

IN THE BAG

written by

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EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

CHARLIE, late twenties, dressed in a warm-up suit and sneakers hurries down a city street. He looks back over his shoulder several times. Charlie is carrying a plastic bag by the handles.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Charlie stops at the corner looking up and down the street, then back down the street he just came down. Charlie stands next to ELLEN, early sixties, as she rummages through a wire city garbage can while humming to herself.

Ellen is dressed in a long winter coat, wears thick lensed glasses and stands next to her treasure filled pushcart. Ellen looks up and sees Charlie.

ELLEN

Charlie. I've got something for you.

CHARLIE

Not now Ellen. Gotta go.

Ellen starts to go through things in her cart.

ELLEN

But Charlie.

CHARLIE

See you later.

Charlie turns and starts to cross the street, but he stops in the middle of the street. A car honks at him. Charlie turns around and heads back up the street toward Ellen.

ELLEN

It's in here somewhere Charlie. When I found it, I thought of you right away.

CHARLIE

Later Ellen, OK? Later.

Charlie walks past her.

ELLEN

You're going to love this Charlie.

Ellen continues rummaging in her cart. Charlie walks down the block and around another street corner.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

ERNESTO, forties, short and thick set, approaches Charlie. He blocks Charlie's path.

ERNESTO

Hey, Charlie. I saw your mother yesterday. She don't look so good.

Charlie tries to get around Ernesto.

CHARLIE

She's fine. I'll tell her you asked
for her Ernesto.

Charlie gets by and keeps walking. Ernest calls after him.

ERNESTO

You and Eddie take care of your mother
now Charlie. You hear me?

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

In the middle of the block, Charlie pulls up short. Charlie stands in front of the large picture window of a laundromat. Through the window a woman makes angry gestures to a man across a row of washing machines.

Charlie clutches the bag while looking distractedly up and down the street. Charlie walks into the laundromat.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

RING of the bell on the door as Charlie walks in the door and down the aisle past JANET, mid twenties, dressed casually in jeans and T-shirt. Janet is yelling at ALEX, a man in his late twenties, dressed conservatively.

JANET

I don't care.

Janet watches Charlie move down the aisle.

ALEX

Your cell wasn't on. I left a message.

At the end of the aisle, Charlie drops into a plastic chair with the bag in his lap. He picks up a newspaper and lifts it in front of his face. Janet turns back to Alex.

JANET

How did you find me anyway? Are you
stalking me Alex?

ALEX

Come on, I stopped by your apartment.
Brenda told me you were here.

JANET

How convenient. Stopped by for what? A
quickie?

ALEX

(ignoring the remark)
Meet me for dinner tonight.

JANET

Are you insane?

Janet picks up an empty soap box. She throws it at Alex. Alex dodges the soap box.

ALEX

I'm thinking 8:00 PM at the Temple Bar for drinks, then wing it from there.

Janet slams her fist on the top of the washing machine.

JANET

I've already told you I never want to see your weasly face again. What part of that don't you get?

Alex calmly stands his ground.

ALEX

I made a mistake Janet. It won't happen again.

Alex's phone rings.

JANET

You bet it won't.

ALEX

Just a second.

He answers it.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Hello. Yeah Bob.

Charlie shifts in his chair. He peers around the newspaper then quickly hides behind it again.

JANET

Unbelievable.

ALEX

(immediately switching gears)
What are the receivables on the account?

Alex walks toward the door.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Yeah, OK. Hello? Can you hear me?

JANET

Loud and clear.

Alex switches the phone from one hand to the other.

ALEX

We've got a bad connection. I'll call you right back.

Alex turns off the cell phone and walks back toward Janet.

JANET

Finished?

ALEX
Yeah, sorry. Where were we? Oh yeah,
dinner tonight.

JANET
Get out.

ALEX
I'd say you're overreacting here.

JANET
Yeah, you would say that wouldn't you.
Out.

ALEX
Look, Janet, I'm sorry OK?

Janet points to the door.

JANET
Sorry doesn't cut it this time Alex.

Alex looks at her, then walks to the door speed dialing his
cell phone.

ALEX
OK. I'll call you later.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

The bell on the door RINGS as Alex exits talking on phone.

ALEX
Bob? Alex. Where were we?
Receiveables, right.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

Janet goes to the washing machine, takes her clothes out, and
dumps them into a portable cart. Charlie peers around the
edge of the newspaper looking past Janet to the front window.

JANET
What are you looking at?

Charlie retreats behind the newspaper.

CHARLIE
Nothing.

Janet moves the cart to a dryer, takes the clothes out of the
cart and throws them in the dryer. She reaches in her pocket
for change. Having on tight jeans, she has to stretch to get
into her pocket. Charlie peers around the newspaper, this
time looking at Janet.

JANET
I don't believe it.

Janet looks at pennies, a nickel and one quarter in her hand. She looks over at Charlie.

JANET (CONT'D)
Got any quarters?

