

Going Home
(4486 words)

When Julian looked into his little brother's big brown eyes, his became glassy and itchy with tears. Thiago wanted to come along with Julian and his friends, but Julian didn't want him to slow them down. Julian was embarrassed of Thiago, who was 2 years his junior, because he had short stubby legs and winced at the first sign of trouble. If something dangerous were to happen, Julian could imagine his brother getting hurt or even killed. He would rather put Thiago out of his misery by leaving him behind rather than to see him get his body or feelings hurt by his friends' rough play. Besides, their cousin Manny couldn't stand him.

"He acts like a little fag," Manny told Julian once. "I just want to beat the shit out of him every time I see him." It enraged Julian to hear Manny refer to his brother in that way, partly because he agreed with him.

The tears rolling down Julian's face were of impotence— that he wasn't brave enough to abandon his brother or adequately strong to defend him against his older cousin, if Thiago came along. Julian knew what it felt like to be left out of things. On his last day of elementary school, all of the boys in his class were nowhere to be found. He was a leftover of a 5th grade apocalyptic rapture. As Julian exited his last class of the year, his ass numb from inactivity, he bumped into his other classmates who were all laughs and smiles. When Julian asked where they had all been, one of them boasted that they had been watching jungle porn at his house. They had all conspired a day before to do so and didn't even think of inviting Julian. They had made a pact and drunk the poisoned punch. A mass deflowering. It didn't bother Julian that they thought that he was a loser. It didn't bother him that he didn't get the chance to enjoy the exquisiteness of jungle porn. What bothered Julian was that they had thought that he was too young to understand.

“Just stay the hell back,” Julian yelled at little Thiago as he descended the hill upon which his grandmother’s house was located. Julian hated excluding his brother, but he wanted Thiago to see him as his strong older brother and the other kids to see him as one of their own. From a distance, Julian waved to his brother, as a way of saying goodbye and telling him to go into the house. But Thiago remained, looking at his brother drifting farther and farther away from him, his sputtered whimpers drifting into the loud howl of an abandoned puppy. “Just shut up,” said Julian, looking at his brother’s distant silhouette. “Don’t make me go up there again.”

The other boys were waiting at the bottom of the hill, impatiently for Julian to hurry up. Although he wasn’t the youngest in the group, Julian felt less wily than the rest. He hung out with them because they were tough and Julian wanted to toughen up. A menace by association. These street kids could rough you up and rob you blind without a moment’s notice. Julian liked that about them.

Julian’s hiking party included his cousin Manny, who, unlike Julian— in Tijuana solely for summer vacation— was living in Mexico due to his parents’ finances. They grew up together, and being only a year apart, this meant that they were in constant competition for their family’s approval. Success in this gauntlet meant more to Manny than to Julian due to the former’s lack of parental affection. Manny’s parents had too many kids to care for and too little time to care about them individually.

The youngest kid in the group was nicknamed Rabbit, but he also went by “El Sex” because his mother was one of the town’s prostitutes. Rabbit was never home, and nobody ever visited his house or even knew where it was located. He was always at other people’s houses, and the only time you could assume that he was home was when all of a sudden you couldn’t find him at anybody else’s house. For all they knew, Rabbit didn’t even have a hole to call home.

The last kid's name was Coco. He wasn't really a kid though, he was way older than any of the other kids and looked more like a man than a kid. He was charming and had a smile that made Julian's face fill with warmth until his temples began to perspire. That smile was the same he placed on Julian's eyes with the grace of a dove as Pastor Emmanuel invoked the name of the Holy Spirit, dunking Coco into the local church's baptismal waters. When he emerged from the small pool, Coco blew water out of his nose and took suffocating breaths. Once he found his composure, he stuck out his tongue as though he had just helter-skeltered down and out of a water park slide.

"Guess who I caught fingering herself?" Coco asked as he hopped excitedly around his three companions.

"Who? Who did you see?" Rabbit asked, wearing a big grin, its malice augmented by the length of his buck teeth. "Was it your mom?"

"Ugh. No, stupid. I saw Dora. Dora was the one. I caught her dipping her fingers into her hole when I went to visit her brother."

"Was she all naked and shit?" Manny asked.

"Yeah, pretty much," Coco said with a chuckle.

"So, you saw her big tits?" Julian asked.

"How do you know she has big tits?" Coco asked.

"Yeah, how do you know?" Manny asked.

"Yeah, how do you know?" Rabbit echoed.

