

Dude was cold, though. Spoke perfect english, but still the mexican accent. 'Tuco'- pronounced 'Too-co'- sharp as a tack, just like Spud. He once told me that he'd never killed a competitor, which is strange with all the rivals their crew must've had(not that some of them didn't wind up dead, it just wasn't his job). You see, adversaries deserve your respect- though they align against you, at least you know where they stand. He said that when a member of your crew turns on you however, you move heaven and earth to make an example out of them. In rare cases, he said he would crush everything they loved- family, friends, business- and leave them around for a while to *take it all in*. Dude was cold.

Then there was Spud's girl, Natalie. Not the prettiest thing, but not at all ugly- she just never smiled. She had a sexy look about her though, and a bangin' little body. Though I didn't get to really know her until much later, I still remember the day I first saw her- the same day I met Spud.

It actually started at school. My little brother and I went to the same high school, I was in 11th grade, he was in 10th. I grew up in a medium-sized town in Southern California and for some reason, there were a lot of bullying types- and he was a bully magnet. So once in a while I'd have to

deal with that, I've got a bad temper and as such, most of the idiots stopped fucking with my brother.

But there were two Puerto Rican brothers, Raul and Zars, who were somehow both seniors(I don't know if one of the idiots got held back, or what). They weren't big dudes, but their older brother was some crazy gangster, and they pretty much rode on his reputation.

The bell rings and I'm walking to my next class when I come across my brother and a couple of his friends in the hallway. His friends were looking all disheveled picking up their books and papers off the ground, and my brother was quick to say nothing happened. Over the years, he has come to resent it when I take up his slack with some punk- to the point that he'd rather deal with it himself. His friends however, immediately told me the whole story and even told me where to find Raul and Zars next period.

They both had different classes, so I went to each one's class and smashed on him. The sissies are both threatening me with their brother while I beat them. It's funny, when you beat down some punk bully- it seems even the teachers, to some extent, are kind of torn about whether they should stop the beating. I so rarely get in fights at school anymore,

and when I do, it's some known trouble-maker, that they didn't even suspend me.

When I finally get back to class, it's the last period of the day, and everybody's talking about the beat downs. Everyone seems to think that Raul and Zars's brother, Spud, is gonna kill me. So now I've gotta hear these stories about how Spud knifed his brother's junior high teacher over disrespecting their mom(bullshit). At the time, all I do know is what the whole town knows: Spud is someone you don't want to fuck with.

I'm the type of person that when I have a problem with you, I'll be at your front door. So here I am at Spud's front door. A thick little honey(that would be Spud's girl, Natalie) answers the door and I ask for Spud. This crazy, tattooed, steroid lookin' Puerto Rican cat appears, "Whadda you want?"

"You Spud?", I ask(though I'm pretty sure that's him).

"Who're you?", he asks.

"I'm the guy beat down your brothers...and they were swingin' your name around", I said.

“So what, you came to fight me?”, he asks.

“I came to deal with your brothers’ threat”, I replied.

“I hope you brought a gun, twiggy”, he says mockingly.

“I have a knife, but I always have a knife”, I say.

“Where’re your friends?”, he asks. “Zars told me you guys jumped them one at a time cause they beat some of your gang down. Don’t tell me you came alone to my front door”.

“I beat them down- one at a time”, I say, “cause they’re bullies who picked on my little brother- I don’t know about no gang shit...None of my friends had the stones to come with me to your front door”.

“Sounds like my brothers don’t need back up, they need to learn how to fight”, he says. “Get out of here, kid”.

He closed the door and I went home. A few of my friends were there(The same pussies that were afraid to back me up) and the idiots had already told my mom that I went to confront Spud. It’s all I can do to keep from back-handing these fools for needlessly worrying my mom, but we all go back to the room to get lit.

We're taking bong hits when someone knocks on the front door. The thing is that nobody uses the front door- ever. Our back door is like our front door, so when someone knocks at the front door, we know it's a cop or something like that. My room is situated so that if you look out the window, you can see the front door- so my friend 'G' looks out to see who it is. He pulls his head back in and says "Dude, Spud's at your front door". I must've looked unconvinced, cause he said "Seriously, Spud's out there". By this time, my mom answered the door, so I looked out and told them I'd be right out.

Spud's an intimidating cat, so when he tells me to go for a ride with him, and we're walking to the car, all sorts of shit's going through my head. We drive in silence and I can soon see that we're going back to his house. I'm figuring that his brothers are still sticking to that bullshit gang fight story, and he wants to clear it up.

When we get in the house, his brothers are nowhere to be seen. He introduces me to his girl, Natalie, and his road dog, Tuco. He leaves me standing there, and goes to the back. It's strange that- I've been in some cold situations before, nothing really shakes me, but standing there for just

those couple minutes, not knowing what's going on, not sure whether I should take a seat- uncomfortable to say the least.

Spud returns from the back carrying a backpack in one hand and a triple-beam scale in the other. I'm a pretty sharp cat, so I kinda got a sense of where this was going- but outta respect, I let him make his pitch.

"When you left here earlier, I was telling my girl that if I had just a couple cats like you on my team...Unstoppable", he says. "So as the saying goes- I'm gonna make you an offer you can't refuse".

"Hey bro, all due respect...", I started to say.

"Hear me out", he interrupts. "It's no secret that I push powder. I don't fuck with rock, or crack- neither should you...the sentencing for crack sales is fucking ugly compared to powder. I can give you ounces for six hundred...If you buy by the pound, even cheaper".

"I've sold a little weed here and there, nothing major", I said, "but I don't have a market for coke, I wouldn't even know how to begin. Not to mention, if any thing went wrong, I got no means to cover any loss. I wouldn't want to risk getting on your bad side".

“Look, it’s simple”, he says. “I’ll float you an ounce, sell it in 20’s- a quarter gram for \$20- I don’t care how long it takes, but don’t front anybody. Protect your money, protect your product- you’ll be fine. If somehow you get screwed over on this first one, I’ll eat it- no biggie. But if you sold it all in 20’s, that’s over two-grand”.

He gave me a gun(.38 special) and a cheap little plastic scale, then a short tutorial on both, and gave me a ride home. I remember not saying much all the way home, just kinda stressing on the scope and gravity of my new endeavor.

After I got home and whacked up the ounce, I had over 100 *twenty dollar bindles*. Made a few calls, didn’t get no sleep, but incredibly it was gone by morning.

I stick with selling 20s for a few more rounds, everyone loves the dope-shaved right off the boulder- no cut. I start stacking cash and my friends want in, so I start fronting them quantity- *mistake*. Kinda hard to make money off some idiot that’s ducking you cause he owes you some chump change- so I’m back to the 20s. The best thing about selling the small amounts is that you make the most money off your product, the worst thing

about selling the small amounts is that you have to deal with all types of dope fiend. I remember this one junkie, Juliano. He was some kind of family to one of my best friends, so maybe he thought he could get away with pulling some bullshit story on me. His drug of choice was actually heroin, but he liked the coke I had- said when he slammed it, he could *taste the ether*. Anyways, he brings back a couple bindles talking about, "Hey fool, you sold me some similac, shit ain't right"...