

DIGGER

by James Timothy Peters

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EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - DUSK

MAN is carrying a case of some sort, walks up to a fairly large hole and jumps down into it. The hole is about two feet deep.

MAN begins to unzip the case, brings out and sets up a video camera near the edge of the hole.

The BODY is in the background sitting up against a tree. It is draped with a sheet with duct tape around its neck and waist.

While MAN is taking a drink from his whiskey bottle, the BODY begins to slide down the side of tree startling the MAN.

MAN

Shit...what was that?

MAN steps out of hole and walks toward the BODY. With a remote control MAN stops the camera from recording. The camera beeps and stops recording.

MAN props BODY back against the tree then walks back and jumps into the hole.

MAN aims remote at camera. Camera beeps and begins to record.

MAN

(looking into camera)

Good evening America. I'm back behind my trailer, some 30 yards away. It's 8:20 and I'm drunk.

MAN begins to chuckle, but then realizes the camera is tipping over.

Camera beeps and shuts off.

MAN grabs camera and figgits with it.

Camera beeps and begins to record again.

MAN (cont'd)

Sorry about that. Here, let me...

MAN adjusts the camera again.

MAN (CONT'D)

...that should do it. Anyway, here I am doing a favor - a big favor. I've got to...

(CONTINUED)

MAN stares into the camera and points behind himself towards the BODY.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
...you know - bury it.

MAN takes a swig from his whiskey bottle.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But that's my job. I'm a "digger".
Any time, any day - I'll be right
here. (pause) Twenty four hours a
day, seven days a week. I even work
holidays! You hear me?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Yeah I hear ya! Now shut the hell
up!

MAN creeps up to the camera and whispers to it.

MAN
(hush voice)
You see, America? No respect.

MAN steps back away from camera.

MAN (CONT'D)
No respect for the shit I have to
do, or the shit I have to put up
with in order to do the shit I have
to do.

MAN begins to dig.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. MR. HOWARD'S MEAT STORAGE ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

MAN (as a boy) is sweeping a back storage room while OLD MAN is speaking to him. OLD MAN seems pleased and is happily giving money to MAN.

MAN (NARRATING V.O.)
I wasn't always a digger. I used to
work for Mr. Howard. He owns a
butcher shop, up by "the hole".

FLASH BACK TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - DUSK

MAN is standing in hole and takes a swig from his whiskey bottle.

MAN

He caught me stealing some steaks.

MAN goes back to digging.

FLASH BACK TO

INT. BACK ROOM AT MR. HOWARD'S BUTCHER SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

MAN (as a boy) is watching older teenagers load up a van with cases of meat. MAN (as a boy) just stands there in disbelief with the money OLD MAN gave him just earlier that day.

When OLD MAN walks in the teenagers scatter. One teenager pushes MAN (as a boy) down to make an escape. The van pulls away leaving that teenager behind who then chases after the van.

MAN (NARRATING V.O.)

It's not that he caught me stealing a few steaks, he caught me stealing a few cases of steaks. Don't go thinking that mean old Mr. Howard would go and fire a starving man trying to feed his family.

FLASH BACK TO

INT. OPEN WOODED AREA - DUSK

MAN is standing in the hole staring into the camera.

MAN

Because I wasn't.

MAN begins to dig.

MAN (CONT'D)

Hell...

FLASH BACK TO

EXT. FRONT OF MR. HOWARD'S BUTCHER SHOP - EARLY EVENING

MAN (as a boy) is standing outside of Mr. Howard's Butcher Shop.

OLD MAN is angry, yelling and pointing as if he's telling MAN (as a boy) to leave.

MAN (as a boy) is looking shameful and slowly turns and walks away.

MAN (NARRATING V.O.)
...I was only thirteen.

FLASH BACK TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - DUSK

MAN is standing in hole with his chin resting on both hands on top of the shovel handle.

MAN raises head and stares out into the woods for a short while.

MAN
No...Mr. Howard was a good man. I
just gone off and done a bad thing,
that's all.

The BODY moves slightly but MAN doesn't notice.

MAN (CONT'D)
After that, I cut grass. I shoveled
snow sometimes in the winter, but I
mostly cut grass. I did it for six
years. I sold pot too. In fact...

MAN drops shovel, raises his head and looks down at the ground.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
...this is where I grew it. Wait...

MAN lowers his hands and looks off into the distance and points.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
...it might have been over there.

The camera topples over and stops recording with a beep.

MAN begins to handle camera roughly. The camera beeps and starts recording.