It came as a surprise that Julian would have that form of sexual reconnaissance, given that he had such neatly trimmed and combed hair and a fresh, round face. The face of a cherub.

He was deemed too cute to know of such things. To them, Julian was a larger version of his younger brother.

“Well, you can see how big they are when she wears tight shirts,” Julian said.

“Yeah, that’s true,” Coco confirmed with a smile.

Coco told the others that when he saw Dora pleasuring herself, he froze. It looked as though Dora was trying to wedge her whole hand into her vagina.

“Ugh, I don’t think I can shake her hand ever again,” said Rabbit, wiping his lips with his shirt sleeve, then spitting. Rabbit always punctuated all of his remarks with spit. Sometimes loogies, but even when he didn’t have any saliva to spit with, the mere puff of precipitated air expelling through his puckered lips was enough to satisfy his oral fixation.

“That was like a month ago and she’s probably washed her hand a million times since then,” Coco assured him. “Plus, you shake a person’s whole hand, not just one finger, stupid.” Coco enjoyed calling everyone “stupid,” especially kids younger than he was, right to their faces, and to adults behind their back and under his breath.

“So, what happened? Did you bang her?” Julian asked, allowing the sparseness of the town’s edge to loosen his tongue and start talking like an adult.

“No,” Coco said, looking down sullenly. “I had the chance, but I was too chickenshit to take it.” As he led the way towards the surrounding hills, Coco told the story of a similar thing that happened to him years ago, when he used to accompany his mother to clean rich people’s houses.

“Well, she wasn’t my babysitter,” Coco said. “She was babysitting the son of my mom’s bosses.” On one occasion, the babysitter was under the impression that Coco’s mom wasn’t coming to clean the house, so she decided to take a shower and walk around the house naked.

“When she saw my mom and me in the kitchen, she freaked the fuck out.” The sitter tried to unwind the knot on the towel wrapped around her head, but it was wound so tight that she had to reach for a small dish rag. “She had some big ol’ titties,” Coco said, jumping up and down.

“They were just bouncing and bouncing. Boom, boom, boom.”

“Did you get to see her pussy?” Manny asked. Manny was obsessed with vaginas. A few years back, Manny, Julian and their older cousin Stan, who had just turned 18, rented a couple of porno videos. Up to that point, Julian had only heard of porno movies but had never actually seen one. He was very excited, but he also needed to pee and he didn’t want to miss all of the loving, so he held it in. The nudity took longer to reveal itself than he expected and by the time the first woman revealed her silicone-enhanced body, Julian was about ready to burst.

“Why don’t they show the girl’s pussy? They just keep showing her tits. Man, I wish she would turn around so I could look at it,” Manny said.

“Just shut up and look at the girl,” Stan replied.

“Um, I’ll be back,” Julian said as he jumped off the couch. “I gotta use the bathroom.” Julian ran past Manny and Stan, hunched over with a double-handed grip on his crotch. While the other two boys were under the laughing assumption that Julian’s testicles had spontaneously combusted, Julian was unloading his bladder, hosing the toilet as quickly as possible, trying not to miss the scene’s penetrating content.

Coco said that he got a little glimpse of the sitter’s pubic region, but that she kept covering it.

“Then what happened?” asked Rabbit.

“My stupid mom started yelling at her, which woke her the fuck up, and the fine-ass babysitter ran with her big ol’ booty into the bathroom,” Coco said, licking his lips. “Man, if only my mom hadn’t been there. What I wouldn’t have done.”

“What would’ve you done?” Julian asked.

“Well, I would’ve jumped on her and fucked her, stupid,” Coco said, incredulous in the face of Julian’s naiveté.

“Yeah, stupid,” said Manny.

“Yeah, stupid,” echoed Rabbit immediately after, both acting as if they themselves knew what Coco was alluding to and would have taken a similar course of action.

My cousin Manny and Rabbit had become inseparable ever since the former took a beating in lieu of the latter. Rabbit had the mouth to start fights and Manny the body to finish them. These two were so close that they used to masturbate in each other’s presence, covered in blankets, to Oliver Stone’s 1991 film, “The Doors.” The scene from which they drew the most inspiration was one depicting Nico, from the Velvet Underground, performing fellatio on Jim Morrison. When Julian met up with them after one of their “blanket sessions,” as they used to refer to them, they were practically holding hands. Even when it came to coming, Manny would come first and Rabbit would echo right after.

