

FROM THE ARCHIVES

# A Bad Habit

*October 20, 2003*

It seems to me that I always kind of lived the typical American life. I belonged to a family with two kids, whose parents divorced in elementary school, and lived in a middle class house in a middle class neighborhood. I was put through a good education system. There was nothing I could complain about in my life, nothing to rightfully complain about at least. It took me quite a while to realize how spoiled I was as a youth. I didn't understand why I should appreciate things back then, I just kind of expected them. And as any typical American kid, the media was telling me that all of my problems stemmed from my parents.

After being told that everything I did wrong was my parents fault, I think I began to believe it. Maybe I didn't believe it so much as I knew I could manipulate it. I could tell everyone that it was because of the divorce, or because my dad wasn't around, that I needed to fill the void with something.

I was introduced to heroin by an acquaintance of mine, Susan. She was a real nice person that I would see out every once in a while. We would talk and hang out and stuff, nothing uncommon. One night she asked me if I have ever gotten my feet in Mexican tar. I looked at her dumbfounded for a moment, and responded, "I've never been to Mexico, do we have Mexican tar here?" completely naïve to what she meant.

"You have no idea what I'm talking about do you?" she said.

"No" I answered, becoming quickly fed up with her "I know something you don't" attitude.

"Have you ever tried heroin?"

I looked into her eyes with a look of complete shock on my face. She was cool and very non-shalant about it. The look on her face, the way she smiled at my reaction, told me she was not joking. I did not know what to say to her, so I said "no."

"Its on of those things that you should just try" she said.

I had no reason not to trust Susan, she was always cool to me.

"Why the hell not" I said, somewhat reluctantly.

I had never thought of what I might do if I were ever offered heroin. I knew how bad it was, I knew what it had done to Sublime, but I figured that just trying it wouldn't hurt me. My decision to try heroin didn't stem from my parents. It was not to get back at my dad because he wasn't there for me. I tried it because I wanted to, because it was something new, because Susan had a way of talking you into things with those little shorts on.

We went to the back room of this dusty little apartment. I am not even sure whose room it was, I didn't know the people that lived there. She took out a pouch of this fluffy brown dust, the color of cinnamon and the touch of flour.

"Do you have a needle or something, I don't know how to do this" I said.

"No, I don't shoot this stuff, only junkies shoot up" She responded.

I was a bit relieved. I had noticed that she had no marks or anything on her arms, so I didn't really know how I was supposed to do this. She put the brown powder on the table and broke it up into two lines. I was a little confused because I had always associated snorting with cocaine.

She went first, I guess to reassure me. She bent down to the table and with one quick sniff, sent the powder up through our first president's head and into hers. She sat back onto the couch, waiting, anticipating the rush that was to come. You could see it as it hit her. Limb by limb she became very loose. She looked at me with euphoria in her eyes, as if to say "you're not going to regret this."

Finally I manned up to the table. I took the dollar and rolled it up. I stared at my "line" for a second. (I say line because it was more of a dab, she was looking out for me) I took it in and sat back, waiting, anticipating whatever was coming. It started in my feet. A total weightlessness, I could feel it run through my veins. Up to my knees, my bad knee became numb, I couldn't wait for it to proceed. To my chest, I could feel my heart slow down, my breathing became heavy, but peaceful. To my arms, they weighed fifty pounds each, I just let them hang by my side. They weren't doing anything anyway. To my head. When it reached my head I was completely relaxed. I was asleep with my eyes open, with someone else. All we could do is stare at each other. There was nothing that could be said. I knew exactly what she was feeling, and she knew what I was feeling, -perfect-.

This was the night that changed my life forever. I liked it. I wanted to try it again. Susan was the only person I had ever met that was into heroin at all. I began to hang out with her a lot, making my own connections and all. The people that had access to heroin were not the people I had expected. I always pictured the heroin user as the Trainspotting type thieving bastards, pale faced and lanky, with no other objective in life but to get a hit. These were rich kids, from all over the area. Their main goal was to make money, taking the rush of wealth over the rush of heroin any day.

It wasn't until I got desperate that I started shooting up. My connections were moving away, getting busted, or simply getting out of the game. I had to turn to the street to get what I needed. By this time I was a full blown addict. Not so bad that I always needed to be high, but after two or three days I would begin to sweat a little more, I couldn't concentrate because all I could think of was pushing off. I never really saw that there was a problem until my brother's 16th birthday.

It was a big deal for Christopher when he turned 16. My family threw him a nice little party. Everyone was there, except for his big brother. I was in some guy's apartment waiting to shoot up when I got a phone call. It was Christopher. He wanted to know where I was, that he was really looking forward to me being there. I lied to him. It might have been one of the hardest lies I have ever had to tell. I told him that my friend Spoons was in a very bad accident, and that I was at the hospital. I told him that I would try to make it back, to not wait for me. I wasn't going to make it back.

The spoon came out, one weight off of my chest. Then the water, and the lighter, its getting easier to breath. Then he pulled out the smack, my eyes lit up. I knew I was in for a hit, I knew this evening I would feel content. My heart skipped with excitement as the lighter ignited. My eyes gleamed as I watched him cook the heroin in the spoon. He filled up the syringe and said "be my guest." I felt nothing but relief as the needle plunged into my arm. All of a sudden, the fact that I missed my brother's birthday didn't bother me at all. There

I was, lying on the floor of some guy's apartment, without a care in the world. Everything that I cared about, the only thing that meant anything to me anymore had been appeased, for now.

I realized that I had a problem, but I didn't want to do anything about it. It didn't seem to me that my dependency was significant enough to bother others with, for I knew that if I were to kick this, others were going to be the only way. I decided that it would be selfish to take other people's time and energy and have them waste it on me. I have always been good about not lying to myself, up until this point. I figured out a plan. When other people begin to notice that I have a dependency, when my withdrawals and generally being cracked out become obvious and brought to my attention, then I would do something about it.

That day has yet to come. There are a handful of people that know about my problem. They continue to try and convince me to get help. I love all of them for it. They will never know how it feels, the pain, the sweating, the delusions, the crying, the insomnia. They will never know how it feels to want to die you need a fix so bad. I have friends that can not kick a measly nicotine habit, yet they expect me to simply put down this bear of a drug, this monster that has engulfed me and drug me to the deepest pits of hell, this monster that I love so much.

Never when I was young would I have thought I would grow up to be this. I went from the typical American split-family, loving relatives, loving surroundings, to a dope dependant fiend barely able to make it through a day without a fix. I always wanted to be in control of my life, now I am helpless to whatever my body demands. One day I will have control over my body again, and come that day, that will be the biggest change in my life.

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## **-Note To Reader**

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This is a complete work of fiction. I have never, nor will ever try heroin, in any form. I am strongly against abusing any kind of drug, even pot. I decided that I wanted to write a fiction piece when I was trying to figure out what in my life had changed drastically. While talking to my friend Michael (Spoons) he told me I should try and write my paper on heroin as a joke. I got all of my information from watching *Trainspotting* and *Requiem For A Dream* and various informational websites dealing with addiction. I tried to make my paper depict heroin similar to how those movies do, without plagiarizing them at all. If you believed that I was on heroin while I you were reading this, then I succeeded. If not, then I have a bit more work to do.