

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Cannabis

There are three different types of assholes in this country: those who try to take advantage of others, those who do take advantage of others, and everyone else. Alvin, Tyrone, and Jonah were all assholes, each for a different reason. The guys resided at Sussex House, an off-campus housing complex of City University of New York. They liked the apartment because of the relatively low rent, battery-operated fire alarms, and the stash of weed they found stuffed into the back of a kitchen drawer. While they were matched for the apartment based on reasons unknown, the young men forged a tight bond over their first exposure to marijuana. The weed united them.

On a comfortably cool October day, Tyrone opened up a brown UPS box. “Jonah, get your ass over here.”

“What?” Jonah shouted from the kitchen. He was adding the finishing touches to a pan of 53¢ macaroni and cheese.

“The day has arrived!” Tyrone declared.

Jonah rushed to the living room. He saw a package and his eyes glistened. “Has today finally come?”

“Today has,” Tyrone said as he pulled out the box’s contents. Inside the box were two pairs of fuchsia-colored Forever Lazys, adult-sized, long-sleeved onesies, and two pairs of matching footies. The guys held their outfits up and admired their quality and utility.

“Ooh, what is this material?” Jonah asked.

“This right here is 100% Anti-Pill Polar Fleece.”

“We are going to save so much money with the heating bill. I am so amazed right now.”

“We’ll never have to buy another blanket again!”

“There’s only one thing for us to do right now.”

They exchanged a smile and a knowing nod. There was only one thing to do.

Tyrone and Jonah were smoking up on the couch and watching the History Channel when Alvin burst into the apartment. He threw his back pack across the room and kicked off his shoes. “Guys,” he said, “we have a problem.”

Tyrone finished his hit, coughed, and asked, “What’s up, Alvin?”

Jonah sat up, his red eyes wide with concern. “Yeah, what’s up?”

“Trenton – wait.” Alvin had noticed the boys’ matching outfits. “What’re you wearing?”

“They’re called Forever Lazy,” Tyrone said. “We’re totally gonna save on heating.”

Alvin saw the empty box and asked, “You guys buy me one?”

“Uh, no, um, you can borrow Jonah’s.”

“What’s wrong with yours?”

“I’ve been masturbating in mine for the last 20 minutes. See there’s this side zipper.” He turned to show Alvin and Jonah the mechanics of his effort.

Jonah looked over at Tyrone, impressed. “I never even noticed. Nice!”

“Yeah, that’s clever. I second the nice. But look, Trenton’s gone,” Alvin said.

“What do you mean he’s gone?”

“Is he dead?” Jonah asked.

“He got sent to the Olive Garden Culinary Institute. Know the one that’s in the commercials? The only pothead we know is in Tuscany right now. What are we gonna do? We’re almost out, and he’s the only pothead we know.”

With a mouth full of cold pasta, Jonah asked, “Can’t we just drive up to Tuscany?”

“Tuscany is in Italy, Jo,” Tyrone answered.

“I’ll pay for gas.”

Ignoring Jonah, Alvin fixed his attention on Tyrone. “The guy says he’ll be gone for another month. If he comes back at all. Do you know anybody who’s holding? Seriously, anybody.”

“Maybe Carol?”

“She moved to LA months ago.”

“Shit.”

Alvin squatted down in front of him. “Think. We’re almost out, and then what? I got a B+ on my Chem paper. I need to keep my edge. We have midterms next week.”

“Actually this week,” Tyrone offered the pipe to Alvin, “and this is the last of our weed. We’re down to cookie crumbs, bro.”

“It’s called shake,” Jonah said.

“We’re down to shakes.”

Devastated, Alvin flopped down on the couch. He took the pipe from Tyrone and took the last hit. He trapped the hot air in his lungs for as long as he could go on without breathing, and then released the thin train of fragrant smoke. The guys watched the last of their weed dissipate into the greedy air. They took deep breaths and hoped to catch some of the lingering fragrance, but all they could taste was the smell of cheap macaroni.

Alvin and Tyrone both muttered in unison, “We’ve gotta get some pot.”

“Really, I don’t mind driving,” Jonah offered.



After several hours of brainstorming, and an intense *Jeopardy* tournament, the gang decided to take a chance on Trent’s replacement at the Olive Garden. They figured if Trenton was a pothead, his replacement probably was too. As Alvin observed, “The guy boils pasta for a

living. He must be getting stoned.”