Julian felt left out, as he had on multiple occasions. He loathed his baby face because of it. To make it up to him, Manny decided to treat his younger cousin to an all-American, fun-loving pornfest. Upon Manny’s pushing play, the video flashed a splash of illumination onto the dark wood paneling, consuming the room with light. The image of a brunette woman lying on her back, legs splayed open, and a man with the biggest penis Julian had ever seen, took over the screen. This thing protruding out of the man’s torso was inserted slowly into the woman, who

was as surprised as Julian and Manny, to see how it kept fitting inside of her. She made it disappear completely. “But how?” Julian wondered. It was an act of magic, for all he knew. A miracle.

“Where did it go, and how did it get there?” Julian asked. Manny and Rabbit snickered quietly.

“It’s because chicks have three holes,” Coco said, stopping the expedition and turning around to face Julian. At an incline, Coco looked bigger and wiser than usual. “One of the holes is for shitting, the other for pissing and the last one’s for fucking.”

“Oh, that’s where they stick the semens, right?” Rabbit said. “That’s what they call artificial cocks. Right, Coco? Semens?”

“No, stupid. Semen is the shit that shoots out of your cock when the tip starts hurting so much that it makes you want to pee. Semen is pee that comes from your balls.”

“So what’s the name for artificial cocks?”

“Those are called dildos, stupid,” Coco said as he turned around and continued the walk.

The hike brought the boys closer and closer to the hill’s summit. As they traversed its steady incline, they came across different types of desert creatures, such as lizards, butterflies, big cockroaches and rats, suicidal squirrels and intrepid gophers, all of which served as target practice for the boys.

“Holy shit,” Rabbit screamed. “Did you see how I almost clocked that gopher on his stupid, pointy teeth?”

“You almost did, gopher teeth,” Coco said, as he, Manny and Julian broke into laughter. “I actually dated a girl with big, fucked-up teeth. She was the first girl I did it with.”

“Did what?” asked Julian.

“Sex, you idiot,” Coco quipped.

“Why do you always talk about sex, man?” Julian asked.

“Because sex is everywhere,” Coco replied, spreading his arms like wings, palms facing up, twisting his torso from side to side. “The birds sing because they want to fuck other birds. We’re here because our parents fucked. Rats fuck like crazy. That’s why there are so many goddamned rats in the world. You see how the bees are buzzing around the flowers? They’re fucking them.”

“Wait, really?” Manny asked.

“Really?” Rabbit asked.

“Yeah,” Coco said. “I want to fuck every girl I see because fucking feels so good. In fact, if Julian were a chick, I’d probably want to put my fingers down her panties.”

Manny and Rabbit went into a teasing frenzy and started to push Julian around, poking him with the sticks they were using to mutilate all of the innocent creatures that they came across and weren’t smart enough to run away. Julian was the only innocent amongst them, or at least the only one who wasn’t afraid to admit it.

“Alright, stop acting like faggots and leave him alone,” Coco commanded. “Yeah, so this girl was all up on my nuts. She kept telling her friends about me.” When they finally reached the top of the hill, Coco turned around to face the other kids. He planted his walking stick perpendicular to the ground, and they all took a seat on whatever they could find.

“So, then what happened?” Manny asked. “Did you see her pussy?”

“Yeah, did you see her pussy?” emphasized Rabbit.

“Well, one day when I was walking by the bathroom I saw her walking out. So I pulled her into the guys’ bathroom and locked it,” said Coco. “After that, she started jerking my dick and I put my fingers in her pussy.”

Manny’s mannerisms became jittery, manic. He was receiving the drug upon which his brain depended. Rabbit, who was sitting right next to Coco, couldn’t take his eyes off of the storyteller. Julian was worried. He was hoping that Coco and his girl didn’t get caught. He wanted to hear more but was afraid that an adult in the story would find out what Coco was doing in the bathroom.

“Did you dildo in her pussy?” Rabbit asked, not blinking once.

“Man, are you stupid or something?” Coco asked, exasperated. “I’ve told you a thousand times, dildos are fake cocks. Man, you should know. Your mom probably sticks a couple of them in her pussy when she’s not getting fucked by half the neighborhood.”

Coco and Manny started laughing, coughing because of the amount of dust their giddy feet were kicking up. Rabbit laughed, taking his friends’ reaction as a compulsory laugh track he subconsciously needed to obey. Julian laughed under the same pretenses, but he could see that the remark had hurt Rabbit a little bit, his upper lip drooping slowly, draping over his chipper smile.

