

Hilary Slump

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Breathless, Hilary sagged to the dilapidated gas station's concrete floor. He leaned back against the same glass topped counter he pressed his forehead against twelve years earlier when he and his friends dropped their bikes and stormed the owner to acquire their daily fix of sugar. Dank oily air draped around him heavily as was this predicament he'd created for himself.

When he'd told the pawnshop owner to hand over his cash box, Hilary hadn't expected the fool to pull a gun from under the counter. Luckily, the old man was a little slow. Hilary shot him six times, but not before the clerk set off an alarm. Startled by the clamor of the moment, Hil bolted out the front door and scrambled down the block, ducking into the alley between the Five and Dime and the bank. "Shit," he grumbled when he realized he forgot to grab the cash box that was crucial to escape his miserable life, this wretched town.

Sirens drove him to this long-abandoned Sunoco station. The one where his asshole of a father had worked in the back room fixing flats and changing oil. Rolling the stud pierced through his lower lip with his fingertips he willed himself to think. Then he laughed out loud at the notion of what thinking had done for him so far. He laughed even louder as he pondered his notions that the life a crime, romanticized by the movies, would be so easy, exciting, even fun. In less than ten minutes, what had seemed so reasonable to a eighteen-year-old had been slapped right out of him.

Hilary flipped open the cylinder and dumped the spent 38 cartridges onto the oil stained floor between his outstretched legs. He dug the remaining few shells from his jacket pocket and reloaded. He stared into the black hole of the sixth chamber, realizing this is what his life has become. As he listened to the click, click, click as the cylinder turned, he pondered his next move, realizing there were no good ones.

Bright lights streamed through the filthy windows of the station. Hil stiffened at the sharp crack of the bullhorn, "It's over, Hilary."

He cocked the hammer and snarled, "Yes, it is."