

# Betrayed Biking

Short Story Contest - August 2022

## Cast

Ray

Danielle

Smith

Jean-Claude

Laura

Martin

Kevin

After Smith and Danielle begin fucking, Ray meanders back to Martin's house, unlocks his bike, and rides back to the eastside with tears streaming down his face.

Andrew R. Hairston

# Dear Diary

Ray picked up some of the residual cocaine off the ~~night stand~~ ~~stage~~ and placed it on his upper and lower gums. Danielle smiled as he did so, and then she sang a verse of the song project she'd been telling him about. He laid back and assumed a comfortable position on the bed. As she lifted her voice up, she inched slightly closer but ~~never~~ <sup>did not</sup> touched him. She finished, he clapped, she grabbed the straw to snort another line, and he snort deeper into the ~~pillow~~ <sup>pillow</sup> that was propping him up. They met two weeks prior to that moment as one typically meets new folks on the weekends in Austin. Tripped on acid. Ray called his buddy Kevin in a fit of restlessness and told him that he had a couple tabs left over from a previous trip. Kevin enthusiastically agreed, and Ray grabbed his bike to head over to Kevin's spot on Salina. Given the existence of Kevin's son's roommate Ray leaned the bike on the side of the house rather than lock it. Ray stepped inside as he had done one hundred times, and her brilliant grin greeted him. 'Hey love - how are you doing?' Kevin hadn't indicated that anyone else was with him, but Ray didn't mind Danielle's presence at all. He felt a connection that he'd only been experiencing with med. as of late. Ray took his usual seat on the sectional couch, and the conversation with Danielle took over in the best way. Even though she expressed her opposition to the COVID-19 vaccine - which somewhat threw Ray off - they quickly bonded over ~~to their~~ shared bisexuality and interest in struggles for Black power. Ray eventually pulled out the LSD tabs at Kevin's request. Ray nearly forgot about his friend in the midst of the kaleidoscopic colors in front of him, made even more vivid by the captivating aura of Danielle. Nothing happened during night



first night they spent together - but - to cap off a glorious introduction they left Kevin's house around 7 am and biked down E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, staying together until she veered right on Pleasant Valley. Ray continued just past Airport <sup>and</sup> arrived to his home with a burst of energy and Danielle heavily on the brain. \* The weeks that flowed from that introduction revealed as many similarities between Ray and Danielle as points of divergence. Danielle met Kevin at a bar near the Domain, they began fucking soon thereafter and she decided to stop that arrangement the night she met Ray. Ray sought a relationship immediately, and Danielle hoped to pump the brakes on a series of rapidly successive courtships. They landed on a compromise that entailed meeting up at Ray's house, enjoying an assortment of drugs - typically shrooms and G - and discussing how a relationship might proceed between them. Danielle shared that she had a seven-year-old son one week after the first acid trip. Due to familial disagreements about her drug use, her mother gained custody of her son right after he finished the first grade. During the second acid trip, which occurred a night before, they conversed about their mutual interest in exploring polyamory. They both admitted how new the concept was to them, and they <sup>with the wishy-washy intention</sup> informally agreed to remain celibate as they approached the two-month mile stone of knowing one another. So here they were, deep in the possibility of a new romance, fully taking in the intoxicating power of the drugs they shared and the physical proximity of one to the other. \* The weeks steadily proceeded as Ray and Danielle got to know <sup>each other</sup> and they found themselves navigating an unseasonably cool weekend in May.

After that revelation, he sent her \$100 in solidarity



Ray's gracious new neighbors - Jean-Claude and  
Laura - invited him and Laura to a concert off  
of Menchaca. Jean-Claude approached Ray  
at another neighbor's potluck near the beginning  
of the year. The two men connected effortlessly. Jean-  
Claude introduced Ray to Laura, his wife of six  
months, and they let this new friendship take off.  
With this elegant French-American couple, Ray  
explored Austin staples from the Barton Creek  
Malb to Home Slice Pizza. With Danielle by  
his side, he was ready for another adventure with  
them. 'My love - a wild thought - what if we  
biked over to that concert on Menchaca? Ray  
posed the question as Danielle finished rubbing  
the last of the cake on her gums. 'Sure baby -  
let's just leave about half an hour earlier than  
we would to give ourselves enough time.' She  
expressed her assent as she planted a gentle kiss  
on his lips. The tingle of the cocaine and the  
electricity between them elevated Ray's mood  
even more. They decided to bike all the way  
down E. 12th Street to I-35. They alternated  
taking the lead as they glided down the I-35  
service road eventually taking a right on 12th  
Street. They cruised down the thoroughfare, appreciating  
it in the calmer hours before the nighttime activity  
takes over. More than several blocks down the  
road, they reached Lamar meaning they were  
more than halfway there. They stopped outside  
of the original Whale Foods noting an oddly  
empty pavilion. 'My love, follow me.' Danielle  
entirely grabbed Ray's hand. They locked  
their bikes and proceeded to the second level  
of the store's outdoor seating arrangement. Ray  
lanced at Danielle, watching the sun reflect off  
her chocolate skin. She reached into one of the pockets  
of her flowing dress and pulled out a small bag of coke (3)