Charlie looks down at the bag.

CHARLIE
No.

JANET
Are you sure? Check your pockets.

Charlie continues to hold the newspaper up with one hand and feels his pocket with the other. The newspaper falls away from covering his face.

CHARLIE
Yeah, guess I do.

Charlie puts down the newspaper and reaches into his pocket pulling out some change. Janet walks toward Charlie.

JANET
How about two quarters?

Charlie picks out two quarters.

CHARLIE
That's all I've got.

JANET
I'll get change in a minute.

CHARLIE
OK.

Janet takes the change and goes back to start the dryer.

JANET
Thanks.

Charlie quickly picks up the newspaper and lifts it in front of his face.

CHARLIE
No problem.

Janet puts the quarters in the machine.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Glad to help out.

JANET
I said thank you.

Charlie looks over the top of the newspaper.

CHARLIE
OK.

Charlie lifts the newspaper back in front of his face. Janet turns the knob of the dryer. Nothing happens. She turns it again, then again.

JANET
Damn it.

Janet smashes the money slot with her fist. There is the sound of COINS CLINKING and the dryer finally starts. Charlie puts down the newspaper.

CHARLIE
You alright?

Janet looks at Charlie then looks away.

JANET
No, I'm not.

CHARLIE
Sorry to hear that.

JANET
Yeah.

She pauses then turns to look out the front window.

JANET (CONT'D)
It's always the same.

CHARLIE
What is?

Janet gazes out the window.

JANET
Nothing. Never mind.

CHARLIE
No, really what?

JANET
Forget it.

Janet turns her attention back to Charlie.

JANET (CONT'D)
What's in the bag?

Charlie opens up the plastic bag revealing a very full paper bag.

CHARLIE
Lunch. I'm brown bagging it today.

JANET
So why aren't you eating?

CHARLIE
I'm not hungry yet.

JANET
OK. You like to eat lunch watching people do their laundry?

CHARLIE
Yeah. It's a good place to think. Nice and quiet.

JANET
Nice and quiet.

Charlie picks up the newspaper as before.

CHARLIE
Hard to find these days.

JANET
That's for sure.

CHARLIE
Want to go out tonight?

JANET
What?

Charlie puts the newspaper down and looks at Janet.

CHARLIE
You know, dinner?

JANET
I don't think so.

CHARLIE
If you're not going out with Romeo,
why not go with me?

JANET
Romeo. Who says I'm not going out with
him?

CHARLIE
You did.

JANET
Well, I still might.

CHARLIE
Hey, Janet, I'm serious.

Janet takes a long look at Charlie.

JANET
No way.

CHARLIE
Come on.

JANET
What, you loan me two quarters, and I
owe you a debt of gratitude?

CHARLIE
You don't owe me anything. But it
might do you good to have some fun for
a change.

JANET
What's that supposed to mean?.

CHARLIE
I don't know.

JANET
That's right, you don't know.

CHARLIE
You seem a little lonely.

JANET
I'm not lonely and who asked you anyway?

CHARLIE
Well, I'm in the mood for something different tonight. Maybe you are too.

JANET
No. But knock yourself out.

CHARLIE
A night on the town with a total stranger. Could change your life.

Janet almost smiles, then catches herself.

JANET
I'm busy.

CHARLIE
Money to burn.

The BUZZER goes off on Janet's dryer. She goes over and opens the door to check it.

JANET
Start without me.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

The bell on the door RINGS as Charlie looks up to see FRANKIE, middle fifties, heavy set and EDDIE, early thirties, rakishly good looking, rush in. Like Charlie, both are wearing warm-up suits and sneakers.

Charlie stands up, grabs a mop leaning against the wall and runs around the washing machines. Frankie charges past Janet like a rhino. He hits the laundry cart and stumbles.

FRANKIE
God damn it.

Eddie goes to the second aisle to cut Charlie off.

EDDIE
Jesus Charlie.

Frankie gets past the laundry cart.

FRANKIE
Shut up Eddie. What the fuck are you doing here Charlie?

Charlie swings the mop wildly back and forth while still holding the bag. Frankie holds up and just misses getting hit in the face with the mop.

CHARLIE
Back off Frankie.

FRANKIE
I've had it with you.

Frankie pulls out a gun. Charlie stops swinging the mop, but still holds it straight out in front of him.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Give it to me.

Janet is at the dryer stuffing her clothes into a laundry bag.

EDDIE
(to Janet)
Hello. Looking good today.

JANET
Get lost.

FRANKIE
Shut up Eddie. OK hand it over.

Frankie and Eddie are about to make their move when the bell on the door RINGS. Ellen enters dragging her treasure filled cart. Janet, madly stuffs the laundry bag. Frankie and Eddie turn toward the door.

Charlie HITS Frankie with the mop, KNOCKING the gun out of his hand. The gun SLIDES down the aisle toward the front of the laundromat. Ellen starts rummaging through a garbage can near the door. Frankie and Eddie make a move for the gun.