In the evening they took Tyrone’s VW Golf and drove out to the Olive Garden at Gateway Plaza. They ignored the hostess and took a table close to the kitchen. The waitress approached the boys and asked for their order. Alvin showed her a confident smile. “Actually,” he said, giving her a once over, “Loretta, we aren’t here for the fine dining and breadsticks.”

She wedged her pen behind her ear and prepared herself for his bullshit. “No?”

He leaned forward. “We’re actually hoping to have a word with the chef.”

“Really?”

Tyrone interjected, “We are friends with Trent, and he suggested we come here and speak to his replacement. Check up on him. See how he’s doing. You understand, right?”

“May I ask what this is specifically concerning?”

“It’s a private matter,” Alvin said.

“A private matter?” Loretta repeated. She cocked her penciled eyebrows.

The boys nodded, exchanged glances, and nodded again.

Loretta leaned in closely, letting her heavy bosom rest on the still-damp table, and sniffed the air. She tilted her head over to a group of muscle-bound men drinking Bud Lights in the corner booth. “You see those gentlemen over there?”

“Yeah,” the gang said.

“Those are true blue NYC police officers. They’ve been here for the last three hours watching the ins and outs of the kitchen. They are here because your friend, Trenton, has been dealing drugs out of the kitchen. You think my manager sent Trent to Italy because of his culinary skills?” She swallowed a chuckle. “I’m not telling our chef shit. I’m onto you boys. Now you should go on and order something as to not arouse these officers’ suspicions. I suggest the Bistecca di Manzo alla Boscaiola. It’s our special.”

“I don’t drink alcohol, ma’am,” Jonah said.

“It’s beef, sweetie.”

Jonah gathered up the menus and handed them to Loretta. “We’ll have three of whatever you just said. And make mine a virgin, please. Thank you.”

She went back to her station. The boys watched her put their order into the computer.

“She must be a lesbian,” Alvin said.

“No straight woman could resist the quality of your orthodontic work,” Tyrone said.

“I think you have a very handsome smile.”

“Thank you, Jonah.”

“Although I still beat you at *Jeopardy*.”

“For the last time, Jonah, you must answer in the form of a question.”

“Besides,” Tyrone added, “you still lost by over \$40,000. Mercury’s a planet and metal.”

“That doesn’t make any sense.”

“I don’t think they’re real cops,” Tyrone observed.

“They don’t have mustaches.”

“Very true,” Alvin confirmed to the guys before this eyes lit up. He whispered to Tyrone and Jonah, and they shrugged in agreement. When Loretta placed their salad and soups on the table, they smiled broadly and thanked her. She moved away from them suspiciously, but an incoming family arrested her attention. While she wasn’t looking, Jonah moved his bowl of minestrone soup under the table. The gang huddled together around the bowl of soup, squirmed a little when its contents accidentally spilled on Tyrone, and then carefully placed the brimming bowl back on the table. “Loretta?” Alvin called, musically. “Could you come here?”

She excused herself from her table and approached them, annoyed. “Yes?”

“Your chef pissed in our soup and we’d like a word with him,” Tyrone said.

While the men at the other table were not police officers, as Tyrone had guessed, they were certainly big enough to throw the boys out of the restaurant and into the curb. They dumped the urinated soup over the boys' heads for decent measure, and said with conviction, "And stay out." The overgrown men pumped fists and went back inside to chug another \$2 Tuesday domestic. Loretta hocked a loogie that landed in Alvin's mouth and went back inside.

Alvin spit and asked, "Why do they always do that?" He took out his cell phone and dialed 911. "Hi," he said to the operator. "Yes, hi. I was just at the Olive Garden off Gateway Drive, and the waitress there, Loretta – yes like Loretta Lynn. Isn't she great? – tried to sell me weed. You know pot? Well, there's also three guys in it with her. No-no," he corrected, "they're white." Alvin took out a Marlboro cigarette and lit it with a match. "Yeah," he said, choking on the smoke, "They are in the back of the restaurant, and their shirts are much too small." He smiled as he listened to the operator. "No, no thank you," he said. Alvin gave a wink to Tyrone and hung up. "I think we should employ Plan B."

Jonah brushed the grass and dirt off his jeans. "What's Plan B?"

