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# Bye, Bye, Jimmy Jones

## Andrew Castellucci

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In these standard times of monotony out propped the pear-head of the suicide-to-be, Jimmy Jones. Jimmy didn't drink, smoke, gamble, sleep around, or do anything fun. His was the life of routine and insignificance. He never stepped out to the razor's edge, but hung in the noose of the nine to five day.

In the bathroom of his two-bedroom town house, with its modest décor, Jimmy looked at himself in the mirror and prepared himself. His bushy eyebrows and chubby cheeks stared back at him. He had planned for this day. Nearly a month of preparation had gone into this mission that he would now embark on. Jimmy didn't want to leave any debts unpaid or promises broken when he left. His lease paid, bank accounts closed, clothes folded and pressed, note written, will notarized, and work notified of his departure two-week prior. It was the polite and responsible course of action.

Now he gathered his nerves for the execution. It was a fine Sunday morning with the sun's warmth peeking beneath the shades of the small bathroom window. The rays touched Jimmy's feet as he still looked in the mirror. He ran his hand against his cheek and felt the sand-papered skin. It seemed that he had one last task before the end: a quick shave.

Jimmy greased his face with some foamy gel and let the warm water from the sink run. He grabbed his razor (which would come in handy later too) and carefully dragged it over the hills and valleys of his face. He whistled a tune while the rushing water played in the background. When he had finished, again he ran his hand across his face. Wherever he found an area not trimmed to his standards he asked for the assistance of his dear friend the razor. This quick shave preoccupied Jimmy for at least ten minutes.

After the diversion, Jimmy doused his hands with sticky perfume and patted his plump cheeks. He thought it was one of the finest shaves he had ever had (certainly the last).

"Well then," he said to his reflection in the mirror. "Should we get this over with?"

He picked up his razor again (this time it smiled with delight). He cleaned it under the still rushing water, washing away all remnants of his facial shrubbery. While he wiped it dry on a towel, an anxious knock at the door startled him.

"I got ta take a shit, Jimmy." His roommate said behind the knock.

“Give me a couple minutes.” Jimmy replied.

He would have to rush his mission now. He didn't want to keep his roommate waiting, it sounded like an emergency. He gripped the razor in his right hand and in one sweep struck at his left wrist. Jimmy closed his eyes tightly awaiting the pain, but there was nothing. He opened his eyes and his wrist was untouched: no blood and no mark.

“Jimmy, what are you doing, jerking-off?” His roommate crudely suggested on the other side of the door.

Jimmy was certain it was the fault of his cheap Bic razor and not his striking motion. It was for the best, he thought, how could his roommate get into the washroom if the razor had succeeded? And if his roommate did get in wouldn't he call an ambulance (that would be bad- Jimmy didn't want to trouble anyone). Plus, his roommate probably wouldn't be able to go to the washroom with Jimmy's lifeless body there (that would be worse). These thoughts convinced Jimmy to abandon his mission for the moment. So Jimmy swung open the bathroom door and his roommate ran past him and charged the toilet.

The garage, Jimmy felt, would afford him more privacy. He would have to devise a new method to accomplish his plan, though, because his friend the razor failed. As he walked down the stairs headed for the garage door Jimmy whistled a tune in step with his pace.

In the chilly garage he rummaged through scattered tools and strange liquids, hoping to find a new assistant. The dim lighting of the room complicated his search as he struggled to read warning labels on bottles. “Warning: ingestion may cause diarrhea”, one label read. He set aside the bottle making sure he didn't accidentally drink the tonic. Jimmy didn't want to shit his pants, especially since his roommate had the toilet occupied. He thought about consuming antifreeze, but he wasn't sure how long it would take the cooling green liquid to fulfill its duty.

He stood back from the plastic bottles in near desperation. Nothing seemed enticing. Beside a stack of wrenches, though, Jimmy's wandering eyes stumbled upon an inconspicuous rope. He grabbed it and tugged at both ends. Its rough skin poked at his palms and fingers. It seemed strong enough. It was certainly long enough, as its ends spooled on the garage floor. This would have to do, Jimmy thought.

He dragged the long rope toward a beam mounted above. Jimmy tossed one end of the rope over the beam and looked for a stool. He wasn't sure about how a proper hanging was to be conducted, but he was sure it involved a stool. The garage was cluttered with random tools and plastic bottles. Silly posters of half-naked girls and unattainable cars adorned the walls. From posters to wrenches, hammers and screws, the garage was fully stocked, but

there wasn't a stool in sight.

