

No Rest for the Wicked

Richard Summers was a hard but dishonest worker. He had been blessed with a charismatic appearance, with a lean but not lanky build, dirty blonde hair, near perfect teeth, and two shining hazel eyes. He was often compared to various male celebrities, though it was difficult to pinpoint which one, seemingly taking different aspects from all. He simply had good looks, an attribute which certainly helped him with his career. He always put so much effort into researching and planning his jobs, but the dishonesty lay in the jobs themselves. Mr. Summers was a conman, and an experienced one at that.

His career had begun at age 24, after he decided that his relatively stable, albeit mundane job at a charity agency wasn't for him, and decided to do something exciting. In the years since that decision, he had impersonated 2 hedge fund managers, 3 insurance agents, 1 lawyer, 5 salesmen, 1 minor arms dealer, and in his latest and riskiest con to date, 1 chairman of a major conglomerate. After nearly getting discovered during that last job, Mr. Summers had decided to take it easy and go after some cold, hard cash, choosing to impersonate a bank security consultant who would help install and test security systems at a large bank in the city, so he could retire at the young age of 43.

His plan was fairly simple, learn enough about bank systems to fake being a consultant and get hired by a bank to upgrade their systems. After getting hired, he would go in the first day to check the systems and find out how to get past them, then tell the manager the upgrade was the next day, when in reality he would come back that night to steal as much as he needed and leave the country before the bank opened the next day. It was in that last crucial step where chance got in the way of his con. Mr. Summers was nearly finished, he had gotten in and out of the bank fairly quickly after the unsuspecting manager told him how the system worked, and put the money in his car to drive to the harbor and take a boat to Europe. As he was coming up on a yellow light, he slowed down knowing he wasn't going to make it. However, the brakes on the car behind him malfunctioned, making the car slam into Mr. Summers. This crash propelled Mr. Summers's car into the oncoming traffic, who had no time to stop before colliding with Mr. Summers and pushing his car into an electric box on the corner of the intersection.

Mr. Summers woke up in a plain white room, surrounded by various machines which measured his heartbeats, brain activity, and breathing patterns. He had a little trouble moving around because of all the tubes and wires attached to his body, but besides those, Summers strangely felt no pain. A tall, redheaded nurse in white scrubs walked in the room, noticed that her patient had awoken, and quickly scrambled for a doctor. The doctor, a slim, older man in his 50s with black hair and brown eyes, walked quickly to the plain room, and upon his entry asked if his patient was okay.

"I feel fine, thanks" replied Summers, wondering what happened. "Where am I?"

"My name is Dr. Savane, and you were in a bad pretty bad accident, but luckily you came out of it OK," replied the doctor, "and you're currently in a transitional hospital room awaiting transfer to a jail where you will be held until your trial."

Summers cursed under his breath, “So they found the money,” he thought to himself before asking quickly, “Can’t I post bail?”

“You’re appointed lawyer told me that’s not currently possible due to your criminal history sir,” Savane replied coldly, “I assume you’ll just have to wait for your preliminary hearing to plead with the judge for bail.”

“Damn, how did they find out about the other cons?” thought Summers, “I was so sure I’d gotten away with them, and they certainly never chased after me.”

“So how much longer do I stay here before I get transferred doctor?” Summers asked

“I’m not entirely sure but your lawyer will be here in a few moments to answer any more questions you may have sir.”, he remarked while scribbling notes on his clipboard, “All I know is that you’re in good enough shape to be transferred, and I’m submitting this certificate of health to get you out of here.” With that, Dr. Savane asked the nurse to unhook Mr. Summers from the various machines and walked out of the room with the nurse following behind several minutes later, leaving Summers alone in his room once again.

After about five minutes, a rather large man in a dark, slightly wrinkled, grey suit with curly, frizzled, light brown hair and large spectacles walked into the room. He seemed to be in his 50s, but had no commanding presence of an experienced lawyer, and walked with an air of lightness, almost as if his job of defending criminals seemed distant to him.

“My name is Mr. Slab, and I am your state appointed attorney for this case,” he said rather cheerily, “but don’t you worry Mr. Summers, I’ve had plenty of cases just like yours, and I’m sure I can convince the judge to get your sentence down to about, what is it, Ah yes, five years.”

