

LEFT SAM DEAD

by

renata Pastuszek

INT. COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALL - NIGHT

A party rages through the building. SAM and SARA, both early 20s, squeeze through a tightly packed hallway.

Sam chugs a beer and Sara trails behind, attached by hand.

Sam opens a door to reveal an orgy- he closes it and looks back at Sara.

They move onto the next door which reveals the party they're looking for.

INT. THE PARTY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Someone shouts Sam's name when he enters. A hand passes him an open beer. He accepts without even thinking.

He shows it to Sara.

SAM

Want some?

Sara shakes her head in disgust.

He scans the room and drinks until he spots, MIGUEL, who looks too old for college.

Sam walks over, Miguel notices Sam.

MIGUEL

'Sup.

They fist bump.

There's a couple other guys hanging around who greet Sam too. FORD, the most sober of them all, gives Sam a fist bump also.

SAM

You're on duty.

FORD

Fuck no, I thought-ch-you were,
seein' the way you popped yo' head
in there.

Ford gestures at the door.

SAM

Do I look like I could get away
with this level of drunk in front
of *anyone*?

They laugh.

Sam looks on edge and eyes Miguel.

Ford focuses on Sam's face closely.

FORD
What-are-you on?

SAM
Coke.

FORD
Really?

SAM
Ha ha. Nah.

MIGUEL
He wants some though, huh.

The attention turns to Sam.

SAM
I was thinking more LSD actually.

FORD
Nuh-uh.

Sam looks at Ford all innocent.

MIGUEL
Mmhm.

Miguel pulls a pack of gum out and passes it to Sam.

SAM
Thanks. I'll Cash App you, yeah?

Miguel nods.

He backs away from the group and scans the room for Sara.

He notices a disgusting fish tank in the corner of the room where she and her friend is and then walks over.

He's saddened by the appearance of the tank.

Sara notices.

SARA
Hey.

Sam's in distress over the fish, actually. He turns back to Miguel's group.

SAM
(yelling above the party)
Yo Miguel!

Miguel looks.

SAM (CONT'D)
Can I have it? The fish?

MIGUEL
I've been waiting for YEARS for
someone to take that thing.

Sam nods in approval and notices the empty cup Sara's holding and takes it to scoop the fish up into.

SARA
Are you gonna drink that right now?

SAM
(acting blackout drunk)
Hell yeah, party!

And mimics like he's about to chug.

It gets a ruse out of Sara and her friend. Sam stops once he's satisfied by their reactions.

SAM (CONT'D)
Sorry. No, I've always wanted fish.
Plus I think I'm serving justice.

He gestures at the nasty tank.

SAM (CONT'D)
Or something.

SARA
(genuine)
That's sweet.

Sam looks down into the fish's cup, then back up to Sara.

SAM
Mind if I get going with this?

SARA
I thought we were going to walk
back together.

Sam eyes Sara's friend.

SAM
 Maybe you can?
 (back to Sara)
 I'm sorry. I feel like I'm aboutta
 black out soon and I don't want to
 lose this thing.

He stares into the cup at the motionless fish.

SARA
 Yeah.

SAM
 Okay! I'll see you in a bit though.
 I just wanna get going with this
 right now.

He kisses her but she doesn't kiss back. He gives her puppy
 dog eyes and she pushes him away playfully.

Sam moves back over to Miguel's group which is by a window.
 He goes over and unlocks it and pushes the screen up.

He's got Ford's attention again.

FORD
 You good?

Sam smiles at his buddy.

SAM
 You don't think he'll mind, do ya?

Sam sits on the sill of the window.

Ford shrugs.

Sam slides out.

Sara watches with a bit of sadness as he leaves.

EXT. COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sam lands on the ground with a soft thud and checks the cup
 to see if it's okay.

Stake raise: the fish falls out of the cup. He puts the fish
 back in but there's barely any water left.

He starts running but gets a phone call.

With his free hand he unpockets his cell phone to see who it is. The image of a young boy that looks just like Sam fills the screen.

The name "LIL BRO" is seen when Sam hits "accept".

SAM
What's up Buddy!

BUDDY
(through the phone)
Hey!

SAM
How are you.

BUDDY
Bad.

SAM
Uh oh.

BUDDY
Yeah. Mom's taking away my phone
for a week because I'm failing
math.

SAM
Math!?

Sam listens to his little brother explaining the situation and crosses a bridge to enter another dorm building.

He is stopped by someone on the bridge whose shirt indicates that he works for the school. Their badge reads "Resident Assistant Mike".

Sam looks down to walk past but RA MIKE halts him.

