

History of Sex
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Published by Babydude Press
36 Mariquita Lane
Corrales, New Mexico 87048
United States of America

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN-13: 978-1535063593

ISBN-10: 1535063599

Printed in the United States of America and Great Britain

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FADE IN:

History of Sex

INT. BEN'S GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

This is New Mexico's nastiest crack den. A telephone rings and rings.

Dim light flickers, illuminating a cramped living room piled knee-high with dirty clothes, abandoned pizza boxes, crushed beer cans, half-eaten chocolate bars, and the like.

BEN SCHREIBER (30s, crack addict) stumbles through this mess, crack pipe in his mouth, searching for the ringing phone.

BEN (V.O.)

I'm Ben. I'm the drug addict.

A troupe of zombies, including: MOVIE DIRECTOR (30s, carrying a megaphone), a JOGGER (20s, wearing an Olympic-type jogging outfit), a STOCKBROKER (40s, dressed in Armani, Hugo Boss), and a HOMELESS MAN (ageless, dressed in clothes filthier than the apartment) jerk spasmodically out of the walls and surround Ben.

He seems not to notice them.

They watch him and copy his movements as he rummages through a pile of clothes and discovers a closed umbrella.

The phone stops ringing.

Ben picks up the umbrella, examines it intently.

The zombies copy Ben, pick up their own closed umbrellas, and examine them intently.

THUNDER BOOMS. LIGHTNING CRACKLES. THE ROOM GLOWS.
RAIN BEGINS TO FALL.

Ben opens his umbrella, but it is shredded, and he is instantly drenched in rain.

The zombies open their umbrellas, which are not shredded. They look at the umbrellas, at Ben, at themselves. They seem slightly confused.

Ben takes the crack pipe from his mouth. Water pools in its bowl.

He dumps out the water, tries lighting the pipe, and then, seemingly noticing the zombies for the first time. He holds the pipe in their direction, as if asking them to light it.

The zombies back away. The rain stops.

The phone starts ringing again.

Ben, no longer wet, no longer carrying the shredded umbrella, but still with the crack pipe in his mouth, resumes his search for the phone.

He crawls over the piles of dirty clothes, across the discarded pizza boxes and the rest of the garbage.

The zombies, also no longer carrying umbrellas, follow behind.

The phone continues to ring.

Ben picks up a crushed pizza box and shakes it. Something slides around inside.

The zombies pick up their own boxes and shake them.

Ben opens the box to reveal a crumpled pack of cigarettes inside.

Ben pulls a cigarette from the pack, lights it, and inhales deeply.

The zombies do the same. They talk among themselves, as if at a party. Wine glasses appear in their hands.

Ben, cigarette still in his hand, smiles at them, picks up a half-empty bottle of beer with cigarette butts floating inside, raises it in their direction as if toasting them and downs the beer, butts and all.

The director, jogger, and stockbroker watch him, shaking their heads in disapproval.

The homeless man downs his own glass of beer.

Ben stretches out on the mound of dirty clothes and pizza boxes and closes his eyes.

The homeless man stretches out like Ben and shuts his own eyes. The director, jogger, and stockbroker continue to look disapprovingly.

Ben, breathing deeply, as if falling asleep, drops his cigarette. The homeless man drops his.

The phone stops ringing. Time passes.

Ben opens his eyes. The room is on fire. The homeless man and other zombies are gone.

Ben, the lit cigarette back in his hand, is completely unconcerned about the burning room.

He watches the fire grow larger and larger, then shrink and die out, revealing GEORGIE GUST (30s, Ben's alter ego) sitting on a matching mound of dirty clothes.

Georgie now holds the crack pipe in his hand.

GEORGIE
I thought you quit.

Ben glances nonchalantly at the cigarette in his hand.

GEORGIE (CONT'D)
They'll kill you, you know.

Ben inhales deeply.

GEORGIE (CONT'D)
Emphysema. Cancer. Heart disease.

Ben flicks the lit cigarette in Georgie's direction. Georgie, "tsk-tsking," stands, brushing at his clothes although the cigarette has not landed on him.

GEORGIE (CONT'D)
Real mature there, Ben. Just burn down whatever you don't like.
Including me.

Ben stares at Georgie for a long time.

BEN
It's Kelly.