Summers groaned internally, “God this guy is such a sap, I’m gonna be in prison for two years for every minute he talks like that to the judge.”

“Now, as for your transfer, the bus is going to be here in about an hour, so just sit tight here until the marshals come up and get you. I have to go see another client, but I’ll check back on you in a couple days to make sure you’re holding up alright.” he chirped as he got up, “It was nice to meet you Mr. Summers and I can assure everything will be A-OK, and just call me if you have any questions,” he said quickly, before handing Summers a note of paper with a number scribbled badly on it, before briskly leaving the room, the back of his untucked shirt flapping behind him as he waddled towards his next rather unfortunate client.

Summers complained internally, wondering how someone with his luck and looks had managed to get such an apparently incompetent lawyer. “No matter,” he thought to himself, “with any luck I can get out of this miserable jail they’re taking me to before I have to see that chippy dud again.”

After about an hour and a half, two men with large builds walked into the room, rather intimidatingly, and one announced, “Mr. Summers we’re here to take you to Gidim Jail, please take this prison uniform and change in that small bathroom to your left. Don’t even bother to try

anything funny, you're not the first criminal who's been in this room, so there are security measures in place to stop slicks like you from getting out."

"No need to be so rude you big brute," Summers snarked internally, "It's not like I'm stupid enough to try anything here anyway." As he changed into the turquoise-green jumpsuit, he wondered where the hell Gidim Jail was, as he'd certainly never heard of it before, much less thought he'd get sent there.

He walked out of the bathroom to find one of the marshals holding handcuffs. The marshal with the handcuffs suddenly made him turn around and put them on a little too tight for comfort, before escorting Mr. Summers out of the room and into the hallway.

They quickly made their way to the lobby, and made Mr. Summers get in the marshal's SUV, before slamming the door and starting the car. The drive to the jail took longer than Summers expected, but luckily it wasn't too uncomfortable, with the ride having minimal bumps and turns, and cushioning in the car being rather soft. The only bad part about it really was the handcuffs, but there was nothing to be done about that.

After what seemed like two hours, the car slowed down and the door opened to the marshal telling Summers to get out. The marshals walked Summers down a fenced walkway towards the prison entrance, where two guards awaited.

As Summers walked toward the entrance, Summers remarked how strange the jail seemed to be, as it was right on the edge of a mountain, and from what Summers could tell, was actually a part of it, with the back of the prison being partially tunneled in, or so it seemed from a quick glance of the side of the jail before the marshal told him to get moving. Summers again wondered where the hell he'd been sent, having absolutely no reference points to tell him where he was, other than the fact that he assumed he was somewhere about two hours outside the city.

Finally they arrived at the entrance, and the marshals shoved Summers toward the guards, who grabbed him by the shoulders and started to guide him into the jail.

Summers went through an abbreviated new prisoner procedure, since he had no items nor had to be checked for any, before finally being dumped in his cell, another white room, though this one was significantly less comfortable. His cellmate was a younger, small dark-skinned man who spoke some language that Summers didn't recognize. Summers tried fruitlessly to try and get some information from the man, but he kept repeating some word, "Onwu" frantically before it eventually turned into a tearful sob, and finally a quiet murmur. Summers decided that this man simply couldn't handle being in jail, and chose to ignore him for the remainder of his time there.

Instead, Summers opted to watch the prisoners get walked up and down the hallway as they were either taken to their cells or to their trials, with most yelling nonsense of some sort. Summers also noticed another unusual trend, that most of the prisoners walking by seemed to be rather old. Sure, there was the occasional younger prisoner in his 20s or 30s, but for the most part the average age of the prisoners he saw seemed to be about 65, very odd for a jail just outside a major city. He even thought he saw someone who looked like a man who'd appeared on the

news a couple nights ago, but why that man was on the news he couldn't exactly remember other than that the man was involved in an armed robbery.

Eventually, the prisoners were let out for dinner, and Summers followed the other inmates down to the cafeteria, a place which stank more with the scent of the food that was served than the prisoners themselves. The cafeteria wasn't visually appealing either, with a dark grey color that was badly painted over everything and peeling, and a couple of ceiling tiles that seemed like they were bound to fall at any moment. The tables were simple slabs of aluminum with scratches and stains from past inmates who couldn't keep down their food.

