

SMALL WHEELS

A Park Bench Play

by

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SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY.

A young man on a skateboard wheels on,
performs a couple of spins and tricks.

BOARDER

Awesome!

Slaps board, spins and starts to exit.
A bag lady slowly pushes on her over-
stuffed shopping cart. The Boarder has
to veer off to avoid her as he exits.
Her face held low, she screams.

LADY

Jimmy Henry, damn you!

The bag lady keeps pushing towards off
but is stopped when the Boarder returns
and stops in front of her, snapping his
board into his hand.

BOARDER

What'd you call me?

LADY

Out! Out! Outta my road.

BOARDER

Ain't yours. Ain't nobody's and it's mine too.

LADY

Jimmy Henry, damn you. Jimmy Henry, damn you.

She turns her cart around to flee the
opposite direction. The Board wheels in
front of her again.

BOARDER

You don't know me. Who the fuck are you?

LADY

Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry. Jimmy Henry.

She turns to go another way. He stops
her again.

BOARDER
 How you know my name? Who the fuck are you to know my name.

She takes bundle of thin grocery bags and flails the air around her, trying to shoo him away.

LADY
 Damn you, damn you.

She connects with him, knocking his board from his hands.

BOARDER
 Hey, that's my stick. My stick!

As he retrieves his board, she tries to escape another direction but he grabs the front of cart and pulls it toward him, yanking her with him.

LADY
 You can't do that to me, Jimmy Henry, not no more, not no ever.

She tugs at her cart, but he won't let go.

BOARDER
 How you know my name? I don't know you. I never seen you.
 (Lets go of her cart)
 You just a fuck up old bitch. You screwy old bitch don't know me.

LADY
 I won't forgive you Jimmy Henry, not ever, ever, ever.

BOARDER
 Hey, you ran into me. You fuckin' attacked me.

LADY
 I know what you did, I know and I know you know and I ain't never, never, never, never.

She turns to go again, but he rolls to in front of her again.

BOARDER
 You never, never, never, what? What? Huh? What?

LADY
 You did that to me. You did that. Did that, did that, you did.

BOARDER

I ain't done did shit to you. Look at you, you old fucked up old bitch. I wouldn't do nothing to you if you paid me. Paid me big time and then I still wouldn't.

She yanks away her cart and give it a shove. The old lady drops her head and just stands there, beaten. Beaten. She mumbles, low, soft and long and sing-song.

LADY

Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry. Jimmy Henry ain't no good. Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry wish he could.

BOARDER

What? What you saying about me?

LADY

Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry. Jimmy Henry don't know squat. Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry can't do twat.

BOARDER

Fuck I can't. I can do any bitch I want. I did Debbie Sue, fucking Mary Elder and that little bitch, Dana. Did her a lot.

The Boarder rolls circles around the Lady, taunting her by careening closer, braking and sliding as close as he can get. She doesn't move.

LADY

You ain't done Becky Tunney, twice.

BOARDER

You don't talk about my mother!

(He raises his board to threaten her.)

You talk about my mother and I gonna squash you in. Roll you flatter than...

LADY

You're mother's...

BOARDER

I'll do it, you old bitch, I'll do it.

LADY

You did me Jimmy Henry, damn you. You did me.

BOARDER

You crazy. I don't even know you and I never...

LADY

You knocked me down, you knocked me up. You knocked me up,
Jimmy Henry, damn you, damn you.

BOARDER

I'm outta her, bitch, you stone dead in the brain. My daddy
told me never mess with the stone dead one, they get you and
then you stone dead in the brain too. My daddy...

LADY

Jimmy Henry, damn your daddy, damn your daddy, damn your
daddy.

BOARDER

Yeah, he's a Jimmy Henry. I got his name, so what?

She looks up for the first time.

LADY

Got his name?

She reaches up to touch his face.

BOARDER

Keep you fuckin' hands off me.

LADY

Got his eyes. Got Jimmy Henry's eyes.

The Boarder stands motionless a moment
while the Lady looks him in the eyes.

LADY

Real pretty eyes. Big autumn moons when you smile. Shine and
twinkle like fireflies on a hot night.

BOARDER

Daddy said my mother used to say that, say that about my
daddy's eyes. How you know that?

