

Jus' Some Fools, Thas' All

These people got no idea who they dealing with. There's a madman in front of them, and they're too stupid to recognize they're tap dancing on the edge of a cliff. And there's a big gust of wind that's comin' to blow them right off the edge.

I can tell Charlie's startin' to lose it. He's got that distant look in his eyes as though he's watching a movie from all the way in the back of the theater, and he's been drooling and doing those weird head twitches too. It won't be long now. He enjoys this shit. He likes the crazy act, the retard act; it's all fine to him – any which way just to make them put their guard down. And when they do, it's all over. I've seen it before. The guy's a fucking mental case.

He twitches his head sideways and gives me just the tiniest of upturned smiles. More like a demented spasm than anything else, but I've been running with Charlie for a while now and I know the score and I know he's itching to bring some violence onto the heads of the fools too dumb to realize they are way out of their league.

The big one in red has got a lot of meat on him, but he'll fall like the rest once Charlie rips out that .357 and sticks it down his throat, aiming for the bottom of his stomach but being satisfied just to blast a whole through the side of his esophagus if it comes to it.

I'm not like Charlie; I just want you to know that. Just want to get that out of the way. I mean, sure, I've done my share, but there's usually a reason. Charlie don't care. He'll gut you just to see how much blood squirts from your stomach. I've seen it. I've watched him take out his old stopwatch and notebook and make all kinds of weird calculations about that shit. Seriously. The fucking dude keeps records on things like this. He's got a whole bookcase at home with binders of this bizarre scientific bloodwork. He likes to think of himself as some sort of pioneering doctor, some sort of criminal scientist who actually does the "hands-on" dirty work.

'Course it's all bullshit. He ain't slicing someone open in the name of science, maybe that's just a lovely bonus for him, but it don't really matter. He just likes it. He's been through every drug there is, the only thing that gets him off these days is a nice sweet murder. Preferably an up close and personal gutting. He likes holding the fool in his arms as the recognition that they are going to die swims up from every point of their body and seeps out of their eyes. Their little bulbs shine brighter than ever just before they darken for good. Charlie tells me that. I've never bothered staring into a man's eyes to watch him die. Not my thing.

So, why am I still with him? Yeah, I've asked myself that, and I've thought about heading on many times. But I don't. With Charlie I always know I'll be able to get a meal and a beer and some money in my pocket. I been hungry too long to put up with that shit anymore. I'm just too tired for it. I'm just too tired to start again, with someone else who could be just as crazy or crazier than ol' Charlie. It's not easy hanging around with someone like this, but once you get used to it, it's hard to get off too. It's comfortable livin' I guess, and I'm just too old to put up with much of a struggle anyway. Just too tired.

And Charlie looks out for me. He's got my interests in mind, always giving me the best blanket or the best slab of meat. He's good like that. He can be good, once you get to know him. You just gotta be willing to put up with a whole lot of bodies, and I guess I am. It's not so bad, most of the time the fools start something first and Charlie's forced to defend us.

People are always coming around looking for trouble, and if they come 'round to our bend, oh, they'll find it alright. Charlie'll make sure of that. He'll make sure they get a nice welcome. They got no idea.

Charlie's doing a service, sometimes I gotta remind myself to thank him every once in a while. He's cleaning up the trash, the fools who want to rumble in the dirt for a while. They come down here and they don't be leaving, naw.

"One less fool in the world," I think as I watch the big boy in red bleed out. His nice white shoes are stained red now too. Not so nice anymore. His friend won't get far. He's bleeding pretty bad, and must have a nice hobble from that chunk Charlie took out of his leg. Nobody knows these woods better than Charlie and me. The boy won't get far. The blood makes tracking mighty easy, and there's a full moon tonight. We'll have ourselves a nice walk.