Time was wasting and Jimmy was already behind schedule due to the bathroom incident. He hastily grabbed a heavy bucket of paint. It was so heavy he preferred to drag it than carry. Jimmy positioned it underneath the long rope and mounted the bucket. Jimmy reached up to the beam and began to tie the rope. As he did this he realized he didn't know how to tie a noose.

Just then the garage awoke from its slumber and the mammoth door began to rise. The humming of the door's electronic response startled Jimmy and he fell off the bucket. Unseen gears, higher than the beam, cranked and churned, exposing Jimmy's scheme to the outside world. His roommate's car lumbered into the garage beside Jimmy, who sat on the floor in amazement. He's in the washroom, Jimmy thought. How could he foil Jimmy's attempt again?

The car rested to the left of Jimmy, its breath exhausted. The car door opened, hitting Jimmy's bent legs.

"Why is there a bucket here?" A woman's voice from the car asked.

She kicked the bucket and it slid an insignificant inch. The female driver stood up from the car and saw Jimmy lying on the floor of the garage.

"Hi, Jimmy." She said.

Her face was familiar to Jimmy, but her name escaped him. She was a lady friend of his roommate. She was cute, with blonde hair falling to the root of her neck; full lips and pert breasts.

"Hello." Said Jimmy, who was still lying on the garage floor.

"What are you doing?" She asked.

"Trying to hang up some sign."

The rope behind the girl, loosely tied to the beam, stared back at Jimmy as if it were about to tell the girl the truth.

"Ok," she said, choosing not to ask anymore questions.

She stepped over Jimmy and he briefly saw the black panties under her modest dress. The door to the house closed behind her and Jimmy stood up. He would have to flea the garage; the house. He might have aroused suspicion. The garage was no good anyways, Jimmy convinced himself. It would have been difficult to park the car if he had hung himself, he thought. His legs would probably have hit the roof of the car, maybe even the windshield (worse yet, his swinging lifeless body might have cracked the window). For these reasons, Jimmy decided that the garage and a hanging were not reasonable.

Jimmy got into his car, parked outside on the street, and coaxed the engine into starting. It struggled at first, but then stuttered to a start. This was Jimmy's finest possession: a car past its prime. It was fitting, Jimmy believed, to leave life with his oldest companion. The idea of carbon monoxide poisoning came to him without any consideration. As his car sauntered

through the streets, Jimmy again whistled a familiar tune.

He would have to stop by the hardware store in order to buy some tubing to reach from the exhaust to his window. The plan was simple: a quick stop at the store and then park somewhere secluded, inhaling the car's breath. Jimmy anchored his car in front of the hardware store and hurried to the door.

The store was busy with middle-aged men wandering about, looking for something useless to purchase. Jimmy passed through the throng and made his way to the tubing aisle. Boxes of tubes, chains, and rope lined every shelf. He estimated the diameter of his exhaust and chose a tube that met those specifications. He made his way to the cash registers and placed his item on the counter.

"Do you think this will fit around an exhaust?" Jimmy asked the cashier.

"Sure," the cashier said, as if listening to Jimmy's inquiry.

"Two ten" the register scribbled on the screen. Jimmy reached into his pockets and pulled out a dime. From his wallet he gave the remaining two dollars.

"Thanks," Jimmy politely said, eliciting no response from the cashier.

Jimmy rushed out of the store with the tubing cradled in his arms. He swung open his driver side door and tossed the tubing aside. As he turned the key in the ignition, Jimmy looked up and saw paper nestled under his windshield wiper. He got out of his car and grabbed the paper from its perch. "No parking.....sixty-five dollars" the paper said. Beside the car a tall sign repeated the words of the paper: "No parking- Drivers will be ticketed".

Jimmy knew it was over now: all his planning was worthless. He couldn't leave now in debt. It wasn't how he wanted it to end. A month of preparation had been foiled. He would have to wait until next Sunday, or whenever. He would have to pay off his ticket before he left.

As Jimmy got back into his car, he looked at himself in the mirror. His bushy eyebrows and chubby cheeks stared back at him. Another week, maybe a month, he thought. His car stumbled to a start and Jimmy turned on the radio, choosing not to whistle a familiar tune.