"Plan B, Jo," Tyrone said, "is we get drunk."

The melodic swirl of police sirens filled the quiet air as the boys made their exit in Tyrone's 1.9 liter, four-cylinder '97 Volkswagen Golf running on limited horsepower.



The gang picked up a handle of Congress from a liquor store on the way home. They gathered around the bottle, and Alvin prepared three shots. Jonah scratched his beard. "I don't know about this," he said, uneasy.

"What are you worried about?" Alvin asked.

"I don't know. Isn't it supposed to be bad for your liver? You get beer goggles."

"Look, Jo, they sell liquor at Walgreens. At CVS. How bad can it be if it's sold at a

pharmacy?”

“You have a point. Fine. All right, I’ll do it. But, but, if we end up on *Campus PD*, I’ll seek my revenge, Tyrone. I will poison your food, rub poison ivy into your clothes, pour regular milk into your Lactaid, and I will shit into your pillow every day for a month. I will drink Metamucil, you sonofabitch.”

Tyrone shrugged and replied, “Fair enough.”

After four shots of vodka, Jonah was drooling on the couch. If he closed his eyes, he knew he would throw up all over himself, the couch, the floor, and - even worse - his new Forever Lazy. He rested his head in Tyrone’s lap, and watched the room tilt. Alvin sat down with his drink next to Jonah. “It kinda feels good, doesn’t it?” he asked.

Jonah moaned and rolled his head. He looked at Tyrone and asked, “This real life?”

“Yeah, this is real life,” Tyrone said.

“Okay, now I ... now I? I have two fingers. Four fingers?”

“You feeling okay?” Alvin asked, sharing a glance with Tyrone.

“I can’t see anything.” Jonah leaned forward to fix his gaze on the television. The screen was a blur, doubling its picture and swirling around him. “Ahhh!” he screamed before slouching back against the couch. His eyes struggled to stay open. “I don’t feel tired,” he said. Looking over at Tyrone and he slurred, “You have four eyes.”

“Yeah,” Tyrone said, and let Jonah rest his head in his lap.

“I feel f-funny. Why is this happening to me?” Jonah was slurring his speech.

Tyrone petted Jonah’s short, curly hair. Jonah dropped his arms to his side. “Is this gonna be forever?”

“No. No, it won’t.”

Jonah fell asleep in Tyrone’s lap as the gang silently watched the tail end of *Do the Right*

Thing and the start of the local news. While listening to the lead story, Tyrone stood up, accidentally dropping Jonah on the floor, and declared, “I’ve got it.”

“What?” Alvin asked.

Tyrone pointed at the television. The news was running footage of the Occupy Wall Street protest. Hundreds of people were chanting, holding signs, and camping out. “Those guys right there. What do they look like?”

“Hippies,” Alvin said as the realization struck him.

“If there’s going to be anyone holding,” Tyrone continued, “it’s going to be these guys! Just look at them. I’ve never seen so much tie-dye.”

“God bless hippies.”

“We have to go. If we are going to score anywhere in this city, it’ll be there.” Tyrone pounded the table top. “They’re wearing face paint, for Christ’s sakes. I mean, shit!”

“Tyrone, you are a real man of genius. This’ll be like going to a Dave Mathews Band concert without having to hear all that shitty music.”



The next morning the guys hit the ATM and took the Manhattan Express to Zuccotti Park. They would normally have gone to Chelsea Park, as it was closer to their apartment, but Jonah once had a bad experience with the Astroturf there. In an attempt to fit in with the protestors, Alvin and Tyrone clothed themselves with items off the clearance rack at Salvation Army. Jonah wore his Forever Lazy. As they exited the bus, the boys were immediately swept up into the body of the mob. People were everywhere. Some were shouting at the cars passing by, some were carrying signs, and most of the others were just loitering. The gang found a pocket in the crowd by the large fountain and regrouped.

“So where do we go?” Tyrone asked. “Now that we’re here, I don’t know what to do.”

“Yeah, I don’t know about this. That lady over there looks like my mom,” Jonah said.

“By-the-way,” Tyrone asked. “How you holding up there, Jonah? You all right?”

“I’m good. I actually kinda want to get drunk again. Let’s find a beer tent.”

“I envy your liver, but it’s ten in the morning, dude.”

“They’re not open yet?”