Summers found himself a relatively clean table near the corner of the cafeteria, and tried to converse with some of the prisoners. As before, most of them didn't understand more than basic english, leading Summers to believe he'd been miscategorized and thrown into some kind of jail for immigrants. This explained why he'd never heard of it before, but not the older inmates. He tried asking a man sitting next to him, who Summers understood to be Greek, where he was, but he simply got the response "Thanatos" before the man continued eating. Summers persistence in trying to get the man to translate the word to english were futile, and left him with no more clue of his situation than before.

Summers then began desperately asking other prisoners where the prison was, so he'd know where to go when he eventually escaped, but they all gave him different gibberish answers like "Mauta," "Naese," and "Saol Eile."

Summers, frustrated by the lack of both information and english speaking prisoners, decided that he would worry about where to go once he got outside the prison and figured out exactly where he was.

The days went on and Summer refused to try and socialize with the inmates, but instead continued his daily routine of eating and laying in his cell. While doing this, he carefully began to plot his escape, noting corridors that guards were seen walking down happily, hinting that some sort of recreation room or possibly exit lay in that direction. He noted where the guards would hook their keys, and when they weren't paying attention to them, as well as how to use them. Lastly, he noted that the guards had their uniforms washed here at the jail, and made note of the so he could steal one when he left his cell.

Strangely, all of the guards seemed very relaxed when it came to security, possibly because the majority of the prison was made up of older men who had no chance of escaping. Beyond that he also assumed that the guards were simply overconfident as he overheard on guard say, "Did you hear about that prisoner who got sent back today? Idiot actually thought he could escape from this place. They just don't seem to get that even if you escape, there's no way to avoid getting sent back here."

Summers wasn't entirely sure what the guard meant by the comment, and just assumed that the escaped prisoner was an idiot who got himself caught by the cops again. Summers knew he wasn't that stupid, and vowed that when he did make it out of this hellhole, he'd never let himself get caught and see it again.

Two more days passed, and Summers continued to plot his escape, noting that, thankfully, Mr. Slab, his attorney, had not yet shown up. “The man probably has too many other cases to worry about me,” thought Summers, “luckily he won’t have to worry much longer, I’m leaving today.”

At last came the time for Summers to execute his plan of action, which started at the horrorshow that was the cafeteria. While waiting in line to get his daily serving of tasteless glob, Summers got in between two rather large and frightening twin brothers, who Summers had noticed never got along too well. He spilled some of his glop on the back of one of the twins, and quickly sidestepped out of the way before he turned around. The twin, believing that it was his brother who had spilled the glop, began verbally assaulting him, quickly gaining the attention of everyone in the cafeteria, since such an event like this was rare to occur due to the age of most of the prisoners. The verbal assault quickly escalated into a physical altercation, with the two brothers wrestling each other on the floor in glop.

The guards were called in to break up the fight, and while they were trying to restrain the twins, Summers grabbed the keys off one of the guards, and crept away, walking down the corridor he believed led to the guards break room, and more importantly, their laundry room.

Using the keys he had stolen, he opened the door to the laundry room slowly and made sure no one was inside. As soon as the room was cleared, Summers walked in and quietly changed into one of the guards uniforms, throwing his jumpsuit into the dirty laundry basket. He donned a baseball cap he found to hide his face in case anyone got too close, then left the room and continued walking down the corridor, leading further into the prison, and the mountain.

As he continued walking, he passed several guards who seemed relaxed laughing and not paying too much attention to who passed them by, more interested in their own conversations. Summers continued further into the jail complex, beginning to wonder how big it truly was, until at last he arrived at some sort of large steel door with multiple locks. At this point, Summers was already deep inside the mountain, and beginning to worry as he had had no idea the jail was this big, much less this complicated. This feeling of paranoia quickly made Summers feel like he was running out of time, and so he decided to open the door, believing he had no other options besides getting lost on the other sides of the jail.

