



AMERICAN WET DREAM

by

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This Catholic school nun once told me (after a vicious smack across my knuckles with her steel-edged ruler) “God gives the opportunity and it’s up to you to prove Him good.” My left hand still bears the scar but I had nothing to do with it when someone ran her over in a stolen Hyundai following a graduation party thrown in my honor. She never saw the *potential* in me, I remember thinking as I pissed on her gravestone the night I left town to pursue my dream. Ye of little faith—but that’s not what moved me to action.

Make no mistake, hombre, I’m talking instant success here—the sports star and movie god or fashion goddess of Milan and New York kind of success. That’s the hype I wanted to believe in. MLK, Jr. was this land of milk and honey’s first rap star. I bought the “*I have a dream*” single and sampled it over and over again in the jukebox of my mind. This country runs on obscene paychecks for sound bites or beauty, box office or box score more important than minimum wage. I have a tin medal track record—check it out. Ask anybody about me and they’ll tell you the same thing—*it’s all good, chief*. My life is an infomercial waiting to happen. I ain’t

no Cuban boy plucked from the sea and made a CNN celebrity. *My country 'tis of thee...sweet land of MTV*. Let me tell you how I got from there to here—*here*, as in let's begin here, Monopoly city, pass "Go" mo-fo (*feel free to plead the Fifth in case anyone asks*).

My alibi is pat. My parents wanted a girl, so I split home and Seattle at seventeen—left town backwards and never looked ahead. Call me a collector's edition not available on CD, video, cable, DVD or MP3. All I wanted to do was play guitar like Jimmy Page in the heyday. I was the best garage band axe god in six states but only my girlfriend, Lola, saw anything attractive about it. She was good for the last two years of high school but all she cared about was trying to get me to stay in town, convincing me my rich parents would eventually forgive my delinquency. They didn't like my hair (*they wanted a girl so what the fuck?*) or the way my jeans showcased my luggage. When Lola's charms didn't work, she finally went down on me in a vain attempt to show how much she loved me. While it felt good it wasn't good enough to stay for. Her idea of a future was working for Starbucks.

Three days after my visit to St. Mary Bitch's grave and a Greyhound bus cruise I found a Zeppelin cover band that let me roadie on a West Coast tour, with all the weed I could smoke and a leftover groupie or two along the way. Those girls did things that made me speak in tongues. Six months later the group (not the groupies) left me behind, so I became the girls' *pimp emeritus* for the rest of the year, put them on a bus to Los Angeles (where they eventually became a porno movie tag team), and then began to see the stars in my own eyes. By now everyone was grabbing cheap foreplay with the New Millennium. Madison Avenue blew wads of cash and verbal cum to convince me to buy some. For me, New Year's Eve came and went, like I was this little altar boy now grown up trying to forget the priest who peddled rape as a

sacrament. Fact is I was half blind on tequila in a motel room outside Vegas, letting some 50-something hooker named Rita jerk me off to Dick Clark's ball dropping countdown.

Utah and Colorado were little more than question mark memories in a Robert Redford/Sundance Kid sort of beer commercial haze, but the cops say I robbed half the liquor stores in some Kansas town the summer I turned nineteen, but I never shot anybody. The gun was for show and nothing else (couldn't even afford bullets at the time). Ripping and running was all I was good for—I was beyond the salvation of televangelists. The judge said I couldn't find my ass with both hands. Maybe he was right, but I told the court I still wanted to see the honest motherfucker on the corner with a sign around his neck: **WILL WORK FOR CRACK WHILE WAITING FOR TOTO TO COME BACK**. Wall Street wasn't in my neighborhood; that sort of turf was Daddy's hangout, not mine.

The time in jail taught me three things. *Uno*—never take shit. Never. *Dos*—learn all you can from other people's misfortune. And *tres*—but no fucking way least—justice sucks, plain and simple. Even when Pops died of a sudden aneurysm there was no time off for good behavior. Yahoo this and AOL that, I can't tell you how many nights of those two years locked down I wanted to kill my lawyer for not investing my inheritance into Silicon Valley, where stocks kept pumping blood into the cocks of cyber geeks who kept building links to God knows where. Didn't the warden realize who I was? I had concert arenas to conquer but couldn't get my break. Rap stars were copping Grammy's then copping pleas. *Are you still listening?*

So there I am, street legal and looking at early release, a Taco Bell hard on, a jailhouse tattoo and a need to find a real band when along comes this second-hand angel who said—no shit here—that she wanted to marry me. I met her in a bar I was gigging at two days after the State of Kansas gave me twenty dollars, a fresh suit and a bus ride to nowhere (actually Kentucky). She

reminded me of Kathie Lee Gifford and said she loved children the same way OJ loved cutlery. I weighed my options against what she whispered in my ear. It was like a come on from Lady Liberty—*give me your poor, your tired, your huddled masses and throw in a Tommy Hilfiger jacket while you're at it*. She wasn't divorced yet, wanted kids and said she'd buy me the electric guitar I always wanted. At that point I was playing one the club loaned me. The owner of Stevie Ray's said he had a soft spot for ex-cons who could play Elmore James.

