A Tear for Bunny

A Short Story from an Idea by Erin

By Maryanne Peters

She could not help it that she was pretty. I really should ay “he” if I am gonna tell the story, but somehow I just can’t. It just don’t seem right. But maybe I will start that way. The start is his story I guess.

His Mom never wanted him to be in a gang. She protected the kid, as any Mom would. He went to school. He walked through the Hood on his way – kept his head down. Men don’t notice kids until they get big, and maybe start to stare of give some lip.

Sometimes we would use the young ones on the corners, running cash and packages. But those were the ones who wanted it. They knew who was running the Hood. We were.

“I can run for you”. We had plenty of kids putting a hand up. We used to say they were the smart ones.

Bunny never put a hand up. He just wanted to study and play music and not disappoint his Mom. We never said anything about kids like that. Hell – they did not exist. Unless they got on the junk in which case they were customers. They exist, but barely.

Bunny and his Mom lived in the Hood because that was where they could live. No other neighborhood would take them. She was black, but Bunny’s father must have been white. The kid had golden skin and light hazel eyes. The first time I saw those eyes I felt … well, mo’ about that later.

He was a fit for our gang. They say the reason why we are called “The Breeds” is because plenty of our people are half something, and half something else. Most have black in them, but maybe with a bit of Asian, Chicano, even Samoan. We have no honkies, but shades of black and brown. “The Slicks” are pure black, or that is what they say.

Down in the hood, the only white folk are the cops. On the street it is black against black, or shades of black and brown against each other. I mean nothin’ by it. It is just the way it is.

I am not sure about how it happened, but the kid’s mother was killed. Some people say that the killer was her boyfriend – like the kind that loves a woman one minute and then beats her bloody the next. Some say that he was just a rapist. One thing is sure and that he was linked to The Slicks.

As I say, we never knew anything about Bunny, until he killed that man stone dead. I mean the boyfriend or the rapist or whatever.

Bunny was badly cut up. The guy had knocked the kid down as he tried to shield his Mom and then cut her up something crazy, then turn his knife on the boy – straight into the groin and up to the belly button. It was a carpet knife. Have you ever seen one of those? Not cutting – tearing the meat open.

The pain made Bunny come to. It does that, as I know. He reached for something and found it. Something he would barely have been able to lift if his blood was not up. His blood was up. His Mom was dead. Done smashed the guy’s skull into pieces, the way I heard it. He knew the stop his own bleeding and call for an ambulance, but he could not find a phone on either body and had none of his own. He had to crawl down the hall to find help.

Anyway, Jamal called me and said: “We got this kid in hospital. He killed a Slick. Go see him and offer him the chance to join. He has already passed the first test.”

We all know down in the Hood that this boy would be dead when he got out of the hospital. Those are the rules: You kill one of ours and you die. Maybe they would get to him in there. But my thinking then was that it was not our concern. He wasn’t a Breed. Why bother? But Jamal calls the shots, for now.

So I went. I got his name and I went to the hospital. I said I was family. The nurse did not believe me.

“Nobody calls him that. Everybody calls him Bunny.” That’s what she said.

“Not any more,” I said. “His mother is dead. He’s gonna have to be a man now. Bunny ain’t a man’s name.” She believed that shit all right, and showed me in.

The kid had his eyes closed in pain when I went over to see him. I just stood over the bed. I wasn’t planning on staying.

I said: “My name is Satch and I am with the Breeds. You are in trouble, Kid, big trouble … with the Slicks. You are gonna need our help. Maybe we can give it.”

He opened those eyes. I looked into Bunny’s eyes for the first time. I saw a woman. I am telling you what I saw.

People say that ain’t so. People say that I saw a boy with his junk cut off, and nothing left down there, so I imagined him with the body of a woman. But it wasn’t like that. The eyes ain’t got nothin’ to do with the crotch. Hell, I didn’t even know about that until the doctor walked in.

“You’re family? Good,” he said. “Bunny has been badly injured. His life has been changed forever, I am afraid. He has no genie tales. We have done some repair work, but without insurance we cannot carry out any repair work.”

Anyway, “genie tales” was the way I heard it. But he was telling me that Bunny’s junk was gone, like, forever. He said that they had taken the tube you piss through down to near the butt hole so the kid could piss sitting down and wear a pad for some reason, but he hoped that was just temporary. They could do surgery to rebuild his cock and make a sack for some plastic balls, when he could afford that.

Any man who hears that shit has to shiver then check their nuts. It is the kind of thing we don’t like to hear.

I asked him when he would be ready to leave, and the Doc said that he could leave the following day, with painkillers, if he had somebody to care for him and change dressings.

“He has,” I said. “That is what family is fo’!” Because He had family now. The Breeds.