“Anyway,” Alvin said, “I have a plan. Let me ask you both, who are the biggest hippies?”

“The ones with the rainbow peace sign flags.”

“That’s right, Jonah. Nail on the head. We just need to find one of those and we’re golden. And then we can get the hell out of this place and bake up.”

“What’s wrong with the park?” Tyrone asked.

“Are you kidding? This place is a shithole.”

“I kinda like it,” Jonah said. “Reminds me of the fair. Bet they have funnel cakes!”

“Come on. It’s crowded and smells terrible, terrible. Like someone shat patchouli and sweat. And homeless people. Plus this whole thing is stupid,” Alvin said.

“What do you mean?” Tyrone asked.

“What is this protest even for? Look around you. There are signs about minimum wage next to signs about the war next to signs about the bail outs. It doesn’t make any sense. Here look at this,” he grabbed a sign from a person standing next to him. ““I shaved my balls for *this*.” This hemp-wearing douchebag actually went to Kinko’s and paid them to make this sign. And it doesn’t even mean anything.” Alvin tossed the billboard into the fountain. He turned to the pissed protestor and asked, “Hey, you have any weed?”

“Way to show you solidarity, asshole.” He threw his shoulder into Alvin as he went to rescue his sign from the water.

“That was both rude and confusing,” Alvin said.

“And I thought only lesbians hated you,” Tyrone threw in.

“There sure are a lot of them around here,” Alvin said. “I think we should split up to cover more ground. Jonah, why don’t you take the north side of the park? And Tyrone – “

Tyrone cut him off. “Nu-uh. Jo and I are a team. This,” he waved to Jonah and himself, “is a package deal.” Jonah nodded in agreement. “So, we’ll both take the north end and you can canvas here.”

“Great. Call me when you score.”

“What if we don’t?” Jonah asked. “I mean there are a lot of cops and security around here. And I’m pretty sure that actually was my mom, which is weird because my dad told she’s dead,” Jonah said.

“If you guys aren’t lucky, or too chicken shit to seal the deal, we’ll meet at the *Joie de Vivre* at four. That’ll give us six hours.”

Tyrone and Jonah left Alvin to make their way through the crowd to their respective turf. Alvin looked around for a hippie stand, someplace selling beads and bandanas, but he could hardly see past all of the waving billboards. He tried chatting up on some random people, but no one was interested in him. Most of them thought he was a narc. The whole thing though, the protest and its people, disgusted him. Everywhere he went he felt like he was standing next to some degenerate, some punk or freak or hippie or skank or genuine homeless man. And to make matters worse, every fifty feet or so was some guy on a guitar playing his acoustic rendition of “Crash into Me” or “Grey Room.”

Tyrone and Jonah were having a wonderful time. They found the people to be especially inviting and fun. There was free food, artistic activities, and a group of girls skimping around

wearing nothing but glitter and acrylic paint. “My thinking on this,” Tyrone said, “is that if we go around asking people for weed no one is going to want to talk to us.”

“And I want to talk to people. There’s a guy over there on oxygen smoking a cigarette. I want to go there and talk to him.”

“Me, too. So let’s let Alvin worry about scoring. I don’t really care about the weed. I mean it’s nice, but I just didn’t want to let Alvin down.”

“Yeah, I’m really not interested, but should we be doing that to him? He is our friend.”

“Listen, Jo, it’s perfect. If he scores and we don’t, he’ll feel better about himself. If neither of us score, he’ll blame himself. Meanwhile we’re painting tits. Like I said, it’s perfect.”

Alvin found a table near the back of the fairgrounds draped in an American flag. Close enough, he thought. Two middle-aged men sitting in plastic lawn chairs were hosting the table. They were very clean cut and even fit, which caught Alvin off-guard. The only characteristic that separated them was one had red hair and the other didn’t. They were brain-storming ideas for the protest signs they were making and handing out. Alvin surveyed the signs displayed on the table. The signs were made out of flattened cardboard boxes. One sign read, “Do you feel it trickle down?” A bunch of others said, “I’m so angry that I made a sign.” Alvin rolled his eyes. “Humph,” he said.

“May we interest you in a sign?” the ginger asked.

“No thanks, I’m not a hippie.”

“Neither are we,” said the other one.

“Clearly the Sharpie fumes have gone to your heads, because this is hippie shit.”

“What do you mean hippie shit?”

