

Have you ever wondered what could make a person cold and calculating
or naive and trusting or totally out of touch with reality?

An Urban Tale

Dane Maurice Horn
1969

Dane and his younger brother Malcolm lived in a small southern town with Big Mama, uncle Sonny and several other women in a big gray house. Big Mama's house was a landmark. Everybody in town knew what it was and where it was. "The Big House", as it was called, sat on the corner of 5th and Lincoln and had a huge porch that wrapped around the front of it and ran down both sides. Depending on where you sat, you could see men headed to The Big House from all directions.

Dane and Malcolm's parents were attending college in Michigan. The plan was for the boys to stay with Big Mama until their father finished law school. In the entire history of the Horn family, Dane's father the first person ever to get a college education, but that ain't the only kind of education you can get.

"Boy, go down the street and git yo' uncle Sonny. Hurry up chile! Tell 'im Mae-Ree and Sylvia is at it again. Go on now boy."

"Ok, Big Mama."

"Uncle Sonny! Uncle Sonny!" Dane calls running the block as fast as his five year old legs will carry him. When he reaches his uncle he is out of breath.

"Uncle Sonny!" Dane yells, "Big Ma said come get Mae-Ree and Sylvia! They fightin'!"

Uncle Sonny and his friends laugh at the little boy interrupting their dice game.

"Hold on there lil fella. Can't you see I'm getting these nigga's money? What I teach you about money?" Sonny asked

"That money talks and bullshit walks." Dane answered

The crowd of men burst out laughing to hear such game coming from a five year old.

"Alright then. Fuck Mae-Ree and Sylvia for right now."

Sonny shook the dice in his hand, held them under his nephew's mouth and told him to blow. He told Dane to be ready to count the numbers when the dice stop rolling. Dane squats down in the semi-circle with his hands on his knees like the other men.

Sonny shakes his hand again and lets the dice fly.

RRRRRRRRRR SNAP! The dice stop rolling, bouncing off the wall on the side of the building were the men have huddled to play.

"Nine" called Dane, when the dice came to a stop, already able to count and add numbers

quickly.

“Daz my point!” yelled Sonny, “Pick up that money boy!”

Sonny throws the dice a few more times, Dane adds and counts a few more times.

Finally, Sonny is ready to leave. He hands part of his winnings to Dane in front of the other men.

“Here you go baby boy.” he tells his nephew, “This chump change is for you.”

Sonny smirks at the crowd of well dressed young men, “You see that shit muthafuckas?”

“Yall’s rent and car note money is gon’ go for candy and firecrackers!” He laughs in their faces.

Dane counts his money and carefully folds it and puts it in the front pocket of his jeans. He loves hanging around his uncle Sonny. On the way home Dane asks his uncle, “What’s wrong with Sylvia and Mae-Ree? Why they always fighting?”

“They fighting cause they in love.” answered Sonny, “They in love wit’ ‘cho uncle Sonny and they trying to figa out who love me the most. I know one thing though. If they got time to fight, they better have me some money!”

Back at the house, Sonny and Dane sit on the west end of the porch furthest from the front door.

“Dane, go get Mae-Ree.”

“Ok uncle Sonny.”

The little boy got up to do as he was told. He ran the length of the porch, around the front of the house and in through the front door. He ran past Big Mama, who was sitting on the sofa with his brother Malcolm on her lap watching today’s episode of “As The World Turns”.

“Git yo butt over here boy! What took you so long to get your uncle? Everythang over wit now!”

“Go get me a switch!”

“Uncle Sonny want me to get Mae-Ree, ok, Big Ma? Ah be right back, ok?” Dane soothes, stopping to give his grandma a hug, a kiss and a five dollar bill. She smacks his butt and puts the five dollars in her bra. He ran past a pouting, busted lipped, black eyed Sylvia, who was sitting in the parlor holding an ice pack to her head. He ran past Pearl, who headed upstairs with a basin of hot water and some clean towels. He ran past Kelly and a mister john going down the cellar, and into the kitchen to get Mae-Ree.

Mae-Ree was tall, slender and brown. She was sitting at the powder blue kitchen table with her pecan colored legs stretched out in front of her, moving her feet to and fro in an effort to dry her freshly painted toenails. She wore a peach colored miro-mini skirt and didn’t appear to have on any panties. Her white blouse was short sleeved and tied at the stomach and because it didn’t have any buttons, created quite a frame for her peach satin push-up bra.

Mae-Ree stared out the window through half closed eyes, letting smoke from her Pall Mall cigarette flow lazily from her nose and mouth. Billie Holiday crooned from the record player in the corner of the kitchen.

*“Mah man wouldn’t give me no breakfast
wouldn’t give me no dinner,
squawked about my supper
then he put me outdoors,
had the nerve to lay a matchbox on my clothes.”*

“Uncle Sonny want you.”