Summers pulled the keys from his pocket and tried multiple keys and the locks until at last they were all open, a process which took about five minutes, further intensifying Summers’ fears, believing that a guard would show up at any moment and ask why he was opening the door. With the last lock open, Summers swung upon the steel door with great effort, and stared into some sort of well lit cavern with multiple vehicles and an exit tunnel which had a faint light at the end. “Finally an escape route!” thought Summers, “I’ll prove that idiot guard wrong, I’m never getting sent back here.” This feeling of triumph was short-lived however, as five seconds after he opened the door, an alarm sounded throughout the jail, alerting guards everywhere that an inmate was trying to escape. Summers quickly noticed that in his hurry to open all the locks,

he had missed a security hub next to the door which was required to be deactivated before opening the door, otherwise an alarm would sound.

Summers cursed his luck, which for some reason seemed to be on a downward streak, and ran into the cavern, frantically searching for a key rack to the vehicles while the blaring alarms sounded overhead. Luckily, Summers did not have to search long, as he quickly found keys along a wall on the far left of the cavern, and took the keys to a large truck, while throwing all the other keys behind a massive, heavy filing cabinet, so the guards couldn't reach them. He started the engine of the truck and immediately slammed the pedal. He sped into the tunnel, as he saw guards running into the cavern through his rearview mirror.

Summers drove through the tunnel at full speed, noting that it sounded like some guards were starting to give chase in their cars, though they were a long ways off, as it had taken about five guards 5 minutes to move the filing cabinet. He zoomed down the tunnel, noting that he could no longer hear the sound of the guards cars, and assumed that he had gained enough time to pull far enough ahead of them. "Great," thought Summers, "now as soon as I get out of this tunnel, I'll ditch the truck and hitchhike a ride at the nearest highway, which shouldn't be too far seeing as this is probably some kind of supply tunnel for food or something."

He continued down the tunnel noting that the light at the end kept getting brighter and brighter, and it now felt like there was more wind resistance than usual, almost like the end of the tunnel was pushing against him. Summers couldn't explain what was happening, but only knew that he couldn't go back, and the only way to go was forward. Summers pushed the truck to it's limit and got closer and closer to the light, and with one final go, made it through and found himself enveloped by the mysterious light, confused as to what was happening.

Suddenly, Summers felt that he was falling, but couldn't orient himself as to what direction he was facing. He felt himself in freefall, surrounded by the light, but with no other sensations besides the fall and the light. He continued this mysterious descent, completely dumbfounded as to what was going on, and only hoping that it would end soon.

At last Summers felt the freefall slow down, until at last he stopped with an abrupt but still somehow gentle landing on some sort of cushioning. He was a little scared to open his eyes at first, but after being unable to resist curiosity and find out what the hell happened or where he was, he opened them.

His eyes took a moment to adjust before he finally noticed that there was nothing to see, as he was surrounded by pitch-black darkness. he tried to move around but found that he had no room to do so, as he was in some sort of cramped dark space with cushioned walls. Summers began to panic banging against the walls of his enclosure and screaming for someone to let him out. As he continued to panic and hit the walls, he began to notice that with each new hit, he felt something move a little on the outside. This gave him hope that he would be able to break out until at last, after several good hits, he noticed the walls weren't moving. He felt exhausted and out of breath and gave one last kick out of frustration, and felt some kind of small powder land on his face. As he went to brush it off he felt the skin of his face, and noticed that it felt rather

cold and rough, strange as he had felt fine before the mysterious free fall. He began to feel himself and noted that all of his skin had the same feel to it, and also realized that at some point during the freefall, his clothes had changed into a suit. Confused and scared, he kicked twice more, and felt the powder once again fall on his face, and this time in his mouth. He spat out the powder, but not before realizing what it tasted like — dirt.

The realization hit him like the same impact of the first car crash. He was in his own coffin, wearing his funeral suit. This realization made him panic even more and he screamed at the top of his lungs, hoping in vain that someone would hear him and realize that he had been buried alive. He quickly discovered that this screaming consumed more precious air, and tried to stop, before he came to a second realization, which was that he had already been dead for several days, weeks perhaps, which is what made his skin feel different. The more important part of this realization was that since he had been dead for a while, there was absolutely no chance of receiving help, no matter how much he struggled. However, Summers, being the man that he was, refused to give up and continued to kick, hit and scream, until at last he passed out from lack of oxygen. He opened his eyes to a plain white room.