam chowder but it’s all that I have. It’s my own damn fault for getting high before going to the grocery store, I picked out the wrong soup. As I take out the can from the grocery bag on the floor, I remember that I went to the dispensary before going to the club. Hopefully a couple hits make this clam chowder taste at least a little fucking decent.

I reach into the backpack on the chair next to the kitchen counter and take out the small plastic bag filled with a couple ounces of weed. I don’t want to get completely high tonight, just enough to take a little bit of the anger away. Taking my tiny plastic grinder, I take a small bud of the weed and grind it into small particles. I take the rest of the weed in the plastic bag and place it into the jar that’s sitting on the kitchen counter. Working quickly, I roll up a blunt and light up the opposite end. I breathe in the warm, relaxing smoke, allowing it to fill up my lungs. Damn, this weed is so fucking good. Instantly, I feel the effects of the hit. I almost forget what I’m doing, but the aroma of the opened can of clam chowder on the counter brings me back to reality.

I take the can and pour the chunky, disgusting liquid into a half-dirty bowl. While it’s microwaving, I continue to take some hits off my blunt. I feel so fucking weightless. I wish I could feel like this all the time. I’m staring out the window, just taking hit after hit when

something outside the window catches my eye. The moon is so fucking bright. I decide to ditch the clam chowder and take a night walk instead. It's something that I usually do anyway. There's something about the night sky that's calming, so peaceful. I've really only found peace while taking a walk in the middle of the night.

Extinguishing my joint to save it for later, I walk out the front door, making sure Princess is nowhere to be seen. Taking careful steps, as to not wake the neighbors, I walk out into the parking lot, and then to the small road that leads to the park.

The serene night sky is up above me. Cool, navy clouds whirl around the brilliant glow of the moon. The Big Dipper is just barely in sight, but the remnants of its glow shine on the tall alder trees outlining the neighborhood. The crisp, cold air bites my face. It's so fucking cold. I absolutely hate living in Ohio so much but it's where I've been almost all my life. There's no way I could ever get out of this shithole. The only way I can escape is if I fucking kill myself. Which, I guess I can do. It's not like I have much to live for anyways.

I continue walking on the narrow road at the park. There's not much to see at this hour. Meth-heads lighting up, high school stoners, homeless people. You know, the forgotten ones. And of course, there's me. The most forgotten of all.

I look down at the small digital watch on my wrist. It's almost three. Oh well, I need to clear my head anyway. It's good, I think. To clear my head after such a shitty day. Why can't I be a normal fucking guy? Even my fucking parents didn't want to be around me. I think about them sometimes. Almost always when I'm out here on these walks in the middle of the night. I can't help it. Every child wants to fucking know why they're abandoned. Every child wants the fucking decision to confront their lost parents and ask them why the hell they were given up. But I know that if I find out, it wouldn't be the thing I want to hear.

I've always envisioned them to be spies that were on the run from the Russian government or something. As a kid, it made things almost easier. But now as an adult, it hurts even more. Why the fuck would my parents be spies and why the hell would the Russian government want them? I don't fucking know. But at least I learned how to be independent. At least I can take care of myself. I don't need anybody except for me. Who fucking cares if I was given up. I don't care. I turned out just fine without my parents.

Goddamnit, I feel my high wearing off. I should've brought the fucking joint with me. I wouldn't be feeling so damn angry right now.

Fuck this. This walk did absolutely nothing for me. Once I start thinking about my parents, I feel something inside me change. It feels as if the entire world is just gonna suddenly combust and everything is gonna go up in flames. It doesn't fucking help that I don't have anything with me to take away the pain. There's a burning sensation in my chest, I can't seem to shake it. I decide to end my walk and frantically returned to my shithole apartment, which only infuriated me some more. Why does my life fucking suck so much? Why can't I just end it all? I believe I would feel happier if I weren't alive to feel *anything* anymore.

I'm so fucking angry right now. How the hell am I supposed to do this? How the hell am I supposed to live through this shit? There's a fire burning inside my chest. It burns so fucking bad. I can't feel my heartbeat. I'm not even sure that I'm completely alive. Damn, Princess' fur is so soft. Soft, silky fur in between my fingers. But I keep hearing this voice inside me, pushing me to the edge, convincing me to just...throw her as hard as I can. I let the voice take over for just a second. There's a brief moment of relief. The fire burns a little less. Princess yowls. She tries to get up. She has a limp. I should feel bad, but I don't. I feel electric.