Sam looks at the RA and gestures as if to say "I'm on the phone"

RA MIKE
Who is it?

SAM
(whispering)
My little brother, dude.

BUDDY
(over the phone)
But yeah.

SAM
I'm so sorry Buddy. That sucks!

BUDDY
(quickly)
Yeah she's literally taking it from
me right now I gotta go! Bye!

SAM
Ok bye Bud!

Sam eyes RA Mike while re-pocketing his phone.

SAM (CONT'D)
You made me miss the conversation,
man.

RA MIKE
No I didn't.

SAM
Look I got a fish!

He shows him the cup. His eyes look like he really is about
to blackout.

RA MIKE
You are fucked up.

Sam punches the RA in the shoulder and then looks around to
make sure no one can hear them.

RA MIKE (CONT'D)
Open alcohol? Dude.

SAM
No! It's a fish I swear look.

He shows the murky water to RA Mike. RA Mike eyes Sam
awkwardly.

RA MIKE
Anyway. We're in the same thesis
group dude.

SAM
No way. That was sent out today?

RA MIKE
Like an hour ago? Guess who else is
in it.

SAM
No.

RA MIKE
Shtim, Kardo. Every slack-off in
the goddam year.

Sam looks up to the gods like "why me?"

SAM
(shaking his head)
Anyway. I gotta-

He starts walking away and stumbles a little.

RA MIKE
Walk straighter, bitch!

INT. SAM'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Sam's eyes are peeking from behind the fish's new tank.

Sara walks in like she owns the place and flings herself on
one of the beds.

SARA
So?

Sam doesn't look away from the fish.

SAM
I think it's got "fin rot".

Sara's not impressed by the fish. She sighs, groans, and
sinks deeper in the bed.

Sam swivels in his chair to face her.

SARA
You didn't blackout.

SAM
Yeah. But I am still kinda drunk.

She waits to hear more. Sam instead gets up to grab a soda
from the mini fridge.

SAM (CONT'D)
How was walking back with Kate?

He downs his soda like tomorrow.

SARA
Good.

SAM

So?

SARA

Ready to get back to the swing of things?

Sam laughs.

He finishes the soda and gets comfortable next to her on the bed. Sara smiles.

SAM

Are you?

SARA

Yeah! I feel like I have to be.

SAM

What makes you think that?

Sara doesn't reply. She rolls to face Sam. His stare prompts her.

SARA

I don't know.

SAM

You've got something in your eye.

SARA

Can you get it?

SAM

No, I mean. What are you thinking?

She frowns a little.

SAM (CONT'D)

Is everything okay?

SARA

Yes. I feel like I need to get my shit together though. Maybe like we both do. Do you feel like you want to stop partying soon? Since we're about to graduate...

SAM

I don't know. This is like the final hurrah.

Sara's still thinking.

SAM (CONT'D)

Why?

SARA

Just like, there's more "hurrah's"
in life.

He waits for more.

She doesn't continue.

SAM

What's more hurrah? I'm working
after this. I can't have any slip-
ups as I go. I think this is it.

SARA

What if "it" came a little sooner?

SAM

What?

SARA

If we had a kid.

SAM

Uh, yeah we don't need a kid. I
don't think either of us have money
or time.

SARA

Yeah.

SAM

Yeah?

SARA

I'm pregnant.

Sam sits up on his shoulder to get a better look at Sara.

INT. FAMILY DINING ROOM - EVENING

The room is warm and the table is full of food. BUDDY, 11,
sits down next to Sam who's already done with his meal. His
expression is the same as when he got the news.

Across from them are their parents. VAL and GORDON, 50s.

GORDON

I'll send your resume to my boss.

BUDDY
(mimics w/ french accent)
Résumé.

Buddy looks up at his bro.

SAM
So the lessons are paying off!

Buddy smiles.

VAL
(to Sam)
Are we certain?

SAM
Yeah. I guess she did three tests.

He looks down at his empty plate and decides to add more food to it.

GORDON
I bet he'll get you in without even an interview.

SAM
It's nice of you to do that dad but it's not music.

VAL
I would make this your wake-up call then because it's one or the other. There's no such thing as having an entry level job while raising a child.

SAM
It doesn't have to be! It won't be low paying. I can apply to places that pay. Plus it's not what I want to do later in life so why would I even bother.

BUDDY
Yeah!

GORDON
Yeah but it's going to be and you know it.

Sam shoots his dad a look.

GORDON (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

Gordon gets up from the table and takes Val's empty plate with him. He exits to the kitchen.

Val sits with her wine.

BUDDY

Can you name him after me?

