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Workshop Submission #1

**All Things Must Come to an End**

I remember when the underground in this town was all laid out and organized. It started with the Smiley Brothers at the top and worked its way down. One giant organization that made millions. They sold weapons of every kind, drugs, and moonshine like crazy, but by far their top product was weed. It was sold in droves throughout my town, we had more than we knew what to do with. Nothing got past Ryan, the oldest and smartest of the two brothers. If he didn’t like it, it didn’t happen. Many ideas were proposed to him and turned down. Things like meth, cocaine, heroin and many of the other hard drugs were forbidden, killing under contract or bounty was not allowed either, but it was rumored that it happened anyway and people were being killed all the time. But above all Ryan would never stand for human trafficking. Most found the art of pimping people out to be sick and inhuman, and when it happened we would always find some kid tortured and beaten to death in a ditch on the side of the road somewhere. In a way, these rules kept the town safe. In a completely crazy way, it felt calming. The system was almost perfect, except for one issue. Over the years word got around and one night the police department raided the Smiley Brothers’ old warehouse. Many students went to jail that night and many others joined them in the coming months. Some even died trying to shoot their way out, but most just gave up. If there is any reason to learn from this, other that don’t deal drugs, is that all things must come an end.

 Things were different now. New people in control with new dealers with stupid little code words and worst of all Ben. Ben was the head of the new drug cartel in my town and unlike the Smiley Brothers, he was not well liked. He didn’t care for other and would do anything to make a quick buck. I liked Ryan and Sam, his younger brother, always doing what they can to for the people around them. They may have been serious law breakers, but they were still good people with good hearts. Ben was the opposite. He would spend his days tormenting everyone. Since he became head, deaths had almost tripled and students were being arrested all the time. He brought back the sale of meth and cocaine and had people killed just for the fun of it. And worst of all, he treated women like shit. I had to hold myself back on multiple occasions where I’d see him pestering some girl in the hall way or in class. He had no respect for women and word was going around that he was pimping out some girls that granted his every wish, probably out of fear.

 At school he would always be surrounded by his friends and dealers, but today. Today Ben is dead. As I walked by his posse of henchmen I could hear one of them talking about getting revenge on some guy wearing a red hoody and a black mask. I knew right away who he was talking about. Everyone had heard stories about this guy. But there was no way they’d ever find him. No one ever knew how he really was.

 From time to time I would hear students about the boy in the red hood. He was one of the middle men under the Smiley Brothers. He would pick up a product from a supplier and deliver it to the customer. But unlike other middle men he was always on a skateboard instead of in car, he never showed his face, and he never carried a gun. Instead he carried a couple of knives and long ball hitch wrench that he would use on people for not paying up or if he was ordered to. There were rumors that he did most of the killing for the cartel. But the most interesting thing about him is that after every job he finished, he would roll up his sleeve and carve an “X” into his forearm with a knife and recite the Hail Mary as a way of repenting for his sins. Everyone thought it was weird, but all dealers had their weird little issues, it’s a very stressful job after all. After the Smiley Brothers were busted, he disappeared. Most thought he died in the shootout or arrested like the others. But they were wrong.

 It didn’t take long for the details of Ben’s death to travel around the school. Last night he was making a delivery to one of his biggest buyers for cocaine. Being one of his biggest sales, he had five bricks in the spare tire hatch that sat right above the gas tank in the back of his car. With each brick weighing 1000 grams, he was carrying up to $300,000. He showed up to his delivery spot, a neighborhood park, at 1:00 a.m., a half hour early. Twenty minutes in someone with a hood over his head and a bandana covering his mouth walked up to the side of the car.

 Ben exited his car and stuck out his hand to greet the man, “You’re early.” But as the man approached him, he snapped Ben’s wrist back and used it as leverage in to shove him up against the car. The man looked through the window and saw Kat in the front seat. She was one of Ben’s most expensive prostitutes and was scared speechless. The man pointed away from the car and in a deep, rough voice he said, “GET OUT!” Those were the only words that Ben and Kat ever heard him speak. She then ran behind a nearby tree. When she turned, she saw something that would make the devil cringe. Ben was now laying on the ground, blood spilling out of his out of his mouth, and the man held high above his head a skinny piece of metal just before laying it upon his cheek. The man continued to swing again and again, every sound made by the cracking bones made tears roll down Kat’s face. Then she saw the man grabbed Ben by his blood soaked jacket and sat him up straight, his back against the car. He got face to face with him and the man pulled down the bandana and showed his face, then quickly pulled it back up again. Ben’s eyes widened, he obviously knew who he was. With a shaky hand, he tried to pull the gun out of the inside pocket of his jacket, but once he got it out the man snatched out of his hands. He took a few steps back and put a bullet in each leg, Ben’s yelp silenced but the sound of the gun, then got in close again. He then pulled out knife and used the back of his hand to hold his back. Both of them could here Kat’s sobs off in the distance, but it didn’t even compare to the blood driven whine that came from Ben. Blood poured out from his forehead and the man continued to scribe. When the man finished, he walked ten steps back and put three bullets in the gas tank, which sat diagonally to the right of Ben’s now unrecognizable head, then threw the gun to the side. The tank caught fire and exploded a few seconds later. For a moment everything was lit up by the giant inferno. The last thing Kat remembered before she passed out from fright was seeing the man rolling up his sleeve as he walked away and disappeared into the dark of the night.

 That was the end of Ben’s rein. Last I heard Kat was taken straight to a mental hospital so there’s no real way to know what actually happened. As the teacher walked into class she walked by my desk and grabbed my arm and said, “I’m sorry for your loss.” It hurt a little. The cuts were still fresh.