

One Night
By bjt

Listening to "On The Shortness of Life" on the radio, **THE MAN** speeds along in his car with nothing but open, country road ahead of him for miles.

A cellphone rings.

THE MAN
(answers call)
Hello? Hey.

He looks in the rearview mirror to see a large duffle bag laying across the backseat of the car.

THE MAN (CONT'D)
Yeah, it's done. I'm headed to you
with it now.

Beat.

THE MAN (CONT'D)
What kind of "hiccup"?

The man flashes red, frustrated. But manages to keep his mellow vibe...

THE MAN (CONT'D)
Okay. One night, that's it. Call me
back when you're ready.

EXT. MOTEL -- LATE DAY

The late-day sun dips behind a slummy, two story motel. It's the type of place that rents by the night or quarter-hour.

A car drives up. Parks in the motel's parking lot.

Door cranks open and out steps the man. He removes his sunglasses, scans the vicinity for any signs of trouble, then heads to the trunk of his car.

Trunk pops open. He reaches up under his shirt and pulls out a pistol from his waistband.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY -- MOMENTS LATER

The man enters. He's greeted by the ATTENDANT.

THE MAN
I need a room for the night.

ATTENDANT
Then you came to the right place.

EXT. MOTEL'S PARKING LOT

A small child, a **GIRL**, eight or nine years old, bounces a blue rubber ball off the pavement. She looks completely out of place in the sketchy environment.

The man steps back out into the parking lot holding a room key.

He quickly spots the girl and her blue rubber ball because she's bouncing it directly in front of the driver door of his car - blocking his path.

The man reddens, but again keeps his cool and attempts to shimmy around her instead. But the bouncing ball accidentally clips the tip of his shoe, shooting it across the parking lot.

THE GIRL

Whatcha' go and do that for?

THE MAN

Why you dicking around my car in the first place?

She scurries away after the rubber ball.

THE MAN (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Where's your parents at anyway...?

Ignoring him, she ducks behind some parked cars, out of view.

THE MAN (CONT'D)

...They needa give you a lesson in manners. Damn kids these days don't know no fricking manners.

He continues mumbling to himself, venting.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

It's what you'd expect to find based on the ranky-dank conditions of the exterior - which is actually more appealing to the eye than what the man has just found himself walking into.

He lugs the oversized duffle bag over to an out-of-the-way spot and sets it down on the floor.

Throws a blanket over it to cover it up some, then heads back over to the front door to leave.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT -- NIGHT'S FALLING

He steps to his car. Grabs a bsg of snacks and beer before turning to walk back inside - when the girl, a teddy bear now clenched in her hands, turns a corner into view...

THE MAN

You again.

(then)

It isn't safe for you to be out here running stupid without a parent or supervision, it's dangerous.

THE GIRL

Could say the same to you.

THE MAN

I'm just trying to keep you safe.

THE GIRL

Me too.

THE MAN

Whatever. You're gonna feel pretty fuckin' sorry if some sick wacko snatches you up to use as a hump toy.

WALKWAY OF MOTEL (MOMENTS AFTER)

The man moseys down a walkway, peeks over his shoulder in time to catch the girl trailing him from a cautious distance. But she swiftly hides from his view.

He continues on, steps to a particular door, keys the lock and walks inside, closes the door.

The girl reemerges and heads toward his room. She's feet away when he throws the door open in a gotcha surprise move...

THE MAN

What's your deal, kid? Why you following me?

THE GIRL

You owe me two dollars.

THE MAN

I owe you no such thing.

THE GIRL

Uh-huh. You lost my ball. I just got it, and you lost it.

THE MAN

You know what? Forget it. Here, you want two bucks? Here's twenty. Buy all the balls in the world for all I care, but get out of my hair, capeesh? And you better get home before it gets dark and all the monsters come out to play.

He gives her the cash, closes the door.

She knocks.

No answer.

Knocks again.

Door swings open.

THE MAN (CONT'D)

You're pinching my last nerve.

THE GIRL

This your room?

THE MAN

Duh, guess?

THE GIRL

You should stay somewhere else. I heard the last person who stayed in this room was never seen again.

THE MAN

Well I ain't no crack whore, so you can go ahead and save your scary stories for the campfire, kay? Now leave. Me. Alone.

Door closes. Deadbolt locks, click.

THE GIRL

(sotto)

Never said it was a girl.

Girl retreats to a different particular door, 1 or 2 rooms down from the man's. She keys the lock and heads inside.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- THAT NIGHT

The man lies in bed flipping through tv channels.

Streetlight beams in softly through a large window flanking the bed.

He shuts off the tv, lies in the shadows for a moment checking his cellphone idly. A lightbulb in the bathroom buzzes to life - bathroom flanks the front door.

He begrudgingly lifts himself up out of bed and crosses to the

BATHROOM

Where he flips the light switch up and down, but nothing happens, flips it a couple more times, light finally turns off.

BED

The man lies down. Picks up his cellphone.

Outside, a person whisks by the window, throwing a silhouette across the wall as they do.

The man takes notice. Dismisses it. It happens again. He climbs out of bed to investigate, looks out the window...

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

We are on the top floor and the walkway is on the other side of the room, door side, so there is no way someone just walk by his motel window - must have been seeing things.

He looks down over the parking lot and parked cars - happens to catch a blue rubber ball bouncing up and down, up and down on its own in the parking lot. He closes the curtains but gets spooked by a teddy bear NOW sitting at the edge of his bed.

THE MAN

What the--?

He looks up to see the girl.

She smiles wickedly.

Lunges with ferocious speed, a beast, clamping a chomping bite down on the man's face. She starts thrashing.

The man screams. Flesh rips. Blood splatters. **THE END.**