

Edge of Life

(previously titled  
\$500.00 )

by

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INT. BANK - DAY

With swift hands, the VETERAN TELLER deals crisp one hundred dollar bills to DANIEL BROWN, late 40s, balding.

A plastic bag dangles from his fingertips.

TELLER

Three, four, five hundred dollars.

DANIEL

Is that all of it? To the last penny?

TELLER

Yes sir.

Daniel stares at the bills. One Benjamin is facing the opposite direction.

DANIEL

Would you..?

Daniel points at the bill and gestures to turn it around.

With a bit of an attitude, the teller meets his request.

Daniel's slides the bills off the counter, one by one, and shuffles to the double doors.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

A sheet of rain pummels the streets. In a dingy overcoat with no hood, Daniel makes his way up the building steps.

Police sirens blare behind him. Clenching his money tightly in one and the plastic bag in the other, Daniel raises his hands to the sky as he slowly turns.

A delusional smile creeps on his face. He chuckles a bit.

Squad cars fly past his home. Disappointed, Daniel sets his arms down.

Rain trickles down his unblinking eyes as he glares at the fading police lights.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

The soaked coat lies in a puddle of water in the kitchen.

Five, wet, one hundred dollar bills lie perfectly separated on a coffee table.

Hands dig into the plastic bag and retrieve dozens of 'Little Trees' car fresheners.

Daniel unwraps each one and pulls there strings over his head, wearing them as necklaces.

Perched on his knees, Daniel hovers over the coffee table.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Five hundred dollars. Not five hundred and four cents or five hundred and two dollars and three cents, but five hundred dollars. Flat.

A fly buzzes past him. Daniel follows it with his gaze.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

How did I come to that? I remember buying the deluxe shoe shining kit for seventy nine dollars. Ebay. No tax. But what I got after that, hmm..? Five hundred.

Daniel slowly peels the first bill off the table. He wipes off the wet mark.

INT. WALMART - DAY

Daniel scans the comforter aisle.

A SALESWOMAN approaches him. She tries to avoid bringing attention to the horde of deodorizers around his neck.

SALESWOMAN

May I help you with anything, sir?

Daniel's tired eyes turn to her.

DANIEL

I need a cover. A thick cover. A cover that won't cost me over one hundred dollars. One hundred. Flat.

SALESWOMAN

...okay. Well, if you look right over here...

Daniel follows the saleswoman. As if buying a car, Daniel leans in and intently listens to her every word.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Daniel stands over his bed, tightly folding his new comforter in a square, smoothing out any wrinkles.

He gently lays the cover over two pillows.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

On the coffee table, four, one hundred dollar bills remain. Daniel holds the first in his palm.

The next one is carefully picked up and placed over the first drenched bill.

INT. MALL FOOD COURT - DAY

Parents, teens and children fill the cafeteria. Daniel sits with three beers in front of him under the rules and regulations of the mall, which clearly states:

"No consumption of alcohol beverages within 500 feet of the premises"

DANIEL (V.O.)

Three beers. Three seventy nine a piece. With tax, three ninety seven. One hundred dollars means twenty five beers. And change.

He pops one open and takes it down.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Twenty four to go.

INT. MALL FOOD COURT - DAY

A security guard eyes the twenty four empty bottles cluttering the small table.

Daniel returns to his seat with the last. He casually sips.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Look at him. He doesn't know what to say. A guy sitting in the middle of the mall with kids and cougars, getting drunk?

Daniel takes another swig.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He hasn't approached because he probably think to himself "why do they sell beer in the mall's food court anyway?" Yesterday, I wondered the same thing. But today...  
(belches)

No.

Daniel lifts, then bobbles past a glaring family.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Getting drunk at the food court is  
fair game.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Two, one hundred dollar bills lie flat in Daniel's palm.  
He carefully pulls up the dripping third.

INT. CITY STRIP - NIGHT

Bright neon lights illuminate the streets. Ladies of the  
night stroll the avenue.

Daniel approaches one.

INT. RUNDOWN HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The springboard violently clatters as the cheap prostitute  
rides Daniel, cowgirl style.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Why would anyone in their right mind  
screw a hooker? A tug job, yeah. A  
blow job, maybe. With a condom.  
But to fuck?

