

# The Story of Valentina and Nolbis ...

by Daniel John Sullivan

“Do you feel that ... ? That’s great!”

“I don’t feel it yet baby ...”, Valentina looked at Nolbis and smiled her cute little sexy ass smile ...

“You gotta feel it ...”

“I don’t ... I don’t feel it ...”

Valentina, aka Val, had been hustling in Little Saigon, Seattle, for about a month. She came from St. Louis, and lived in Ferguson until the riots in 2014. Then she started darting around the country, going from one bad mistake to another cold bed – her lovers deserting her, in the morning, leaving crumpled up twenties on her nightstand. She wasn’t a hooker ... so why did those men treat her like one? Now she was with this guy, in this shitty motel room ... “Listen honey, you gotta take another hit ...”, she prodded him.

Nolbis was her current waistoid boyfriend ... boyfriend? - more like male pal for a week or two. Nolbis worked at Harbor Island, on the docks, unloading container ships ... he had connections, and was able to get some drugs ... he’d never done PCP, he’d always wanted to. He’d been diagnosed with stage-4 cancer only a few weeks earlier, in the lungs and brain, and he had only a few weeks longer before he’d be bed ridden. He wanted to feel something. He wanted to do something.

“Just trust me ... take another hit ...”, Val passed him the broken piece of mirror on which the hit of PCP had been lain. A powdery little streak on that chunk of glassy nothing ...

“I’ll do it, I have to baby, I have to get high ... geez you’re beautiful ...”, Nolbis looked at her, and then tilted his head down to take a snort off the glass. Val was beautiful, the way a woman can be even if she doesn’t have any makeup on. She’d been living rough, pretty down low, for months now, but she knew she looked pretty to Nolbis.

“DAMN THAT’S WEIRD!”, Nolbis felt a blast to his head and his heart started pounding.

“What is it honey?”

“DAMN ... FUCK THAT’S WEIRD ...”

“You feeling it now?”

“Shit ... yeah ... it’s weird baby ... it’s like all the cells in my body just exploded, and now all that’s left on the inside is rainbows ... I feel like I can do anything now ...”

“Anything?”

“Yeah ... like maybe fly a plane ... or perform surgery on someone ... or rob a bank ... or maybe even kill the president.”

“You’d never kill the president?”

“I’d do it ... I’d do it on PCP ...”

“You don’t like the president?”, Val was suddenly engaged in the the thread of Nolbis’ crazy. She wanted to delve the addled and despair ridden brain of a man on the brink of destruction.

“He’s ok ...”

“But you said you felt like you could kill him?”

“You know what I meant Valentina ...”, Valentina is what he called her when he got frustrated. Nolbis wasn’t dumb, but he wasn’t well educated and didn’t read much. He’d worked the docks for 20 years, and now, in his mid-40’s, he was about to die ... not having lived much, no kids, no wife, no nothing.

“Val ... it’s like I was saying last night, a man can do almost anything if he’s used up, spent, got nothing left for anyone to rip off or take.”

“But that means you want to kill the president?”

“Nah ...”

“What then?”

“Do you vote?”

Val was confused.

She hadn’t been asked a question like that in almost 10 years ...

Did she vote? She voted ... once in a while, as she could remember. But mostly she remembered the ritual as pointless, and almost degrading. Her “vote” did nothing but legitimate every crappy day she had - implied in that “vote” was some kind of Utopian lie, but she couldn’t see it. Utopia seemed to be an old CHEVY, on concrete blocks, rusted out, covered in algae and moss and pointlessness ...

People on the streets saw through “voting” - and they knew it was a rigged game ...

“No ... I think I voted in 2012.”

“Why did you vote in 2012?”

"I voted for Gary Johnson I think ... I think I'm a libertarian."

"What's a libertarian?"

Another question Val was not prepared for, "Well ... shit honey ... I haven't been asked that in a while ..."

"Come on Val ... you know I just want an answer?"

Nolbis looked at her with those desperately angry eyes - the look of a man who's life had been one big dreary nothing ... and NO ONE was going to deny him knowledge at the end.

Nolbis grabbed Val's arm, "DAMMIT WOMAN, I'M PAYING YOU!"

"I NEVER ASKED FOR ONE RED CENT!", Val pulled her arm back, she was incensed. She'd been hanging with this freak for a few weeks, not long, mainly because she felt sorry for him and his story was entertaining - but she wasn't some hooker to be pushed around.

Nolbis got up and walked to the other side of that nasty little motel room. He leaned up against the wall, as far away from Val as he could. His eyes began to tear up, Val could see he was hurting, he felt guilty for grabbing her arm.

"Listen honey, this is all a lot ... PCP ... you're dying ... and we were just talking about killing the president ..."

"We were just talking about it ...", Nolbis mumbled.

"Sure ... talking ... just don't grab me like that. I know you're sick. I know you're dying. I know you want to blame everyone ... but you can't grab people like that ...", Val got up, walked across the room to Nolbis, and hugged him.

Val was  $\frac{3}{4}$  Nolbis height, and her arms could not reach around his chest, but he could feel her heart, and she could feel his, and in that touch was the dignified consolation of two wretched souls not yet dead.

"I just get angry ...", Nolbis said, with a soft tone, and the hesitancy of a contrite spirit.

"Man, it's ok ... let's get back to it ... why do you want to kill the president?", Nolbis' eyes lit up, and he and Val sat back down on the edge of the bed and continued their discussion ...

"I don't want to ... not really ... but he's just a guy ... the president is just a guy like me."

"Yeah, so?"

"Don't you think he has people killed?"

"Lots ..."

"And what about that?"

“But he’s the president ...”

“Ok, fuck Val, WHAT THE FUCK IS A LIBERTARIAN?”

Val thought about it, she took another snort of the angel dust on the glass shard, and she looked up at Nolbis with her blood shot eyes.

“... dingus ... a libertarian is someone who knows you should kill the president, but also knows that he’s probably bullshit ... he’s not real ... he’s just a play time character ...”

“That’s what a libertarian is?”

“Not exactly ...”

“If the president were standing in front of you, would you kill him?”

“Any president or this guy?”

“This guy?”

“Do I have a weapon?”

“Yeah, a gun ... a big ass hand gun ...”

“You mean a big ass dirty harry style gun?”

“FUCK YEAH!”

“Ok ... well ... does he have body guards?”

“Nah ... he’s tied to a chair ...”

“He’s just tied to a chair?”

“Yeah ...”

Val looked down at the ground, at the motel room, and then she looked at Nolbis ... that broken bitter man ...

“You know ... I think I’d let him go.”

“You wouldn’t kill him? What about all the shit that’s happened?”

“What shit?”

“All the shit, the wars ... the poverty ... the prisons and the disease and poisons everywhere ... the cancer they gave me ... the dark and broken world we live in every fucking day ... DON’T YOU THINK SOMEONE SHOULD DO SOMETHING?”

Val took Nolbis’ hand in hers, squeezed, and then spoke ...

“Honey ... WE WERE ALL supposed to do something ... we all failed.”

Nolbis was tired, and Val was burnt too ...

They had the room till the morning ...

They had the wicked high of PCP running their brains down strange corridors of madness ...

They had a warm bed and someone to sleep next to when they passed out ...

Val and Nolbis had more than most ...

- THE END