GEORGIE
(Incredulous)
Your wife.

BEN
My wife.

HOUSEWIFE KELLY (30s, an emaciated, skin-and-bones, probably anorexic housewife zombie from the 1950s, wearing an apron, carrying a rolling pin) jerks into view.

GEORGIE
That's not your wife.

Housewife Kelly jerks out of view and is replaced by CONSERVATIVE KELLY (a clone of Grace Kelly), wearing a straight skirt below her knees, an angora sweater with clip, and sensible, flat shoes.

GEORGIE (CONT'D)
And that's not your wife.

Conservative Kelly jerks out of view and is replaced by the REAL KELLY, still a zombie, but kind of sexy, wearing a T-shirt and jeans.
Ben stares at her for several seconds.

BEN
She doesn't get me.

GEORGIE
Ah. My wife. She doesn't understand me.

Kelly flashes a "Yeah, sure" look at Georgie.

GEORGIE (CONT'D)
It's not me. It's him.

Kelly flashes the same look at Ben.

BEN
She doesn't get my . . . obsession. You know.
(beat)
She doesn't get Claudia.

CLAUDIA (poster lady for the eroticism of homeliness; old, chubby, bespectacled, pimped, chunky, brutal . . . and a vampire) undulates into view.

Ben sighs in appreciation. Kelly lifts an eyebrow. The phone resumes ringing.

Claudia notices Kelly and hisses, baring her fangs. Kelly flips her off and jerks out of view.

Claudia watches Ben as he once again looks for the phone. She approaches.

Georgie blocks her.

She stops.

Ben throws clothes from one pile to the other and pizza boxes from one end of the room to the other, as he and Georgie talk.

BEN (CONT'D)
She gets jealous.

GEORGIE
(Keeping his eye on Claudia)
Kelly?

BEN
Yeah. Kelly.
(beat)
She grills me.

The stockbroker wheels a grill into view and douses charcoal lighter on it.

Georgie frowns at him.

The stockbroker wheels the grill away.

The sound of the phone ringing fades but it still rings.

BEN (CONT'D)
Constantly.

Housewife Kelly reappears, shaking the rolling pin first at Ben and then at Claudia.

GEORGIE
Doesn't sound like the Kelly I know.

Housewife Kelly disappears; Real Kelly reappears, looking slightly amused.

BEN
And all she is, all Claudia is—was—is an obsession. You know?

Claudia frowns and begins to fade out. Ben fingers his crotch.

BEN (CONT'D)
A goddamn good one.

Claudia wavers back into view.

Kelly fingers her own crotch.

GEORGIE
And what's Kelly? Chopped . . .?

The movie director appears, carrying a meat cleaver. Claudia's image is clearer.

GEORGIE (CONT'D)
(To movie director)
No.

The movie director disappears.

BEN
There was no one like Claudia.

Claudia is crystal clear.

Ben is practically masturbating. Kelly imitates him, but tauntingly. Claudia wavers.

The phone ringing fades back in.

The movie director appears and begins fondling Kelly; she responds, but she keeps looking at Ben, taunting him.

Ben notices and stops fingering himself. Claudia fades out.

GEORGIE
And no one like Kelly, Ben.

The phone ringing gets louder.

GEORGIE (CONT'D)
You don't watch out, she'll leave. Just like Claudia.

Ben looks distracted. Annoyed. Georgie disappears.

Ben resumes looking for the phone. It blares unbearably.

As before, he throws everything in the room from one side to the other.

Phone RINGS & BLARES & HOLLERS.

BEN
(Holding his ears)
Goddamn phone.

The phone ringing morphs into a POLICE SIREN.

The zombies—all of them, including Kelly—reappear. Georgie reappears, but this time, he, too, is a zombie.

One by one, they slip “Sniper/Men in Black” gear over their costumes, and then clip guns and police batons to one another’s new uniforms.

Ben shrieks (not necessarily out loud) in terror as the zombies turn on him.

He races away. Over the clothes. The pizza boxes.

ROLL OPENING TITLES

EXT. ALBUQUERQUE ALLEY - NIGHT

Ben races alone through an alley lined with metal garbage cans and dumpsters.

BEN (V.O.)

I’m Ben. I’m the mental illness. I am that which I am Not.

The Story Continues