“Yeah, so then she bent over and spread her ass for me and that’s when I shoved it in,” Coco said. “Man, she was so fucking tight that I busted a big-ass nut in her.”

“How long did it last?” Julian asked. All eyes turned to Julian. *How come I didn’t think of that?* Manny and Rabbit wondered. This was the main reason why the boys hated and liked Julian. He was intuitive and sensitive. He thought of things they would’ve never thought

possible, making them feel curious and stupid, all at once. After a second or so, all eyes went back to Coco.

“I think it lasted like a minute,” Coco said, scratching the back of his head, the tingling feeling that accompanies nervousness. “It’s because once you stick it in you automatically come.” The boys’ eyes bulged in disbelief. “One time I had sex and held my come inside my balls for five whole minutes.”

“Damn, that’s a long time,” Manny said.

“A long fucking time,” Rabbit said, padding Coco on the back.

“Yeah, I felt like my balls were going to blow u—” Coco said, suddenly interrupted by something he saw.

“What happened?” Julian asked.

“I don’t know,” said Coco, “I just saw something black run behind you guys.”

“Yeah, me too,” Rabbit said.

Manny and Julian turned to see what the other boys were so alarmed about. Coco stood up in one clean motion and pulled his wooden Excalibur out of the earth. He brought his index finger up to his face and formed a cross with the line between his lips, whispering, “Shut the fuck up.”

The other boys rose up slowly and spread out around the bush Coco had motioned to.

“Rabbit, when I tell you, you’re going to throw this rock at the bush,” Coco instructed.

“Okay,” Rabbit whispered.

When Coco mimed the stone throw, Rabbit launched the rock into the bush. The bush shook for a moment. Nothing happened. With a look of puzzlement, the boys took a step forward. The bush rattled once again, and a piglet, brown and hairy, bolted out as if on fire, past

the four boys. Coco yelled out to follow it. As they sprinted downhill, right behind it, the piglet kept looking, unsuccessfully, for another place to hide, swerving left and right, jumping over rocks and fallen branches. The boys picked up rocks along the way and threw them at the fleeing animal, trying to injure it. The piglet veered away from the points where the rocks collided, gliding through the clouds of dust rippling around it.

“Look, it’s going into that cave,” Manny said.

“I’m not fucking going in there,” Julian said, curtailing his stride, falling behind the pack.

“Yeah, you are, fucking pussy,” Coco yelled, trying to catch his breath.

The piglet ran in, as did Coco, Manny and Rabbit. It took Julian a few seconds, but he reluctantly joined them. When he finally caught up with the other three inside the dark cave, Manny was shining a light on the creature.

“It looks like a baby,” Julian said, alarmed by how small and defenseless the creature was. Its shivering vulnerability reminded Julian of the nights when he used to console his brother after he’d wake up from a nightmare.

“You look like a baby,” Rabbit scoffed, poking Manny’s ribs with his elbow.

“Let’s kill it,” Coco said as he began to gather several rocks. Manny and Rabbit did the same. The piglet was trying to burrow itself, digging desperately into the dirt.

“Get him! He’s trying to get away,” yelled Manny.

The boys began to hit the piglet with a torrential rain of rocks, eliciting ear-piercing cries from the animal, similar to those of a child. This was the very reason Julian had refused to bring his brother Thiago along. He could picture his brother being tortured in the same fashion by the gang. Julian closed his eyes. The boys laughed. The symphony of pain and play reverberated through the cave walls and through Julian’s tortured eardrums.

“Coco, it’s running towards you,” yelled Rabbit. Coco kicked the piglet like a soccer ball, its little, broken body thudding off the wall and bouncing on the dirty ground. “That’s my boy,” Rabbit yelled, as he and Coco hand-slapped, echoing over the piglet’s dying whimpers.

“Hey, Julian,” Coco said, “open your goddamned eyes, you little pussy.” Julian opened his eyes and saw the piglet heaving violently, its last breaths interrupted by spastic jerks. It looked like a run-over puppy. “Come over and kick it a little. Don’t worry. It’s almost dead.”

“No,” Julian said turning his back to the boys. “It wasn’t hurting anybody.” *Hurting things was fun, Julian thought, but killing was different.* He imagined it felt like drowning, like being thrown from the third story of a building and not knowing whether you would survive or never open your eyes again. “Just do it without me.”

“What?” Coco asked. “Bring his faggot ass over here.” Manny and Rabbit ran over to Julian, who was beginning to run towards the mouth of the cave. They dove towards him before he could exit and grabbed his legs, knocking him flat on his face. They flipped him over and dragged him by his feet towards Coco, who was standing over the piglet’s tenderized body. Manny and Rabbit picked Julian up and each held him by his arms.