The gun HITS Janet's foot as she closes her laundry bag. Janet looks down at the gun, and then up to see Eddie and Frankie coming toward her. Janet picks up the gun POINTING it back and forth at Frankie and Eddie.

JANET
Stop or I'll shoot. I swear to God.
I'll will.

Eddie and Frankie pull up short. Janet takes a firm stand holding the gun with both hands.

FRANKIE
Give me the gun.

JANET
Stay where you are.

FRANKIE
Now listen little sister. You're in
over your head here.

Eddie makes a move in her direction. Janet SHOOTS at him, misses and tears a hole in a box of laundry detergent. The detergent cascades out of the box onto the floor.

EDDIE
Shit.

Janet is startled, but recovers quickly and resets her stance. Ellen looks up from the trash basket, but does not focus on what is happening. She goes back to rummaging. Frankie turns toward Charlie, who fends him off with the mop.

FRANKIE

(to Charlie)

You dumb fuck! Look at the mess you got us in.

CHARLIE

(to Janet)

I'll come around, and you give me the gun.

FRANKIE

You're making a big mistake here girlie.

JANET

(to Eddie)

OK, move over there.

Charlie, still with mop and bag in hand, starts around the center machines. Eddie moves past Janet to Frankie with his hands in the air.

EDDIE

(to Janet)

I can do rough, if that's the way you like it.

FRANKIE

Shut up Eddie.

EDDIE

She's tough. I like that.

FRANKIE

Shut the fuck up.

Eddie stumbles on the laundry cart pushing it towards Frankie.

EDDIE

Shit.

FRANKIE

Watch out you idiot.

Frankie and Eddie fumble with the cart. Frankie pushes in front of Eddie and makes a move toward Janet. Janet SHOOTs again. A mirror at the back of the room shatters.

JANET

Careful. I'm not in the mood.

Frankie stops short.

FRANKIE

(to Charlie)

What a fuck up. You can't even get a bag drop right.

Ellen finds a discarded blouse in the trash. She holds it up approvingly then puts it in her cart.

EDDIE
Listen Charlie, just give us the money, and we'll call it a day. OK?

FRANKIE
Shut up Eddie. No deals.

Ellen catches sight of Charlie.

ELLEN
Charlie.

FRANKIE
(to Charlie)
Worthless, totally worthless.

Charlie moves up the aisle towards Janet. He slips and almost falls on the spilled laundry detergent.

CHARLIE
I'll show you worthless.

FRANKIE
You're through Charlie.

Charlie approaches Janet. She turns and POINTS the gun at him.

JANET
Stay where you are.

Charlie pulls up short. Janet POINTS the gun back and forth between Charlie and Frankie and Eddie.

CHARLIE
We can help each other out here.

JANET
I don't need any help.

Ellen rummages in her cart.

ELLEN
Charlie, remember? I've got something for you.

FRANKIE
Push off Ellen.

Ellen is still rummaging.

ELLEN
It's in here someplace.

FRANKIE
Give me that gun.

Charlie inches toward Janet, mop and bag in hand.

ELLEN
Here it is.

Charlie FLINGS the mop at Frankie and Eddie. He GRABS at the gun in Janet's hands. They struggles for a moment and look each other in the eye. Then Janet let's Charlie take the gun.

Taking her by the arm with bag in hand, Charlie PULLS Janet to the door. He points the gun at Frankie and Eddie.

ELLEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Charlie, look.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

The bell on the door RINGS as Charlie and Janet emerge from the laundromat. They run down the sidewalk.

JANET

Let go of me.

INT. LAUNDROMAT-DAY

Ellen stands looking out the door. Frankie and Eddie try to get by, but Ellen won't budge.

FRANKIE

Ellen, get out of the way.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Charlie flags down the cab.

CHARLIE

We lose them, then we talk.

The cab stops.

JANET

Ouch. I don't want to talk.

Charlie opens the door.

CHARLIE

You took a shot at them.

JANET

So what.

CHARLIE

Get in.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

The bell on the door RINGS as Frankie then Eddie charge out of the laundromat and down the sidewalk.

FRANKIE

(to Eddie)

After him. You're so slow

EDDIE

CHARLIE!

INT. CAB - DAY

Janet and Charlie look back out the rear window. Frankie and Eddie run into the street.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Frankie and Eddie watch the cab drive away.

FRANKIE

He's a dead man.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

Ellen comes out of the laundromat pulling her cart and holding up a paperback book.

ELLEN

Charlie, I found it.

INT. CAB - DAY

Janet sits back in the seat.

JANET

My clothes.

Charlie sits back and looks at the bag in his hand.

CHARLIE

I'll buy you some new ones.

Janet and Charlie look at each other.

JANET

You could use a new outfit yourself,
Charlie.

Janet and Charlie look at each other for a second longer and then each turn away looking out their side windows.