Alvin pointed to the billboards. “This hippie shit. You know ‘I’m so angry that I made a

sign' doesn't mean what you think it means. All these people are going around with this sign, and they look like jackasses, which is even worse."

"I've had enough of this. I'm going to go find more boxes." the blonde one said before leaving.

The ginger gestured to the open chair for Alvin to sit down on. "I want to hear what you have to say. That's why we're all here – to be listened to." Alvin reluctantly took a seat. "I'm Simon," the man said. "What's your name?"

"Alvin."

Simon smiled and said, "We're both chipmunks. If only my friend's name was Theodore. It's Donald, but go on."

"Okay, well first of all." Alvin grabbed a marker off the table and crossed the word "that" out from the signs. "Right now, I'm so angry I had to fix your sign. Get it?"

"You are here right now, Alvin. Not because you just wanted to throw a Frisbee, but because you heard us. Why are you even here?"

"You a cop?"

"No."

"I'm trying to find some pot."

"Really? Why would you come here for that?"

"Hippies love weed."

"Hmm," Simon muttered. "You have a glorified version of things. I wonder, who's your favorite movie star?"

"Seth Rogan's funny."

"And who's your favorite rock star? You're in college - bet it's John Lennon."

Alvin shook his head. "Boss. Bruce. Bruuuuce."

“Really? I didn’t think you kids listened to him anymore.”

“I saw him at that Super Bowl halftime show and really got into his catalog.”

“What if I told you that Springsteen’s a hippie?”

“Take that back.”

“‘41 Shots’ and ‘Born in the USA’ are protest songs! Alvin, since I’ve met you all you ever talk about it hippie this, hippie that. And all your favorite people are so-called ‘hippies.’”

“It’s different. Seth Rogan and Bruce Springsteen are not hippies. I mean they’re not hippies. I mean, let me explain myself. They’re-they’re not really hippies. I mean they’re hippies, but not really hippies. They’re more than hippies. It’s different.”

“It’s different?”

“Yeah, to me it’s different.”

“Alvin, deep down inside, do you wish you were a hippie?”

“Get the hell outta here.” Alvin laughed and waved Simon away dismissively.

The blond man, Donald, returned with a stack of folded boxes under his arm, and he was upset to see Alvin in his chair. He glared at Alvin and leered over him.

“I’ve been reading about your – ”

“Oh, you’re reading now?” Donald interrupted.

Alvin looked up at him and said defensively, “I read.” He turned back to Simon. “I’ve been reading about your leaders: Ralph Nader, Hillary ‘the do’ Clinton. ‘We are the president. We are the president.’”

“That’s messed up,” Donald said.

“You want the seat back? Here.” Alvin stood, which put him face-to-face to Donald. Alvin started to say something, stopped, and then said it anyway. “You are talking about how Wall Street betrayed you, capitalism betrayed you. You want to go back to this glorious past?”

“That’s right.”

Alvin waved his hands in front of his chest. “What past are you talking about? Capitalism has always existed, will always exist. You are spending more money even though you have less of it. Those signs, your free-trade, organic shit all costs more. What did I miss?”

That thin string that kept Donald tethered to his patience snapped. “You know what?” he asked, enraged. Pressing a finger on Alvin’s chest, he said, “Fuck you. Fuck your Tea Party bullshit. And fuck Glenn Beck.”

Alvin stared Donald down and finally said, “Fuck Nancy Pelosi.” The words burned hot in his mouth.

Donald was taken aback. Horrified, he left the table, taking his boxes with him.

Tyrone and Jonah found that there was a lot to do in the park. They had green dots painted on their foreheads, beads were woven into Jonah’s beard, and they met a cute, yet certainly strange, girl named Zoë in their drum circle. She wanted to give them both a mohawk.

“Come on, it’ll be fun,” she said to them.

“I don’t know about that,” Jonah said, rubbing his scalp.

“You guys would look so hot with one, seriously.”

“Okay,” they said.

She sat down on the grass and opened up her backpack. “This has been my thing,” Zoë said and took out a pair of scissors, a bottle of water, a beach towel, cheap shaving cream, and a Bic disposable razor. “Who’s going first?”

“Jonah should go,” Tyrone said, “cuz I really want to see what a Jew-hawk looks like.”

“Come here, Jonah,” Zoë called.