SAM

No. I don't want it. Not the name, I don't want to be a dad. That's not the plan!

BUDDY

I think it'd be cool to be a dad.

Buddy goes back to eating.

SAM

(to his mom)

She doesn't want to abort.

VAL

Don't say that.

SAM

(dumbfounded)

Abortion?

Val's displeased.

SAM (CONT'D)

It makes sense! For her too- I don't see why she doesn't see that.

He chugs his soda. Val sips her wine.

Buddy pushes peas around his plate in boredom.

BUDDY

Can I please be excused?

VAL

Yes.

Sam smiles at his brother as he leaves the table.

Sam finishes his soda.

VAL (CONT'D)

I think you'd make a good dad. With all the positivity you bring to the world. I think it'd be a shame to have that kid grow up without you.

INT. MIGUEL'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Sam hits a bong. Miguel's laid back on the sofa.

SAM
This could be my last bong hit
ever.

MIGUEL
Oh you can't be that strict.

SAM
I dunno, I think Sara wants me
sober.

Miguel hums in understanding.

MIGUEL
Yeah you gotta *feed* your kid, not
give it second-hand high.

SAM
But for-real. I think we shouldn't
hang out as often.

MIGUEL
Is she that in your head, bro?

Sam shakes his head.

SAM
Nah I'm in my own head to be
honest.

Miguel reaches for the bong now and hits it.

SAM (CONT'D)
Like, I actually really do need a
job now.

MIGUEL
(holding the weed in)
Your RA job doesn't pay you?

SAM
Nah it's just free room and board.

MIGUEL
(letting some out)
Damn.

SAM
But I got good news.

Miguel pauses.

INT. CLASSROOM OFFICE - DAY

Sam sits in a chair the exact same way he sat in Miguel's room. He is across from his professor at a desk.

The professor is FRANCESCA SCOFIELD, she has a wild style of dress-choice.

She waits for him to start.

SAM

I got an interview with Platinum Records!

FRANCESCA SCOFIELD

Congratulations! When!

SAM

It's during our next class.

FRANCESCA SCOFIELD

Oh.

She looks at her computer. Then back at Sam who's distressed.

FRANCESCA SCOFIELD (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

SAM

This is important, is there any way I can miss?

FRANCESCA SCOFIELD

You *can* miss, but I won't change the grade drop.

Sam definitely didn't want to hear that.

FRANCESCA SCOFIELD (CONT'D)

I'm sorry!

SAM

Maybe if I could explain more.

FRANCESCA SCOFIELD

This is life. There's choices. I don't bend the rules Sam, again I'm sorry. There's choices in life and if I were you, I'd take that interview.

Sam smiles.

INT. PLATINUM RECORDS OFFICE - DAY

An INTERVIEWER takes a seat across from Sam. They're much more relaxed than Sam is. Almost too relaxed.

INTERVIEWER
What's up!

SAM
Hi.

Sam shakes the Interviewer's hand.

INTERVIEWER
I only have one question for you.

Sam's a bit confused but okay.

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)
Why?

Sam looks up to think about the question. Is it a joke? The Interviewer doesn't look away from his notepad.

He looks around confused. His brow is furrowed.

SAM
Why not. Haha.

The Interviewer's not impressed.

SAM (CONT'D)
Nah. I truly believe there's gotta be some kind of positivity in life.

The Interviewer takes notes and hums in approval.

SAM (CONT'D)
For me, my happiness needs to be success.

Sam sees the Interviewer holding eye contact so he continues.

SAM (CONT'D)
I'm about to have a kid. I honest to god thought this internal need wouldn't be satisfied at all now. Working in the industry. After thinking. Thinking that I need a "real" job and not my dream job.
(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

But this is it. I feel like I can make a change in this world with this job.

Silence.

SAM (CONT'D)

Well, with what I can do afterwards from having this job. I can't make a change anywhere else.

The Interviewer lets Sam sit there awkwardly.

SAM (CONT'D)

Music's the reason I'm even alive maybe, I don't know. I'm sorry.

Sam realizes that he didn't pass his resume over.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh!

He slides it to the Interviewer.

INTERVIEWER

Cool!

The Interviewer looks down at it.

Sam sits there twitching for a minute.

SAM

Can I please have this job?

The Interviewer actually laughs.

Sam regrets being forward. There's just silence now.

INTERVIEWER

Can we drug test you?

SAM

When?

INTERVIEWER

You can take it anytime you want to start here.

Sam isn't sure if he should believe it at first but the Interviewer shakes his hand and smiles. So Sam smiles back realizing it's true, he just got the job.

INT. SAM'S DORM ROOM - DAY