

Marla and Tyler: A Sick and Twisted Love Story

I first met Tyler at “Above and Beyond”, a support group for brain parasites. I don’t have brain parasites, and neither does he, but that’s where we met. I had seen him before at other support groups, and he never used his real name. He would always glare at me, as if I was intruding on him or something. I’ve dated a lot of weird guys before, guys that liked to cross-dress, guys that couldn’t get enough body piercings, but Tyler takes the cake.

We had our first conversation at “Above and Beyond.” It wasn’t a pleasant one. He couldn’t handle having me around at all his support groups. I was invading his space, he told me. He was being such an ass. He threatened to expose me, to tell everyone at the support groups that I didn’t really have brain parasites or ascending bowel cancer or whatever else. That wasn’t going to work – I could expose him just as easily. We decided to take turns going to support groups. We decided that was the only way we could handle the issue. I played his little game for a while, but then I decided to cheat. I thought I’d show up at one of *his* support groups, just to piss him off. But he wasn’t there. Tyler had stopped going to all of his support groups, the fucker. God, I was angry. Who knows how long I’d been missing out.

One night, I just got sick of everything. I grabbed my bottle of Xanax pills and ate the rest of them. I just thought I’d drift off peacefully and never have to worry about my shit job, my crappy apartment, or anything ever again. I didn’t really want to commit suicide, I was just bored, I guess. I was just about to fall asleep forever when you-know-who

called. Tyler Durden. That crazy, crazy Tyler. I can't even remember what we talked about, but before I knew it – he was knocking on my door. I was really loopy, could hardly stand up. We took the bus back to his place – a rickety old wooden house on Paper Street. He would have to keep me awake all night, I told him, or I would die. So, he did, in that perverted Tyler way. Over and over. He was great though, must've had the Kama Sutra memorized from cover to cover. He was being really nice, until the next morning when he threw me out. Typical man.

Tyler had several different jobs. He was an office worker, a film projectionist, a banquet waiter, and also sold his homemade soap – The Paper Street Soap Company. I thought that was why he was so cranky sometimes, but it turns out his problems were more deep-seated than that. He sent me to the store once for lye, which was one of the ingredients in his soap. I spotted something pretty strange at the store: 100% Recycled Toilet Paper. The worst job in the whole world must be recycling toilet paper. Yuck. Tyler was really only nice to me when we were sleeping together, and after that, he would most likely kick me out of the house. I think we were really getting on each other's nerves. Most couples call each other "sweetie" or "pumpkin." Me and Tyler, we called each other "Human Butt-Wipe."

So, I was stockpiling bags of my mom's liposuctioned fat (for collagen implants) in Tyler's freezer, right? I had saved up nearly 28 pounds of it when I found out that Tyler-Butt-Wipe-for-Brains-Asshead had stolen it all to make soap. He made a small fortune off it, too! I was so mad, I was ready to kill the little shit. He kept saying, "It wasn't

me, it was Tyler. It wasn't me, it was Tyler." I guess that's about the first time he started to lose it, referring to himself in the third-person and everything. What a nutcase. He boiled my mother into soap. He just ran off and disappeared that night. I could've killed him.

After that, I didn't see Tyler much anymore. I forgave him for the whole collagen thing, but he just wasn't himself anymore. I called him once because I thought I found a lump in my tit, and I don't have health insurance so I just wanted someone else to make sure. We ended up finding two lumps, and I went to a clinic, but I decided to hell with it. If I'm gonna die, I'm gonna die. No use worrying about it, right? So, I got a job at the mortuary, you know, to make myself feel better. The first time I ever filled an urn, I didn't wear a mask. So, when I blew my nose, I had black snot from it.

Tyler started doing the whole Paper Street Soap Company thing full-time. He even hired a few new guys who all wore black clothes and had shaved heads. "Space Monkeys," he called them. Most of them had bruises, broken teeth, etc. Really beat-up looking. I don't even want to know why. We took walks through his flower garden, which they planted for the soap's natural fragrance. He was obviously way overstaffed, some of those guys did nothing but scrub the kitchen all day. And they were living there, too. Tyler put up some bunk beds in the basement for them. Every day, for a while, there were new applicants waiting on his porch. Completely and utterly devoted to Tyler. I asked him what he was going to do with all these guys. He said he didn't know. It turns out he was lying.

Tyler had to go out of town on business for a few days. He called me to check up on things at Paper Street Soap Company. Everything seemed to be running fine, more and more recruits were shaving their heads, making soap, scrubbing the house, and god-knows-what-else. Tyler must have been making a fortune on his soap to be able to pay all these guys.

He called me again a few days later and asked me if we'd ever done it, slept together, had sex. Okay, now he's really lost it. That crazy son-of-a-bitch. Christ, what kind of stupid question is that, anyway? He asked me how we met. Yadda. Yadda. Yadda. Then asked me to say his name. Tyler Durden. Tyler Durden. Tyler Butt-Wipe-for-Brains Durden. He thinks he's someone else. He told me his name was Tyler Durden the night he saved my life. I guess I just believed him. You can't trust anyone these days.

When he got back, I told him we needed to talk. We went to Denny's. Our waiter and a few other people were bald and beat-up looking. The waiter tells us we can eat for free, so I ordered a whole bunch of stuff. He tried to explain to me that he wasn't really Tyler Durden. He even showed me a driver's license with a different name. He said he's only Tyler when he's asleep. I didn't quite understand it at the time. He wanted me to keep him awake, so he wouldn't turn into Tyler again. And if he did fall asleep, he wanted me to follow him everywhere and keep track of the things he did. He was absolutely fucking crazy.

I managed to keep him awake for a night or two, but then he had to go to work and I lost track of him. I caught up with him at the Pressman Hotel. It was murder mystery dinner night, and Tyler had his waiter job there. He was supposed to be the “murderer.” Only his psychotic ass used real bullets. He killed the guy. I couldn’t believe the guy I was dating was a murderer. Then he disappeared again. He called me later that night and said to meet him at the Trinity Episcopal church where we first met. It was bowel cancer night. I was very angry, but I said okay. Then, I called the police and told them they could find Tyler there. We had a big argument in front of the group, but the police never came. He told me to watch out for space monkeys, that he was going to “take care of Tyler Durden” and disappeared, again.

The next night, I followed him to the Parker Morris building. He had a gun. I called the Trinity Episcopal church and gathered as many support group people as I could. Tyler’s space monkeys were trying to blow up the building. Tyler was suicidal. We all went up to the roof of the building. Police helicopters were circling the building, fires ablaze, and Tyler was sticking a gun in his mouth.

“It’s not love or anything,” I yelled to him, “but I think I like you too.

“You like Tyler.” he said.

“No, I like you.” I replied. I knew the difference now.

He pulled the trigger.

He’s still alive, in the state mental institution. I probably won’t see him any time soon.

God, I miss his crazy ass.