Jonah sat down before her and let her drape the towel over his shoulders. He closed his

eyes when she rubbed her hands through his hair. Tyrone wished that he had gone first.

“Oh, I like your hair. Do you put anything into it to make it so curly?”

“No, it’s naturally Jewish.”

Zoë proceeded to trim and shave and sculpt Jonah’s hair. She only nicked his scalp a few times, but he didn’t mind – he was adrift in euphoria. Her hands were warm and soothing, and while she worked, she whispered in his ears. Tyrone couldn’t believe it. He stood off to the side and bit down on a knuckle while he watched them. She finished up Jonah and told Tyrone that it was his turn. Before she could finish the sentence, he had knocked Jonah over and took his place.

Alvin actually was enjoying his conversation with Simon. The two of them had been talking for over an hour, during which Donald would periodically appear and then storm off again.

“This is the place,” Simon said, “where you can come to express your views. Protesting is fine but you don’t have the right to go and, without a permit, violate the law.”

“Right, right. How many people have been arrested so far?” Alvin asked.

“I think it’s over 700 by now, maybe more.”

“And what are they getting arrested for?”

“Mostly blocking traffic.”

“That is so lame. Someone needs to up the ante. Needs to stand up.”

Simon handed him a blank sign and a marker, and said, “You’re angry. I’m not asking you to be any different. Be angry. Express yourself.”

“All right, I will,” Alvin said, resolutely. He wrote in bold letters, “Ahhh!”

He took his sign and charged the mob. “Ahhh!” he shouted at them.

After Zoë finished Tyrone's new haircut, he noticed that the time was almost 4:00. He showed Jonah his watch, and Jonah lowered his head. "What is it?" Zoë asked.

"We have to go meet our friend down at the red statue," Tyrone said with reluctance.

"Do you mind if I come?" Zoë asked.

"No. No, yes, no, yes do come. Please," Jonah made out. He was sweating.

She rolled up her grooming supplies, stuffed them into her bag, and said, "Let's go."

When they arrived at the statue, Alvin wasn't there. They waited a while, tried his phone several times, but no answer. "He can take the bus back. That's how we got here," Tyrone said. Jonah agreed, and they made their way through the mob back to the stop. While they were waiting for the bus, they heard an argument break out down the street. They went to find out what was happening.

Halfway down the block, they discovered Alvin waving his billboard at the manager of Starbucks. The manager, a tempestuous 30 year old woman, was yelling to Alvin that her bathrooms are reserved for customers only. Alvin approached her and the yelling continued until she grabbed his sign and tore it in half. "I just killed your freakin' sign," she said.

On an impulse, he picked up a lawn chair and threw it at her window. It bounced off the glass, not even leaving so much as a scratch. Alvin went for another, but three policemen who were standing by rushed him. They tried to take him down, but he held his ground. One of the cops tried to choke him down with his baton. He struggled to stay strong and keep the message alive. The protestors shouted for the cops to stop. "You're killin' him!" someone cried. But the police refused to stop, squeezing him so hard his body gave out. The policemen dragged Alvin's unconscious body away and stuffed him in the back of their NYPD cruiser and drove off.

Tyrone looked at Jonah and Zoë. “Wow, I didn’t expect that.”

“Me neither.”

“Who was that you think?” Zoë asked.

“That was Alvin, our roommate. He’s kind of an asshole,” Jonah said.

“Total asshole,” Tyrone added.

“You know, I didn’t get enough of that pizza earlier,” Zoë said. “I’m getting kind of hungry again. A drink also sounds fantastic.”

Tyrone rubbed his belly and agreed.

Jonah noted, “Yeah, I could go for some Olive Garden. Some Bistecca de Mango sounds pretty good right now.”

“I have to warn you guys,” Zoë said. “I get crazy when I’m drunk.”

“You get crazy, huh?” Tyrone teased. He pointed at Jonah and said, “You should see this guy get loaded. Last night he was hilarious.”

Zoë smiled over at Jonah, who was blushing.

He scratched his beard and shyly looked over at her. “I don’t remember.”

She gave him a wink. “I’ll have to do something to make tonight memorable.” Jonah nearly fainted so she grabbed him by the hand. She then claimed Tyrone’s. With the two men at her side, she led them down the street and into the New York sun.

They’ll pay Alvin’s bail in the morning.