'Babe, you are so sneaky,' Ray said as he moved in to embrace her. She pulled out her keys and they both did a couple bumps. Feeling the rush of such a high, both of them recognized a sense of effortlessness from the other. They also recognized the thrill of being ~~with one~~ <sup>on the</sup> precipice of so many possibilities. They held each other for a bit longer and then they nodded to indicate their willingness to continue the journey. The path from Lanas to Menchaca seemed exceptionally easy with the wind provided by a few bumps of ocean ~~xxx~~ The venue ends ~~up~~ <sup>up</sup> being right down the street from Radio ~~Bay~~ Ray and Danielle found spots for their bikes just in time to spot Jean-Claude and Laura walking up. 'Ray, what's up man? Good to see you - and this must be Danielle,' Jean-Claude greeted them with his characteristic warmth. The four of them exchanged introductory hugs soon thereafter. Ray and Danielle stepped inside the home right after Jean-Claude and Laura entered the threshold. Several falls spread out across the space, with glasses of red wine in hand, set the mood for an intimate concert. Ray only needed to look at Danielle and witness a subtle head nod to know that he ~~needed~~ <sup>should</sup> retrieve two glasses of wine for them. Ray navigated the moderate crowd for less fearful of the risk of contracting COVID-19 than he'd been a year ago. He arrived in the kitchen just in time to see a handsome man pull two glasses down from a cabinet. Ray must've stayed for longer than he'd intended because the man's introduction almost escaped him. 'Hey, I'm Martin. Welcome to my home.' Ray snapped out of the short trance long enough to extend his hand. 'Hey, I'm Ray - no chance you could grab one more glass?'



'Who are I getting it for?' Martin asked with a smile.  
'This woman I came with - Danielle,' Ray replied.  
'Is she your girlfriend?' Martin inquired - paired with a look that Ray often employed when he flirted.  
'Not yet,' Ray said with a mixture of confidence and intrigue.  
Ray felt a hand on the small of his back - Jean-Claude's face appeared in front of them. 'Something told me that you two would meet before I got the opportunity to properly introduce y'all. Ray, Martin and I have been friends for <sup>over</sup> ~~over~~ <sup>forty</sup> ~~forty~~ <sup>five</sup> years - this is home,' Jean-Claude explained as Ray and Martin extended their hands to each other to enliven the formal introduction. 'Martin, out a few more glasses of wine and ~~what~~ us in the living room.' Jean-Claude said as he walked off. 'Well, you need help with those,' Ray asked. 'Sure, I'll use your assistance,' Martin said with a grin, placing the glasses in Ray's hands as he did so. The two then walked into the living room, and Ray immediately noticed Danielle chatting with a moderately handsome white man. Ray came to her side, and she briefly greeted. 'Oh Ray, this is Smith - Smith, this is Ray,' over with the standard greeting, something told Ray ~~old~~ <sup>old</sup> back a bit. Following the handshake, he <sup>handed</sup> ~~put~~ one of the glasses of wine to Danielle. 'Ah, looks like we're one short - Smith, do you want to come with me to get your glass?' she said. Smith certainly did not ~~part~~ <sup>part</sup>, and he and Danielle were in the kitchen as the band began their set. Ray leaned on a wall, before he could linger on the slight unease, Martin came up right beside him, connecting his ~~last~~ <sup>last</sup> to Ray's. The <sup>genre</sup> of blues and jazz enveloped the room. At some point Ray noticed Smith and Danielle to the left of him and Martin. The tunes ~~shaped~~ <sup>shaped</sup> me doubt. Ray felt a revival of that ~~undescribable~~ <sup>undescribable</sup> spirit that brought him to Austin four years prior and that had kept him there since - in the company of stunningly beautiful people.



