

ROBBERY UNDER ELMS

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Characters:

Brian
Chrissy
Micki
Ned

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ROBBERY UNDER ELMS

THE PARK

CHRISSY AND BRIAN ARE SITTING ON A BENCH

BRIAN: Don't start crying.

CHRISSY: Are you saying you don't love me?

BRIAN: That's not exactly what I'm saying.

CHRISSY: What are you saying then?

BRIAN: I don't think I *ever* loved you.

CHRISSY: How can you say that?

BRIAN: You don't let me breathe. When I'm around you I literally feel like I can't breathe.

CHRISSY: I'm the one....Who can't breathe....
(CHRISSY PULLS OUT HER ASTHMA PUFFER AND TAKES A FEW PUFFS)
See how stressed this is making me. I just can't believe you can do this to me Brian. I can't believe you can say you don't love me.

BRIAN: I didn't say I don't love you....I said I don't think I *ever* loved you.
There's a distinct difference.
I think I like you.

CHRISSY: You're sleeping with someone....Someone else.

BRIAN: No. I'm not.

CHRISSY: I don't believe you.

BRIAN: Take a few deep breaths. Just calm down.

CHRISSY: Don't patronize me. I know you're screwing someone.

BRIAN: I'm not.

CHRISSY: You're lying.

BRIAN: You're right. I am.

CHRISSY: Who is it?

BRIAN: It doesn't matter. It's Maxine Beale. Now you know. Does that make you feel any better?

CHRISSY: Maxine Beale.

BRIAN: Don't get fixated on that. It's us. Chrissy, there's nothing thereMaxine or no Maxine-

CHRISSY: She has a huge arse.

BRIAN: What?

CHRISSY: Maxine Beale has one of the biggest arses I've ever seen. How can you break up with me for Maxine Beale. I have such a small bum. And I have dimples...When I smile. Do you know how rare that is? Two dimples. You're leaving a woman with a sweet smile laden with dimples for a woman with an arse as big as Texas.

BRIAN: Chrissy, I told you....It's not her. It's.... You suffocate me.

CHRISSY: I suffocate you? (*USES THE PUFFER*) That's a joke.If you're sleeping with Maxine Beale, you'd better be careful she doesn't roll on you in bed – then you'll know suffocation. Then you'll know what its like to be me....Right now....Completely crushed. (*USES THE PUFFER*)

BRIAN: You're making yourself sick.

CHRISSY: You and barge arsed Maxine Beale are making me sick.
(*USES THE PUFFER AND STIFLES A SOB*)
Now I've used up my whole puffer....

(A MAN AND A WOMAN BOTH WEARING BALACLAVAS APPROACH FROM BEHIND. THE MAN LOOKS AROUND WHILE THE WOMAN APPROACHES BRIAN AND CHRISSY WITH HER HAND IN HER POCKET – AS THOUGH HOLDING A WEAPON)

MICKI: Don't bother turning around. Nothing to see. Mouths shut and make this nice and easy. Hand over that watch, mobile phones, all your cash and the handbag. Now.

BRIAN: Jesus. Are you robbing us?
But you're a woman.....

MICKI: 10 out of 10. Let's cut the fucking editorial Einstein. No commentary necessary. Move quickly and make sure Darth Vader there does the same. Now hurry the fuck up.

CHRISSY: I have asthma and I need to get my spare ventolin out of the bag. I'll give you my purse and-

MICKI: I couldn't give a fat rat's arse about your asthma, princess. You can drop dead on the fucking bench there for all I care. Just give me the purse and the bag before I get very fucking angry. Do you think I've got a knife..... Well if you don't want to find out throw the bag over here. And do not turn around.

BRIAN: Chrissy give her the bag.

MICKI: Do as this dickhead suggests. You're giving me the absolute shits and when that happens... Things can get pretty fucking scary.

CHRISSY: Don't shoot me.

BRIAN: Shut up and give her the bag. It's a knife not a gun.

MICKI: I'm going to have Ned here count to five and if I don't have that bag by 4 and a half, you are in big trouble. Now start counting Ned.

NED: One.

CHRISSY: Just the puffer... I need it for my asthma.

NED: Two.

BRIAN: Give her the bag.... For Christ's sake.

NED: Three.

MICKI: This could have been so easy.

NED: Four.

CHRISSY: I can't find it.

MICKI: For the last time....Hand over that bag or I'm going to slice you open you stupid cow.

NED: Five.

(CHRISSEY THROWS THE BAG AT MICKI.)

MICKI: At last. Let's get the fuck out of here.

(MICKI TAKES OFF. NED LOOKS BACK AT CHRISSEY WHO IS USING HER EMPTY PUFFER FRANTICALLY AND THEN EXITS)

BRIAN: Christ....We were just mugged....By a woman.

And you could've got me killed. This is the thing with you...Everything is so high maintenance. Come on....We need to get to a phone and ring the police. And an ambulance. Jesus. That's all I need...You dying.....It's bad enough I was mugged by a woman.

A FEW MONTHS LATER

THE SAME PARK – CHRISSEY IS READING A BOOK

NED: Anyone sitting there?

CHRISSEY: No.

NED: You come here a bit?

CHRISSEY: Sometimes.

(NED FOSSICKS AROUND IN HIS POCKETS. HE PULLS OUT THE VENTOLIN)

NED: Is this yours?

CHRISSEY: Did I drop it?

NED: Just take it.

CHRISSEY: Who are you?