“Here, kiss your baby boyfriend,” Coco said, picking up the bloody pig from the ground and shoving it in Julian’s face. The piglet’s eyes were hanging out of its sockets like a landfill baby doll, and blood was gushing out of its baby snout. It was shrieking in pain. “I want you to kick me, Julian,” Coco mocked, snorting like a pig.

Julian knew what he had to do. The piglet would never be the same. It would never run or play again. Even if he refused to torture it, it would die at the hands of his friends or in agonizing pain if he were to convince them to leave it alone and go home.

With one eye opened and the other half-closed, Julian saw the piglet on its side, running in circles with the only leg that wasn't completely broken. He took a deep breath, a big gulp of snot and closed his tear-lined eyes. With tears rolling down his cheeks like drops of blood, Julian let out a loud cry that filled the totality of the cave and jumped up in the air, breaking free from his captors' grasp. As he landed back on the dirt floor, Julian crushed the piglet's skull. The sound was similar to that of stepping on a raw egg, the bloody yolk bathing the ground adjacent to it. Julian's shoes were spattered red with blood and muddy with purple brain matter goop and bone. He released it from their cruelty, just like he would've wanted someone else to do for his brother. To end his misery in the face of brutality. To send him to heaven instead of living in hell.

"What the fuck?" Manny yelled, "What did you do, stupid?"

"What did you do, stupid?" Rabbit yelled, or maybe it was just the cave's echo.

"That's okay, guys," Coco reassured them. "We were going to kill it anyway." Coco began to unzip his pants and motioned the rest of the group to do the same. "Let's pee on it now."

Julian was apprehensive once again, but he also knew that if he didn't comply, it would take them even longer to head back home. As the boys whipped out their baby penises, Coco pulled out his large, over-developed one. Manny and Rabbit started to spray and splatter their urine on the piglet's desecrated carcass almost on command, but Julian was having trouble starting. Manny and Rabbit were laughing and crossing streams and Coco kept tugging and jerking at his penis, which looked erect. Julian was first to finish.

"Hey, Coco. What the fuck are you doing?" asked Rabbit.

"I'm jerk—"

“Aw, dude. Are you jerking off?” Manny interrupted.

“Yeah,” Coco answered with a smile.

Julian remembered what that looked like from the pornos he had seen, but it wasn't until that moment, until he saw Coco release semen, that he figured out what had happened to him a few months back while watching Francis Ford Coppola's 1972 film "The Godfather."

The scene where Michael Corleone undresses his Sicilian wife Apollonia, exposing her small, perky, olive-tone breasts. That sight gave Julian a strange sensation in the pit of his stomach, as if he needed to pee. After everybody went to sleep, Julian rewatched the consummation scene, and the sensation in his pants returned. The organ that had delineated his boyhood was slowly petrifying and cobblestoning the way into his manhood. The scene passed, and so did the feeling. Julian rewound again, and again the feeling returned, a little more intense each time. The rush that it elicited was an addictive feeling. Julian did it over and over. He was transfixed on Simonetta Stefanelli's Barbie-doll breasts. Julian stared at her body for an eternity. The amount of time necessary for Julian to thrust himself out of childhood and come forcefully into manhood. When he reached the unbearable feeling Coco had mentioned, he felt a warmth emanating from his innermost being. Julian imagined that this was what Mary, the mother of Christ, must have felt when her body was inhabited by the Spirit of God. It was complete and utter envelopment. A baptism by fire.

After the intensity of the moment allowed Julian to blink and move his limbs again, he found that he had soiled his white cotton briefs with the same substance that Coco was dripping onto the piglet's cadaver.

“This is the cave of dicks,” Coco said proudly. “And I'll beat the crap out of you, like I did this pig, if you mention this to anybody.” They shook on it and zipped up their pants.

They were greeted by a darkening sky as they emerged from the darkness of the cave. Everybody was quiet, even Rabbit. Julian wished he had stayed back, playing the stupid games his brother wanted to play. He knew that they had a long way to go before they saw any streetlights. Coco would probably run off before then, with one of his real friends. Rabbit would disappear like he always did. Manny would start acting as if he was Coco, talking about things he knew nothing about. And Julian would go back to being his brother's older, chubbier twin. But he knew that even after he crossed the threshold of his grandmother's house, he would never be able find his way back home.