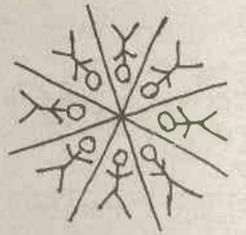


Kaleidoscope



"Jennifer In Lace Shadows" by Aubrey Moore

DAVE

No one was around when it happened. The girl wanted privacy anyway, and the only place to be alone in this club was the bathroom, so she hid herself pretty well. She had been shooting up on heroin or something, was having a good time, but then she OD'd. It was too bad, really. She had been quite pretty.

Darcy found her in one of the stalls in the bathroom. Darcy needed to go really bad, she'd been drinking a lot, and after she was done she saw the body on the floor in the last stall on the row. The floor was filthy and there were needles and paper and a few spoons on the floor around the girl, like offerings to some demented god. The graffiti on the walls around the make-shift god would make some of the guys in the club blush.

I cannot say why Darcy was so cool and calm about the whole thing. I wouldn't have been. I might have

crapped in my shorts if I'd seen a dead guy in the bathroom. We were at the club, *El Dorichio*. It don't think it means anything in any language, the owner just thought it sounded cool.

The inside of the place was huge. It was a three story building without any of the floors on the inside. The only standing space left was the basement. The stage was on the level where the first floor would be, and it was supported by heavy wooden beams. I love playing the place. The crowd couldn't reach you, and you could spit on them without any problem.

So anyway, Darcy found the body and came out and told this bruiser of a security guy, you know, the kind with no hair and a brow ridge so low you can't see his eyes. So he burst into the ladies' room and took hold of the whole situation. Of course he didn't know what to do, so he called the cops.

Everyone in the place was on something from pot to Coke to LSD to Ecstasy. It was really bad, but the place was a narcotics bust waiting to happen. It was like an easter egg hunt for cops, and all the eggs were out in

the open.

So when the police wanted to interrogate us they would get a bunch of drooling, crying schmucks with their thumbs up their asses. I told my band to stay off the stuff before a gig so we would be clear as to what we were playing. Lucky for them they listened.

It took the cops about thirty minutes to arrive with an ambulance. By then the body had been forgotten, and there was some stupid dooper chick taking a dump. It was funny the next day, because she was halfway through, if you know what I mean.

So this chick was thrown out of the bathroom, but only after she'd taken care of business. She really hurried up after the cops busted in. Darcy was at the bar getting questioned by a detective, since she had found the body. They wanted a statement from pretty much all of us. There were only three people there who knew the girl, and they were so doped that they couldn't give a statement without having an epiphany every five minutes or so.

It was kind of pitiful. I think it was around the time that the cops questioned the third dooper that I swore off drugs. The dooper was puking everywhere, and the cops didn't give a damn.

The neon lights were still flashing away, and they were buzzing and crackling now. Somebody had bumped into them while they were moshing around the pit. They flashed reds and greens and blues and yellows, a virtual rainbow covering the floor. The LSD freaks were having a wonderful time in this liquid color landscape.

A cop came up to me to talk about the girl. He was short and had a mustache, and he wore a dark blue shirt that said SHERIFF in white. He had his gun at his hip. He went through the whole thing about my name and such, and then he got up close and personal about me.

"Did you know the deceased personally?" he asked. This wasn't like *COPS*.

"Nah, none of us did, except those dopers you guys questioned. I never really noticed her before, but then I rarely recognize people in here."

"How come?"

"Because, so many new people come in here. Plus, I'm with the band, so I don't come here all the time either. I might come here once a week or so."

"Did you notice her tonight?" he asked. His moustache ruffled when he spoke.

"Nah. I mean, I might have seen her, but I wouldn't take any special notice of her. She was a dooper. I used to be. I don't hang with dopers."

He scribbled all this down. If I was called to be a witness, they could use that against my character. The cop hanked me and went his merry way

and probably found some dooper to arrest. The cops would get a warrant on this place in no time at all.

I hunted down Darcy and she was sitting out in front of the club wearing her sun glasses. She was curled up and there were people strolling by her not taking any notice. She was crying, but she didn't want anyone to notice. No one cares anymore about who has been hurt. Some jackass business man walked by and told us to move our asses and get real jobs.

"Piss off," I shouted after him. Darcy cried a little more, and the suit just moved a little quicker. He probably thought that I was going to jump him.

I looked down at Darcy, "You OK, kid?"

"No." She whimpered a little.

"I know, I know," but I didn't. What else could I have said?

"She's dead Dave. She was laying there while I was peeing, and she was dead," she sobbed and spit came out of her mouth, "and I didn't see her until it was too late."

I hugged Darcy as she sobbed some more. People were looking now. She was making a lot of noise, and there's nothing like a scene to attract a crowd.

Darcy didn't seem to care if we attracted a crowd. She'd just found a dead body. I didn't know what to say. What can you say? Nothing real important, I guess, so I told her some jokes. It wasn't so she would forget or anything (What's the last thing that went through Kurt Cohain's mind?), just so she'd cheer up (His teeth. Oops.). She only cried harder.

The cops started to leave. It was only four in the morning and what not. They wanted to secure the area and shut down the place because they still hadn't moved the body. A police woman tried to talk to Darcy and tell her it was okay. I think Darcy wanted to become a junkie right about then. At least junkies get to run away for a little bit.

The boys from the ambulance were rolling out the body in a bag. They were shouting and Darcy cringed. When they came out of the doorway, they were like demons spewing forth from some hell-gate. The body was jostling from all the bumps the paramedics were giving it. Darcy cried a little harder.

"Why don't they stop!?" she screamed.

I didn't know.

The band left about an hour later. They didn't say anything to me or Darcy, they just patted my shoulder. They didn't have any clue as to what was going on.

After everyone left the club (which was two hours and one hell of a