NED: Don't ask any questions, okay. You don't know me.

CHRISSEY: Oh my God. I do know you. You-

NED: Don't yell . I'm not going to hurt you. I don't want to take anything. I just wanted to give you this .

(HOLDS OUT AN ASTHMA PUFFER IN A PLASTIC BAG)

CHRISSY: Leave me alone. I'll scream.

NED: Don't get excited. You're not going to have another attack. Are you?

CHRISSY: For your information the police are looking for you and-

NED: Settle down. They got Micki. She tried to knock off a car outside the pub. She'd had one Midori and lemonade too many. Lost her head. Anyway, I just wanted to give you this.

CHRISSY: How did you find me?

NED: I hung around here for a few weeks after and then one day you came back and had your lunch so I followed you. Don't worry I'm not stalking you.

CHRISSY: Sounds like it .

NED: I don't want to do a big song and dance – I just wanted to give you the puffer. We should've let you have it that day. I mean asthma can kill you, can't it?

I made sure it's not out of date. It's clean. I kept it in a plastic bag.

CHRISSY: For six months?

NED: Yeah.

CHRISSY: Why?

NED: Look, it seemed like you were having a really shitty day. Giving back the puffer would've been a good thing to do.

CHRISSY: Thanks for nothing. Not threatening me with a knife might've also been a good thing to do.

NED: Micki wouldn't have hurt you. She's all talk.

The funny thing is....After we took your bag I couldn't stop thinking about it and then I started thinking about the first crime I'd ever committed.. And then I couldn't sleep.

CHRISSY: Excuse me if I don't feel a lot of sympathy.

NED: Yeah, yeah...Calm down. This is an interesting story.
When I was 13, this lady a few doors down got a brand new car. A little white Jap car. She was always polishing it.

One night, it was parked outside her house and I don't know why but I picked up a piece of glass out of the gutter and scratched "Fuck off" across the passenger side door... I had trouble with the 'u' in Fuck so it looked like I'd written....F.V.C.K

Next day, I saw her with the police. It made me feelPowerful. I felt like I was controlling what she did for a few days. I changed her routine. Me. If I hadn't scratched the car, she wouldn't have to get the train to work while it was fixed. It was a great feeling. She'd had to change her plans because of me. Me. It was amazing.

That day with you. I thought about it again.. Like taking that puffer meant we could have killed you. We could've have changed your life without meaning to. That's really powerful isn't it?

CHRISSY: Fascinating. But you didn't change my life or me.

NED: Suit yourself.
So where's your boyfriend?

CHRISSY: He dumped me. And that wasn't because of you . He was seeing someone else. A woman with a huge arse.

NED: What a dog. You could see he was a complete dickhead. You should've let Micki stab him...But Micki's knife was a plastic letter opener so it probably wouldn't have broken the skin.

CHRISSY: Could you really see he was a dickhead?

NED: No question. Complete turd.*(PAUSE)*
Anyway nice catch up but I gotta go. Don't worry about me stalking you. I'm heading to up to Queensland.

CHRISSY: Really?

NED: Moving in a new direction. Different profession.
Respaying stolen cars. I'm getting a bus tonight. I just wanted to give you the puffer.

To tell the truth...Before I tracked you down, I really thought you might've carked....

CHRISSEY: I wanted to. But not anymore.....I'm completely over it...Brian, I mean.

NED: He was a dickhead.

CHRISSEY: And you really would not believe the size of her arse. It's absolutely huge. But I don't care. Couldn't care less. It's just....she's so smug. Smug and self satisfied.

NED: You feel like teaching people like that, a lesson. Getting revenge. Making them pay.

CHRISSEY: Revenge...Yes. That's all I've thought about.... I'd like to see her fall straight on her huge fat arse. Then she'd see that I've had the last laugh... Me. The sad pathetic jilted asthmatic..... I would laugh then....Let me tell you.

NED: Don't get over excited. You don't want to blow a lung.

CHRISSEY: Is it hard to commit a crime?

NED: With Micki it was complicated. You probably didn't notice but she was a very angry woman....Made it personal. Too much talking. A mugging should have a seamless poetry. Like a ballet.

CHRISSEY: Would you have time to mug someone...For instance...In an afternoon... This afternoon? For instance... Hypothetically. If you wanted to. If someone asked you? Someone you couldn't say 'no' to. Someone you owe a debt to....

NED: I don't have debts...Never borrow money. Never get into debt.

CHRISSEY: More....a moral debt.

NED: I wouldn't want any hassle catching the bus.

CHRISSY: Wouldn't it be easy? If you knew exactly where your victims were going to be. If there were any victims....To know about. For instance.

NED: How many would there be? For instance...

CHRISSY: Two. And if by chance...You did decide toMug them....They wouldn't actually be hurt? Would they? Theoretically speaking.

NED: I don't even have a plastic letter opener. I'd have to use a ballpoint pen. To tell the truth....It's the balaclava that really puts the wind up. Muggings are a mental game...

CHRISSY: Yes. I see that.

NED: It's all about what goes on up here. (*INDICATES HIS HEAD*)

CHRISSY: And its not like you can refuse. Because maybe this person can identify you....So you owe them. You really owe them. Hypothetically.

NED: You and Micki have more in common than you'd think.

(PAUSE)

So how would I know them? If there was anyone to know? If someone was to ask me. Someone I couldn't say 'no' to.

CHRISSY: You can't miss them. He's a dickhead and she has an enormous arse.

LIGHTS DOWN