Nothing lasts forever and that guitar she finally bought me from Uncle Miltie's Pawn Shop had to stay (but she had to go). No problémo landing some more gigs, shit hole clubs in towns built to die while taking baby steps to fame and a VH-1 special as I moved East with a vengeance. Blowjob jobs were flying left and right in the Oval Office and America.com didn't blink. My country 'tis of thee was too busy playing world cop to give a fuck about AIDS or kids taking pot laced dreams to school in book bags stuffed with guns. I knew all along someone had me on a string and was pulling hard. *Who wants to be a millionaire?* Same shit, different day—and that's my final answer. What could I do that no one else ever did? Forget the destiny angle...I ain't no Ponce de Leon searching for a history book. If I had to do it all over again, there'd be no worries about how much money I could have stolen from Pops or how bad I needed to get it on with someone like Mom. Cell phones now fucked earlobes and road rage still hadn't seen its 15 minutes of fame yet. I don't run from nothing or nobody (like a Tony Soprano role model) and taking shit isn't an option, *kapish?* For me to give up my dream of becoming Jimmy Page, Jr. would mean the real time angels flew down from the Empire State building to fit me with wings. No can do, not right now.

So it's this and that and I ain't done *The Tonight Show* yet. Fucking conspiracy if you ask me. Disney took over Times Square and kiddie porn was now Junior at two in the morning

surfing Mom and Dad's laptop to find group sex in million-pixel Technicolor. It was Energizer Bunny time for me. I kept going and going with no burning desire to look back cause I don't need to know from whence I came. Dead or alive I was gonna find that moment when I knew what's what and the rest of them wondered what hit town. I had saved enough cash to buy an amp once I hit NYC. I had a dream I was standing in Times Square and played until my fingers bled while Madonna French-kissed Britney Spears on the giant television screens above my head.

Are you still with me here? People only listen because they want to hear something other than the status quo or whom Gwyneth Paltrow canoodled with or if it's gonna piss acid rain the next day. Maybe Bill Gates can't sleep at night because he's dreaming about playing guitar like me. Later for that, because right now I'll let you in on how I saved my ass and my face at the same time. It's nothing short of a miracle, Mother Theresa back from the dead and walking down the aisle of St. Patrick's Cathedral carrying me on her shoulders while Princess Di sat in a pack of *paparazzi* and wished she had taken a taxi.

To say I got on my knees don't mean I'm a punk. Call it God or cheap faith—anything to get me through the night. If I had called 1-800-Ask-Me-If-I-Give-A-Shit, I would've gotten a busy signal. In and out of it, I wanted something other than last place, the Cracker Jacks with no fucking prize in the box. My odds looked good, you had to bet; a no lose situation we're talking about here. If ripping and running paid a salary, I'd be Trump in a New York minute.

Miracles do happen. I was a Fender Strat poet waiting for the Last Supper. Oprah kept saying, "Read this, read that" and I recalled those days when she was just fat. Are you *comprende* or *no lo comprende* at this point, my friend? I stole a red Chevy Cavalier outside of Hershey, PA with no radio and didn't even own a credit card. There was a bumper sticker on

those wheels that said, “*Does Heaven takes American Express?*” I can make this a bit easier to follow if you lend me your ear and leave the Seeing Eye dog at the corner. Let me get right to it. I can trust someone like you with this ...

Someone made me an offer I couldn't refuse. This mogul who knew somebody who dated somebody who dealt coke to somebody who knew Mariah Carey (or maybe it was Ricky Martin) caught my set in this Delaware titty-twister bar and gave me his card. “Look me up when you get to town,” was all he said. Life dealt, life bet, life won and life dealt again but I kept playing from town to town on a promise, sort of like shooting pool with the Devil and acting like Minnesota Fats with a short cue. Ed McMahon wasn't knocking at my door with any fat ass check but you look like you see the potential in me, the light on my horizon so to speak. Catholic schools didn't save me way back when but at least I'm not a guest on *Jerry Springer* today (or that stupid bitch nun with tire tracks on her penguin suit).

What I'm about to tell you goes no further. No fly on the wall shit here, okay? I got a plan. It's not something Ted Kopel's gonna be outing on *Nightline*. Christy Turlington on Calvin K's runway ain't got nothing on what I'm about to show. It scared me to just close my eyes and think about it. It's big, bigger than Gump.

What if I told you that I wanted to give it all the way up, no more ripping and running for this compadré? Would you believe me now or listen to me later, checking out my moves in the sunset as I danced the light fantastic? See, I ain't about fame or the commemorative stamps or a deal with Nike or some six-minute David Letterman gig with Paul Shafer rocking the Ed Sullivan Theater with my intro music. Someone told me they loved me once, but all Lola did was tell me that lie with a mouth full of cock. It's all mini-moves and bullshit. This American wet dream can't even make me remember and I think I'd cry if no one were looking.

Ask anybody about me and they'd tell you the same thing...

Manhattan welcomes me into its oozing womb. When I called the mogul his number had been disconnected. I wasn't ready but I was willing and able. It was time to tune up, lock and load, find me an amp and a roomful of drunk monkeys and step out under the lights to do my best Stairway (*like my man Jimmy in the day at Madison Square G*). I'm nobody's stepchild on stage or any critic's whipping boy. I don't have a *faux* Rolex telling me it's time to go home. Coast to coast, I'm a Manhattan landmark yet to be as I breathe in the night air standing outside the Port Authority post 9-11 listening to some blind Rasta strum a funky looking six-string. I drowned out the sounds with a silent scream and saw myself up on stage someday soon doing doggie to the crowd and telling myself it ain't gonna fade if I don't wake up. *I pledge allegiance to the flag...* even though Miss Liberty's been putting on a g-string, doing the bump and grind on our shores while the Green Card cats abroad call her *whore*. Somewhere over the rainbow, baby—that's where I'm gonna debut. Download this and zip-file that, e-mail, fax and all that crap. I think it's cool Elvis left the building and never came back.