

Snow white and the seven bloody garden gnomes

A short tapping sound followed by a light squeak. Henry knows what time it is. Two little doors are pushed aside and there is his trusted cuckoo.

Cuckoo – Cuckoo – Cuckoo – Cuckoo – Cuckoo – Cuckoo

Cuckoo – Cuckoo – Cuckoo – Cuckoo.

'Há, ten o'clock, trash my ass, it's running like a freaking Jamaican!'

With a satisfied grin on his face Henry reaches down to grab a can of beer and places it against his lips. The tab scrapes audible against the inside of his front teeth. Swig, gulp. Aaahhh', 'The corners of his mouth shoot towards the gray, pink sky and with the back of his hand he spreads the foam through his feral gray mustache.

'Oooh, ' he wiggles his himself in the most comfortable position the with moss overgrown garden chair lets him. Ready for his battle.

The first snow flakes fall and prove the world radio, which he has clamped between his knees, right.

' Weather alarm. Há, 1963, that was a freaking cold year. Those bloody weathermen will give a weather alarm when they open up their fridge. Poofs. '

Henry licks some snowy beer from his cold lips, the lips of a dead man, and looks at the letter that he holds in his hand one more time before he puts it back in his pocket.

"Hygienic House InspectionDear Sir ... " ' Dear Sir my Godforsaken ass. '

"Junk.....clearing .. forced ... Danger to public health. "

'Há, danger to public health, ' I haven't seen a dead rat in years! '

" clean out the house and garden between 10: 00 and 14: 00.."

' Brainless bullshit! They will have to get past me first!

Henry opens another can and takes in the view of collected items. Bikes that he has saved from the garbage and that he still wants to refurbish, some day. He and his wife used to go cycling all the time. Hours of fresh air and chitchat. Love and sweat increasing with every

pedal stroke.

There are car tires lying around, as good as new. His wife used to hate cars until she got to sick to ride the bike. Furniture, slowly eaten away by the weather. Paintings that his wife would have find so beautiful. Toys for the children that they have never had. Some handy tools that can serve as a weapon when the inspection arrives.

Snow is falling faster and in larger flakes. The worn down grass slowly disappears under him and turns into a white carpet that creeps in the holes of his shoes. Two beer cans and eleven cuckoo's later the radio tells him the whole country is under the spell of the extreme weather.

' Godforsaken wimps, It's just getting comfortable. '

Henry cracks the knuckles of his left hand where L-O-V-E is tattooed on and does the same for the letters H-A-T-E on his right. He blows a small cloud and opens a next can. He raises his can as a toast to a collection of garden gnomes that are standing next to the cuckoo clock.

' Bloody garden gnomes. '

His gaze lingers on the ugliest gnome of the seven. It is the only female one and a true monster with its chubby cheeks and thick red lips from a girl six year old girl that has put on make-up for the first time or from a seventy-six year old prostitute. Full breasts fill her tight dress. A Lovelorn stare hangs between the eyes of the monster and that of the now shivering old man.

Henry casts his empty can besides him, on top of the others that are now covered with snow, opens a new one and says with affected voice:

' Cheers treasure. '

Outside the garden a man walk by. His head withdrawn in his collar, hiding for the snow flakes that are now really crashing in. Between the hitting flakes the man and Henry have short eye contact. The man then quickly looks away as if he has just seen his own conscience.

Little Paul. Henry knows the guy. Little Paul used to come by to a lot when he was still little and Henry's wife was still alive. The kid played in their garden for hours straight.

The grown up kid surely forgot and probably only knows him as most people know him now;

that crazy old fool.

' Godforsaken thankless shithead, ' murmurs Henry between his frozen lips.

Twelve cuckoo's and eight cans of beer later Henry's bladder is whining like a little kid in a candy store. Henry thinks of punching it but puts the radio down instead and gets up, his head spinning. He squeezes his eyes hard, in the hope those yellow flashes in front of him will disappear; they do and black marks appear.

He sweeps the snow from his legs and groans; ' this Godforsaken rickety body. '

It keeps snowing harder and Henry has to struggle to find the way in his own garden. A rusty old bird cage at his feet tells him that he is on the right side of his garden. A great place for a great piss. With one pale hand, blue veins cutting through, he opens up his zipper and with the other he struggles loose his button.

Looking down he growls: ' We are not going to be shy all of a sudden, huh? '

In white snow, yellow choppy letters appear and form the name MaRIe. Henry staggers back, intoxicated and hypothermic, and takes in his art, his work of honour. Shuffling back he picks up the hideous gnome and plants it, together with the small radio, on his lap. The voice between his legs tells him that they are dealing with the worst snowstorm of the past thirty years.

' That...that won't stop me from defending my property, ' Henry growls while a opening a next can of beer.

' Over my dead, godforsaken body they won't. Right Marie? '

Henry slaps himself, with flat hand, in the face a few times to dissipate the stinging cold. He punches himself on the shoulders. He smashes his own face; releasing anger, getting warm, making sure he's still alive. Blood fills his throat and mustache.

He enjoys it like Frosty the mental vampire and gargles:

' Damn ssnowes. '

Cuckoo.

Henry puts the pack with remaining beers on his lap, gently like they are his newborn octuplets. The alcohol is no longer sufficient to heat his body and his shivering continuously.

Almost inaudible whisper sounds between his blue running lips. A whisper meant for the

garden gnome stuck under his arm.

' It..it all started with ... you M.Marie. '

Henry salutes the seven garden gnomes that are now buried to their necks and mumbles with a drifting and distorted voice: ' I could ... not ... in the garden ... leave you alone.. M.Marie. Everything here is, everything in house... re ... reminds me fyou, every thing we had, may have had. They are coming to g..g.g.get you. That bloody ... over my dead bbbody. '

The voice on the radio tells that it is not recommended to go on the road.

' Do you think I'm gonna ssit in the middle of the the street, ' it sounds mockingly between the chattering teeth of the old man.

The lower part of Henry his body feels numb. He lays his fingers his wrist, searching for a pulse. He finds one; crawling by.

' Won't ... beat ... me. '

With some difficulty Henry opens up another can. The two cuckoo's that follow float by as white noise. The voice on the radio, who tells that all major roads have been closed and further traffic today is impossible, doesn't find Henry. Old man autopilot drinking.

Henry's legs, shoulders and mind are full of snow. The six garden gnomes on the ground are fully covered with a thick white layer. All items, all valuable memories buried under a layer of snow.

Gradually the wind lowers and snowflakes are swirling dainty again. The pain slowly leaves Henry his eyes and returns in his legs. The sun hits it's beams trough clouds and illuminates the face of Marie.

Henry looks around him at the white blanket and feels something he hasn't felt in years; calmness. The garden seems empty. His head seems empty. He empty's his last can, throws it besides him and mumbles with a satisfied smile:

' Just you and me Marie, just you and me. '

The voice on the radio sounds:

' ... here and there a temporary lull, but tomorrow everything might change. '