

rise out Mike.

"Holy shit, are you crazy? You're going to be bouncing off the walls!"

"Good!" Daryl egged him on. "I can use the extra energy. I gotta get going on my Christmas shopping now that exams are over."

This was Daryl. I don't think he actually enjoyed filling up every waking hour of his life with activity for the sake of staying active or living life to the fullest or anything like that. He just liked the attention it got him. His brother had a lot to do with it, I think. His older brother went to the same university, but he wasn't doing well and was really jealous of Daryl's success and the praise their parents heaped on him. That Daryl would move on to Christmas shopping was no surprise now that school was over. I also knew that he'd be pouring over his MCAT literature again, now that it was break time, even though he didn't plan to take the test until final year.

"When's your flight," I asked Mike, as I finished up the last of my lunch, taking time to gently wipe my mouth with my serviette.

"Not for a couple days. Why, you got some post-exam excitement planned?"

I hadn't thought about it, but for some reason I said, "Maybe," smiling coyly at him. I liked Mike. He was a lot more accessible than Daryl. Not the fucking goof that Daryl was back in grade eleven, just, I don't know ... normal. A normal guy that can enjoy a baseball game, a movie, a game of pool, whatever, without always trying to impress you. Mike and I were both Political Science majors. It was pretty much because of him that I declared Poli-Sci my major; I like being in his classes.

"Oh, that reminds me, I was going to ask you if you were going on the pub crawl that Alex is planning for Friday night."

I hadn't even heard about it. My spirits were beginning to lift. It was finally starting to dawn on me that it was Christmas break. I'd been looking forward to this moment for weeks. "I didn't know he was doing that again this year. Yeah, I'm definitely thinking that I'm going. I take it you're going."

"Oh yeah." Mike said. "For sure. I might be a little tired on the plane the next day, but what the heck?"

I really liked Mike. Who else said 'What the heck'? I chuckled at that.

"You can always take ..."

"I'll just take a couple hundred of these things," Mike completed my thought, motioning to the bottle of Vivarin still

sitting on the table, flanked on either side by Whopper wrappers and ice-filled cups.

I laughed, "Yeah, that's what I was thinkin'." I turned to Daryl who was scurrying to finish up his meal. "You should come this year. It was really good last year."

"We'll see. I bought the textbooks for next semester already, I'd like to see if I can get a head start on the reading."

Daryl was never much into the social side of campus life. He didn't drink for one thing; he says it kills brain cells. Occasionally we'd drag him out to a movie but that was about it.

"Whatever." Mike said, clearing away his stuff. I got the feeling that Mike didn't like Daryl that much. It wasn't the all work no play, but rather the constant bragging about the all-work-and-no-play that got tiresome for Mike.

Then, to my surprise, as Daryl was cleaning up his mess, he said "Well, might as well finish off the bottle," and emptied the remaining Vivarin into his hand, threw them in his mouth, and swallowed them down with the last of his coke. He then threw the empty Vivarin bottle and the rest of his trash into the garbage.

"Are you nuts?" I cried. "You're just being stupid! You shouldn't play around with that stuff. You, a Biology major, of all people should know what that stuff can do to you!"

Mike backed me up. "Did you read that long list of warning on that bottle?" I severely doubted Daryl had.

"Relax. It's no different from drinking a pot of coffee. It's good for you. Keeps you alert." Daryl countered.

"Each one is the equivalent of two cups of coffee. You must have taken about fifteen pills just now," Mike answered.

Daryl was beaming. He loved the attention. "What? Noooo..."

"Look!" Mike fished the empty bottle out of the trash and handed it over to Daryl, who now did seem concerned.

"Shit," he laughed. "That's not good. Oh man." It was all just a big joke. "I better take some Nytol to balance it out, just like on *The Simpsons*." I didn't know what episode of *The Simpsons* he was talking about, but I was determined not to encourage him by giving him any more attention.

"Give me a ride?" I asked.

"Yeah, sure. What about you, Mike? You need a ride?"

"Naw, I'm good. Call me about Friday," Mike said to me as we gathered up our knapsacks.

"Yeah, but be there this time," I joked in reference to the last time I called, when his roommate, unaware he was in the bedroom, told me he wasn't home.