The Car Wash

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The Car Wash

Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"The night commenced with a series of cruddy decisions. It began with an excellent suggestion, and ended somewhere in Dansville. I had my first, and only, taste of Dansville that night. My hazy memory recalls a lot of trees, and a few double-wides. The area I experienced is used primarily for hunting. As a result we lacked all amenities. We didn't have the luxury of bathrooms, street lights or cell towers. The 6 of us were alone in the woods."

Cover Page Footnote

This prose is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol2009/iss3/5
I'm a rambler, I'm a gambler, I'm a long way from home;  
and if you don't like me well leave me alone.  
I'll eat when I'm hungry, I'll drink when I'm dry,  
and if moonshine don't kill me, I'll live 'til I die.  
- The Clancy Brothers

The night commenced with a series of cruddy decisions. It began with an excellent suggestion, and ended somewhere in Dansville. I had my first, and only, taste of Dansville that night. My hazy memory recalls a lot of trees, and a few double-wides. The area I experienced is used primarily for hunting. As a result we lacked all amenities. We didn't have the luxury of bathrooms, street lights or cell towers. The 6 of us were alone in the woods.

"Please, Clint, let's just stop for a minute so I can pee."
"Just go Katie, don't worry about it; just go."
"Clint, I don't know if I can..."
"I went 5 minutes ago."
"But I don't have any other clothes with me."
"Who cares, you aren't going to be able to wear the clothes you have on anyway."
"Good point."

As we ran through the dark rainy night in our soiled clothes I felt like I needed my mind back. The night was menacing. We were inundated with rain and dark. Thunder and lightning rolled and cracked along with our broken spirits. Why were we running? I hate running. Our situation was not going to change because we showed a little hustle. The path we ran was dominated by mature barren trees. The intermittent stab of lightning illuminated our surroundings. Each stab affirmed our futile situation. We were fucked. I was moderately fucked; Clint was really fucked. When the drugs wore off and the rain stopped, he would be forced to explain our actions to rational people. In the meantime, we were determined to do something. Every problem has a solution, right?

Sean and Jocelyn were with us when the Jeep met its maker. They were willing to accept the lack of control we had over our affairs. They were not interested in running back to camp and they didn't need a solution. They were feeling the effects of the LSD. Ken Kesey said it best: "Man, when you lose your laugh, you lose your footing." Sean and Jocelyn were away on a trip. They were not going to come back early to face a crisis. I wish I had that kind of control. The control to accept your lack of it. I saw the acid in my brain as a problem. What happened?

Moments earlier we had intentionally driven a Jeep into a raging creek. By intentionally, I mean we sat around and made a group decision to get in the car and drive it into the creek. Every drug-abusing individual is at the mercy of her drug-abusing, decision-making self. We cripple ourselves from being able to know right from wrong. Reality television has found a way to capitalize on our foggy judgment.

An example of such exploitation would be the contestants on the show "Fear Factor." These rational beings spend their 15 minutes of fame eating donkey balls at the notion of possibly winning $50,000.00. That isn't even a lifestyle change. What surprises me most is how low these people will go. Not only do they eat pig snout, but they do it half-naked. This is how I felt during our crisis. I could have been a contestant on Fear Factor.
Ordinarily, I would never pee my pants. The idea of intentionally wetting myself is disturbing. But I did. I did and if I wasn’t high on 5 hits of acid and a case of beer I would probably decide that I was running nowhere and could take the time to squat on the side of the road. I wonder how the candidates on Fear Factor would react if Joe Rogan announced, “Okay, teams, for your next challenge I am going to need one of you to pee your pants.” They would jump at the opportunity.

When Clint and I finished our shameless run to the camp, we were broken. We did not have any plan to implement. We just wanted to get there. We wanted to separate ourselves from the wreckage. We wanted to get a "do over.” Our hopes were that the camp would generate a miracle. A miracle that would elevate the Jeep from the depths of the swollen creek. It never happened. I don’t think we were in any position to ask for miracles. I think God saves his miracles for sick kids.

Chris and Steph were passed out when we entered the filthy trailer. Filthy is a gross understatement. Nothing in it had ever been cleaned. The one exception to that would be the water in the six foot bong. I believe they changed that seasonally. The space was stifling. Every callous square inch of the trailer was blanketed with debris. Every blanket and cushion was dirty and worn. These fabrics had spent their last years being suffocated with smoke and the occasional spill of cheap beer. The walls were lined with trashy, enticing women. The moment I stepped foot in the trailer I felt the plague of our affair. I knew nothing good could ever come from such a bad place. Clint roused Chris from his coma-like slumber. He was not amused.

We convinced him to come check out the wreckage with us. It was still raining when we started back. I decided to ditch my underwear. I figured that my underwear suffered the most when I urinated in them. I wanted them gone, for good.

The walk back was much more enjoyable. I was beginning to accept our crisis and I resolved to make the most of it. We were half way to the wreckage when the rain stopped.

The sun began to work its way up the horizon. The path we had run earlier was taking on a completely different look – a less terrifying look. The combination of dark and drugs had made me feel like I was Jaime Lee Curtis in the movie Halloween. Maybe that is why I ran. Was I running from a hockey-masked murderer? Any rational person would pee their pants if they were running from Michael Meyers. Justification: an absolute must for drug-abusing individuals.

We continued down the road feeling bad. Sean and Jocelyn were resting on two giant boulders when we met up with them. They had embraced the situation and came out of it feeling great. The five of us walked together to the scene of the incident. I wish I could call it an accident. When we reached our destination we found the Jeep completely submerged and 20 feet from where we had jumped from it. I took a quick look around. Disgusting; I could not believe I swam in this shitty creek. Now that we were graced with light I took a quick inventory of my body. Jocelyn checked out my back. No leeches, thank you Jesus.