LADY

Had voice that rippled like creek water when he sang, running
from high note to high note like skater daters across the
ripples around a rock.

BOARDER

Yeah, he sang. Not that I heard him much, but I heard him.

LADY

You Jimmy Henry?

BOARDER

Yeah, I'm Jimmy Henry. Junior. The real one is my daddy. My
real daddy.

LADY
He doing okay?

BOARDER
Okay, if being dead is okay.

LADY
Jimmy Henry dead?

BOARDER
Fifteen years... sixteen...or something.

LADY
He's gone?

BOARDER
No he's sitting right over there, you can't see him?

She looks where he points.

LADY
Where Jimmy Henry?

BOARDER
Where? Where, you fucking stupid or something? He's dead. He ain't nowhere, fucking nowhere for ever and fucking ever.

LADY
Is is damned? Jimmy Henry damned?

BOARDER
No he ain't damned! Grandma said the words before the burned him up in that creamery thing place.

LADY
He's ashes?

BOARDER
What'd you think, they burned him didn't they. Put him in a wooden casket and burned him and the whole thing.

LADY
You see him go in?

BOARDER
No, I didn't. I didn't want to see something like that. You're crazy. I'm going.

LADY
Get my cart.

BOARDER
Get your own fucking cart.

LADY

I got something in it for you.

BOARDER

I don't want nothing you got in that heap of garbage on wheels... Is it money?

LADY

Better than money.

BOARDER

You are crazy. Nothing is better than money. What is it?

LADY

You don't want to see it.

BOARDER

No, I don't. Ah fuck.

He retrieves the cart and pushes it in front of her. She digs through to the bottom, handing bags of whatever to him as she digs.

LADY

Be careful with that.

BOARDER

Phah! It smells like... Hey this ain't what it smell like is it?

LADY

I don't know. What's it smell like?

BOARDER

Shit. It smells like shit.

LADY

Maybe it is, maybe it isn't.

He throws the bags down. She pulls up a tattered old satchel, a valise, leather briefcase, whatever it was, it is now difficult to tell.

BOARDER

That where you keep the good shit? Get it? Good... Shit.

She opens the bag and carefully pulls out a large envelope and from that a single folded picture. She hands it to him. He unfolds it, looks and looks back at the Lady.

BOARDER

Hey, that's picture of my mom. Where'd you get that? How'd you get my mom's picture?

LADY

I had it a long time.

BOARDER

How'd you get it?

LADY

Jimmy Henry, damn, Jimmy Henry.

BOARDER

Fuck saying that. How'd you get my mom's picture?

LADY

Jimmy Henry...

BOARDER

Fuck, stop it. How'd you get my mom's fucking picture?

LADY

Jimmy Henry gave it to me.

BOARDER

Why'd he do that?

LADY

Wanted me to see it.

BOARDER

Why'd he want that?

LADY

Wanted me to see how pretty she was.

BOARDER

Damn pretty, best pretty woman ever lived.

LADY

Best pretty woman ever lived.

BOARDER

Don't you say that... unless you...

LADY

Mean it?

BOARDER

Yeah.

LADY

Mean it.

BOARDER
You said you had something for me.

LADY
You want it?

BOARDER
Can I?

LADY
Yeah. If you want.

BOARDER
Yeah, sort of. Yeah.

LADY
You let me go?

BOARDER
I'm not keeping you. I'm not touching you.

She picks up her bags and puts them into her cart. After a bit, he helps her.

LADY
You seen it before?

BOARDER
No. Nothing, never.

LADY
You like her eyes?

BOARDER
Yeah, course. They're nice.

LADY
Just nice?

BOARDER
They're pretty.

LADY
Pretty than Jimmy Henry's... than your daddy's?

BOARDER
Yeah, sure, lots. They're my mom's. Sure.

The Lady pushes her cart towards the exit. The Board rolls in front of her.

LADY
You ain't stopping me, Jimmy Henry, damn, damn, Jimmy Henry.

BOARDER

No, no, I ain't. You go on.

She exits.

LADY

Jimmy Henry, Jimmy Henry, I ain't damning you no more.

She exits.

The Boarder spins a couple of times,
stops, looks at the picture, put it in
his pocket, spins again and rolls off
in the opposite direct of the Lady.

THE END

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