They are done. Gasping in passion, the hooker lies in bed.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
A piece of plastic over your manhood  
doesn't protect you from everything.  
Her pubic hair brushes yours, then  
boom. You have crabs. Why risk  
that?

Daniel sits up and peers out the window.

DANIEL (CONT'D)  
Where is the closest casino?

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Daniel's scented necklace dangles over a counter as he leans  
toward the CLERK behind it. He shouts over the blaring music.

DANIEL  
I'll take four hundred quarters,  
please.

CLERK  
That'll be a hundred bucks.

DANIEL

Wait, you know what? How's the jackpot? How much would I win?

CLERK

It's up two fifty six mill tonight.

DANIEL

Okay, I'll take three hundred and eighty eight quarters, and I think I'm going to go for the jackpot. One ticket, please... for the jackpot.

CLERK

Cool. That's still going to be a hundred bucks.

Daniel hands her the bill as he awkwardly bobs to the music.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Peeling the fourth bill off the table, Daniel gently places it over the others.

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Daniel shoves a quarter in a slot. He pulls the lever. Two cherries and a money sign. Another quarter goes in.

DANIEL (V.O.)

(chuckles)

I bought a lottery ticket. Wouldn't it be funny if I won? A dead guy with a multi-million dollar winning lotto ticket in his pocket. They probably wouldn't even check them at first.

Daniel slips in another quarter. Pulls the lever... no luck.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Some jerk that works in a morgue'll probably come across it first. He'll keep it for himself, for sure. Probably lay --

WAITRESS (O.S.)

Hey love, can I get you a drink?

Daniel snaps his attention over to a gorgeous WAITRESS with a tray full of colorful beverages.

DANIEL

Love? You don't know me.

WAITRESS

Is that right? Well, we can get to--

Daniel gets back to the slot machine.

The waitress' face stings with "fuck you". She storms off.

DANIEL (V.O.)

He'll probably lay low for a couple of weeks and then cash it in. Later, he'll be screwed 'cause they got footage of me purchasing the ticket.

Daniel scoffs and looks over at a large plasma screen, broadcasting the news.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

How embarrassing. I would be the talk of the week, though. Two weeks if I'm lucky. Daniel Brown on CNN. What a day that'll be.

Daniel continues to slip the quarters in the slot machine with a smile.

EXT. CASINO - DAY

The sun bares down on Daniel's squinting eyes as he exits. His gaze falls upon a GUN SHOP across the street.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

The final bill is removed. Daniel wipes away the final watermark. He folds the money and heads out the front door.

INT. GUNS SHOP - DAY

Daniel cradles a high point .380. Behind the counter, an OLD BIKER scratches his Jesus beard.

He glares at Daniel's collar full of air fresheners, then nods at the pistol.

OLD BIKER

Now since it holds a little age to it, I'll let you have it for seventy nine fifty. Throw in a round for ten. You have a license, right?

DANIEL (V.O.)

I don't blame him for asking. On average, would a man like me have a gun permit? No.

Daniel reaches in his wallet and retrieves his license.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
But today, I'm a different man.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Daniel fluffs the folded comforter then gently rests his head on top.

He places the .380 to his temple...

DANIEL (V.O.)  
Wait... What kind of person will  
people think I am if I did this?  
They already think that I am a chump.  
Neurotic. Lazy. An overeater.  
Some kids thunk in high-school I was  
gay, but a coward?

Daniel sits up, and peers at his surroundings. A happy picture of a Daniel and a WOMAN lie above the bed.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I'm definitely not a coward. I'm a  
guy with problems he can't fix, but  
definitely not a coward.

He runs his finger through his hair as he frowns at the pistol.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I didn't even have the decency to  
leave a note. Nah... Not today.

He pulls open a closet door and tucks the weapon behind a pile of clothes. Daniel heads out the room.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Daniel brushes another portrait of the woman and him.

He opens the front door, but before he leaves out, Daniel removes the necklace of air fresheners and drops it at the foot of the door.

His feet shuffle out, leaving the front door wide open.

Propped against his couch, lies a Louisville slugger, coated with dry blood.

On the couch, a MAN and the woman in the picture lie in the nude, slumped over. Lifeless.

Flies buzz around the corpses.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
...Today was actually a good day.