(CONTINUED)

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(under his breath)
Mother fu...I'll get you.

MAN slowly steps back, grabs shovel and begins to dig.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But now...? Now I'm a worthless digger.

MAN begins to dig faster and faster.

MAN throws shovel down and moves closer to the recording camera. MAN talks straight into the camera.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(sounding agitated)
"But why do you do it, man? Why do you keep doing it?" you ask. I'll tell you why, because I make good-as money, that's why.

MAN slowly wobbles back, stares off and takes a swig from the whiskey bottle.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(sounding sad)
I make real good money.

MAN reaches in his pocket , pulls out a wad of cash and throws it in the hole.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
You know? Two tears in a bucket...

MAN takes a swig from the whiskey bottle. He then goes and shuts off the recording camera.

The camera stops recording with a beep.

MAN sobs quietly to himself.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

MAN is moving around in hole conversing with himself.

MAN
...so I said, "The hell with you, man. I ain't your shit." Then he hit me.

(CONTINUED)

MAN stands still.

MAN snuffles and begins to dig.

MAN (CONT'D)
(sounding upset)
He used to come home drunk and...

MAN stops digging and turns back to look at the BODY.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(referring to the BODY)
I didn't even kill this asshole.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

MAN is urinating next to the BODY then urinates on the head of the BODY.

MAN
Oh well.

MAN looks down at the BODY.

MAN (cont'd)
(sounding angry)
To hell with you, too. That's why
you're dead Asshole. You let people
piss on your head.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is digging the hole faster and faster.

MAN
I got this. I got this. I got this
son-of-a-bitch.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is sitting on the edge of his hole smoking a cigarette.

MAN lowers his head into his hands.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is in hole digging.

WOMAN'S VOICE

What the hell you doing back there?

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN walks off.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN walks in with an ice pack on his shoulder and a beer.

MAN jumps back into the hole and drinks his beer.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is digging but then stops and looks around slowly.

(CONTINUED)

MAN
(under his breath)
You know that feeling you get when
you're being watched?

MAN takes a drink of beer while looking around.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is staring off into the distance.

MAN
(sounding paranoid)
Who's there...? Who's there...?
Hey... hey... who's there?

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is in hole staring off into the distance.

MAN
I really hate doing this at night.
It's just plain stupid.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN walks in carrying a lawn chair and another beer.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is sitting in lawn chair next to the BODY chopping cocaine on some sort of flat surface. MAN has his beer resting on the head of the BODY.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is digging the hole faster and faster.

MAN

(while digging)

You know...? I just want to be appreciated. I mean, it's bad enough that they can call me whenever they want and I'm suppose to drop everything and tend to this shit? The wife won't quit bit...

WOMAN'S VOICE

Are you back there?!

MAN stops digging outstretches his arms and slowly turns around.

MAN

Yeah, I'm back here! I just told you that a couple of minutes ago.

MAN lowers his arms.

WOMAN'S VOICE

I need some cigarettes!

MAN

What the...

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

The BODY begins to move more frequently unnoticed by the MAN.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

The hole is much deeper so MAN crawls out of hole while the BODY is moving more often and eventually falls over.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is standing over the BODY while it moves erratically.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is walking from the hole towards the BODY with a shovel in his hand.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN begins to bash the head of the BODY repeatedly.

MAN props the BODY back against the tree. Small amount of blood is seen soaked through the sheet.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

MAN walks back to hole and jumps in. MAN begins to dig.

The blood stain through the sheet covering the BODY is seen getting larger and larger.

MAN

That's just messed up right there.

MAN continues to dig. Blood stain getting larger.

MAN (CONT'D)

You see, America? People these days, always trying to get by by doing the very least possible.

MAN stops digging and looks into the recording camera while pointing back at the BODY.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

You think I wanted to bash its brains in? No. I didn't. That's not my job.

MAN begins to dig and then chuckles to himself.

MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

I mean...

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN is dragging the BODY towards the hole and places it next to it.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Camera starts recording with a beep.

MAN kicks the BODY into the hole and begins to bury it.

Camera stops recording with a beep.

CUT TO

EXT. OPEN WOODED AREA - NIGHT

MAN is standing over the fresh grave with shovel in hand.

MAN

And that's all she wrote.

MAN walks off with shovel.

Moments later, flashlights are seen.

Two police officers walk through with their guns drawn.

FADE TO BLACK

OFFICER'S VOICE

You, freeze! Get down, get
down...everybody get down! Get
down, I said get...

Shotgun blast is heard followed by barking from a vicious
dog.

FADE TO WHITE

THE END