But I wasn’t about to take him to no gang house. They would not “change his dressing” and wash the stitches of a boy with no junk. Hell, they would take his painkillers – use ‘em or sell ‘em, and leave the Kid to suffer. No. Not there. But I had another place in mind.

Patty ran a “Beauty Shop” down on 23rd. She ran with The Breeds. Her man was a Breed before he died in the Battle of Holland Park some years back – The Breeds and the Slicks. There were just women folk there. Bunny would be safe with them.

When the doctor had gone Bunny started croaking out some words. He said: “I am not joining any gang. That is not what I want.” I knew then that this kid had spunk.

I said that it was his choice but a Slick was dead and soon he would be too. If he wanted to live, he would have to hide, at least for a while. I told him that I had people who would care for him and get him out of hospital. The doctor’s seemed keen to be rid of him.

“That’s because a big African American tried to get in before you came,” he said. I decided that I needed to get Bunny out then and there.

I called Patty from my truck on the way into the hood. It turned out that she had worked on Bunny’s Mom’s hair once or twice. She was ready to help. The Breeds had asked more of her in the past, and she would not always say yes, but when it came to helping folk she was up to it.

When I left, I said: “Put Bunny in a dress. Hell, he must be about the prettiest boy I have ever seen, so he would look good in a dress. The Slicks are looking for a boy, not a girl.”

Patty told me later that it sounded like an order, but really it was just a suggestion. I think it was, anyway. But the truth is, I wanted to see what Bunny looked like as a girl. I thought that she might be pretty – the girl I mean. She.

Well, I was not disappointed.

Bunny’s hair was not black but a shade of brown, and it was curly rather than wiry, and long enough for some kind of style with a parting down the center. But the makeup was great. Those eyes just look as big as cue balls with the eyelashes and all, and the pink lipstick done made those lips look ready for God’s own blow job. The dress kind of hung off the body, because there weren’t no body (but that was gonna come) but the legs looked like one of them supermodels.

I said that nobody was going to guess that she was a guy.

But she was still hurting. Her body was sore, but that would pass. It was the loss of her mother that cut deeper than the carpet knife. I said that he mother must have been a pretty lady, and maybe when she walked and talked dressed like that she should act as her mother would – sort of like a tribute. Bunny kind of liked that. I think that was where she came from after that.

I said that we could go out, but only if she pretended to be my girl. That way I could stay close.

Patty set her up with some stuff and I took her down to the Hood in my truck.

Jamal said that the Slicks were demanding blood. “They are saying that the bitch’s kid killed one of theirs, and they want him named. To hell with those fuckers. Is the kid safe?”

I said that he was in hiding and he would never be found.

He said: “That bitch in young truck is a fine lookin’ piece of ass.” I had to agree. “She needs a good pair of tits, though. Maybe get her a pair for Christmas?”

The Slicks were not giving up. They went down to the school where Bunny had gone and hauled kids out of class to ask about any contact. There weren’t nothing the teachers could do. Security was a joke. No fool would be standing up to the Slicks in our town, nor the Breeds neither.

We had a small face off about it. I just said that the kid was no member of our gang. “And if his Momma was hanging with a Slick, I guess that makes her one of yo’all. Seems it is just a case of a boy protecting his Momma, just like any of you would.”

I figured that made sense. But we are talking about hatred. It is the kind of hatred that has sense about it that can be made.

There was a killing a week later. One of ours died and then one of theirs died the day after that.

And then it was Christmas and I bought Bunny those tits. She was my girl, that’s why. She may not have had everything a girl has, but we made do. I said that the Christmas after I would buy her the bottom to match the top. It seemed to please her.

I loved her, you see. As for her loving me, well she liked me to hold her, and liked doing that. It was just that she never really got over her loss, and she needed to be held by somebody the way her mother had held the child. It was like she knew that she would never hold a woman as a man, so the kind of contact she needed was a man like me – somebody who loved her and wanted to protect her.

She was either mad or sad, sometimes both. But somehow tears in those big eyes just made her all the more beautiful. Is that a shitty thing to say?

Everybody knew how much I loved her. They never knew what she was or who she was, because she was the perfect woman – like her Mom she said. But they knew that I loved her.

That is why the Slicks shot her in the head.

Tore me up worse than she was torn. She was only crop to belly button, where I was torn right up to the heart. Inside I mean.

I took down seven Slicks before the cops arrived. Now I sit on death row with only a memory to keep me alive. The memory of Bunny, my girl – the scar of her tear that I used to love to kiss, the tears that I loved to lick away … sad Bunny. I don’t think I ever cried in my life until the day she died,, and it seems like every day since.

The End

© Maryanne Peters 2021