\*\*\*

Two hours swiftly passed by, and the six partygoers stood in a circle for at least half an hour after the last song. Ray didn't know exactly what it was, but now it seemed like the ease of the evening had never left him.

There appeared to be some sort of dynamic flow as the conversation jumped from topic to topic.

~~As the occupiers of the house dwindled,~~  
Almost an hour after the concert, Danielle expressed what felt like a group thought.

'Do y'all want to go to Radio Bar to get a few drinks?'  
Everyone nodded in unison. ~~Everyone~~ <sup>The six of them</sup> gathered their things and moved toward the entrance. Ray went to put his arm around Danielle's

shoulder but she swiftly walked ahead with Smith.

Not even five minutes later they all took comfortable seats under a large tree. Smith opened a tab and kept the PAs flowing. Ray sat near Martin with Danielle and Smith in eyesight. Martin leaned in after getting his third refill. 'I've been

watching your <sup>gaze</sup> eyes jump from me to Danielle all evening. Ray now noticed a countenance with elevated determination. 'Well, I am bi'

Ray said it both coyly and with an inquisitive hook. 'Well, I don't love labels, but I guess bisexuality comes closest to describing how my attraction works.'

Martin responded. Ray perked up. Jean-Claude and Laura suddenly stood. 'Lovely people, I have a work presentation on Monday that I need to start,' she said.

Jean-Claude smiled at all of them

The bikes could stay in front of Martin's house.



Have some  
whiskey  
I'd like  
y'all to  
try.

They all rose to properly say goodbye, and then  
the four remaining folks looked ~~at one~~ <sup>around</sup>. 'I know Martin's  
place is right down the street, but so is mine.' <sup>just south of 71</sup> Smith said.  
That sounds like a move. Danielle responded  
she looked at Ray and quickly winked. As good as  
he felt in that moment, he couldn't remember why  
he'd sensed any discomfort. 'I'm down,' said Ray. 'Me  
too,' Martin replied. All four of them - sufficiently  
tipsy and content - walked half a mile from Radio  
Bar to Smith's home. Smith unlocked his front  
door and revealed a comfortable earth-toned living  
room. 'Feel free to relax ~~make yourselves~~ on the couch - I'll make  
the drinks,' Smith exclaimed. Ray, Danielle, and  
Martin assumed relatively close positions on  
the sectional couch. Ray sat in the middle  
of them and extended his arms across both sets of  
shoulders. They heard Gregory Porter enter the  
space through a nearby speaker box. Smith  
reappeared, expertly balancing four cups of whiskey.  
He placed them on coasters and then took a seat  
next to Danielle. The four of them almost swayed  
together as the conversation shifted from the concert,  
to music more broadly to dating to sex. Ray had been  
interested in group sex for a while, and each  
passing moment seemingly brought him closer to  
the fulfillment of his desire. Smith turned off the  
speakers and turned on his smart TV. He chose a series  
of Brykah Badie videos. Ray now perceived him as  
a particularly soulful white man.

\* with  
an emphasis  
on  
preferences.



Martin stood and beckoned for Ray to follow him. Ray <sup>closed the</sup> settled on the front door and leaned on it. Martin looked him squarely in the eyes. 'I have to go. I don't want to give you the wrong impression - I've had a wonderful time this evening - but I'm not ready for this,' Martin said. As he finished, he ~~leaned in~~ <sup>stepped</sup> closer to Ray and kissed him for five seconds. The gesture seemed both hopeful and final. 'I hope you enjoy the rest of the night with Smith and Danielle,' Martin concluded. He walked off to a car - an Uber that he must've subtly called. Ray barely processed it before he was back in the couch. Danielle and Smith remained in an embrace. The possibilities of the evening still existed. 'It's pretty late - should we go to bed?' Smith asked. Danielle just smiled. 'Sure, let me just go to the restroom,' Ray said. He went down the hall to relieve himself in somewhat of a daze. As he turned on the sink, he heard thumping. 'Harder - harder - harder!' Danielle screamed. Ray prepared himself for the scene he was about to witness in the living room. He stepped back into the hall, taking a few seconds to realize they weren't in the common area. The sounds came from a closed door to Ray's left. Ray almost thought to check if it was locked, but he decided against it. He went to the entrance, grabbed his shoes and ~~quietly left~~ <sup>proceeded onto the sidewalk</sup>.  
(refer to conclusion or intro page)