Dane doesn’t notice Mae-Ree roll her eyes or heave and sigh as she gets up to do as she is told.

The small boy follows her from the kitchen and out thru the front door. Out on the porch, Mae-Ree stops to speak to a mister john coming up the front steps. She smiles at mister john and tells him Sylvia is in the parlor and that she will take care of him.

Mister john begs for *her* attention.

“Sylvia don’t do me like you do.”

“Next time.” she promises.

At the other end of the porch, Dane reaches his uncle and sits on the floor next to his chair.

“Where Mae-Ree at?” Sonny asked

“She talking to that man.” Dane answered

By the time Mae-Ree reached Sonny, he had already started to burn.

“If I sent this boy to get you, how come he beat you back?” he snarled

“Because Frank just got here. He wanted to see me, but I told him Sylvia would take him.”

“Oh you did huh? So you wanna direct girls around like you my bottom bitch, but you wanna fight and make trouble like a first day hoe. You lucky the stories on or my Mama woulda beat yo’ ass herself. Now which is it gonna be baby? You gonna be my number one lady or you gonna keep making trouble and make me put yo ass back out on the street? I thought you liked working in the house. You wanna go back to sucking dick in cars?”

“It wasn’t me Daddy. It was Sylvia. I think she stealing from you.” Mae-Ree said, just as much with her neck as with her mouth.

Sonny stood up from his chair. His hand shot out so fast, Mae-Ree never saw it coming.

“You counting my money now bitch?” Is you out yo’ goddamn mind?”

Sonny smacked the slightly built woman down to the porch.

“Daaaaaang!!! Daddy! Noooooooo! It was that bitch! You should be kicking her ass!”

“Shut up” Sonny said using a cool even tone, “You got too much goddamn mouth. That’s why you talking from the floor right now. Sittin’ up here worrying about somebody else’s trap. How much you got? How much money was yo’ pussy worth today?”

Mae-Ree reached into her bra and pulled out two hundred dollars. Just then, a mister john came across the grass to short end of the porch. He put his hands on the rail and cleared his throat.

Mae-Ree got up from the floor, wiping tears from her face and motioned for mister john to follow her to the front of the house.

“Thank you baby.” Sonny said, kissing Mae-Ree on cheek and taking the money as she passed.

“Dane, go get Sylvia.”

“Ok, uncle Sonny.”

Lillian Alexandria Lyons

1974

*“Somebody come and plaaaay.
Somebody come and play, to-day-a.
Somebody come, and sing a song
and laugh a while, it won’t take long.
Somebody come and plaaaay to-daaaay”.....*

She’s three years old with two nappy brown afro puffs, sitting on the floor in purple Tough Skins jeans, with no shoes and no shirt, singing along with the television. Ernie and Bert and Big Bird and Snuffy are all seen through the bright sunlight and faint blue haze wafting through the room. The air smells so sweet. It’s the delicate aroma incense and marijuana, only to Lily it is the smell of love. She thinks her house smells this way because everybody loves each other so much. So much you could smell it.

Mommy walks over, puffing a joint, and places a bowl of Coco Wheats and a glass of water on the floor next to Lily. Lily hates milk and Mommy doesn’t make her drink it. Mommy is so sweet.

Keys rattle and then the doorknob turns in the door to the small apartment in the Jeffries projects. It’s Daddy, home from class.

“Hi Daddy!” Lily yells from the floor. She doesn’t bother to get up because she knows Mommy will beat her to the door. Everyday when Daddy comes home, Mommy runs to the door and greets him with hugs and tongue kisses. Daddy is so handsome with his baldhead, red-brown skin, dashiki shirt and bell bottomed pants.

Mmmmmmmmmmm. Can you smell that? Mommy is at the stove, cooking dinner in her underwear. Fried pork chops, rice and brussels sprouts. They eat together at the kitchen table in the tiny apartment on the fourteenth floor. Between bites of food, Daddy is walking back and forth from the dinner table to the television, switching channels from Sixty Minutes to Sanford and Son and back again. Mommy has one knee under her chin and one foot on the floor, totally absorbed in a novel by Octavia Butler. Lily is drawing pictures with a purple crayon directly onto the surface of the family dinner table.

“Finish you food Lily.”

Mommy feeds Daddy a fork full of rice. They kiss. Mommy treats Daddy so good. Everyone is so happy. The air smells so sweet.

Tonight Mommy and Daddy are having a party, which means Lily will be sleeping under hundreds of coats. She likes sleeping under all those layers because it reminds her of the fairytale Mommy read to her called "The Princess and the Pea" only in reverse. It's so warm and comfy and there are always so many interesting things in all the different pockets.

At one point, Lily creeps out from her coat cave and into the front room to get a look at the party. Mommy and Daddy have so many friends. Men and women, black and white. The small apartment is crowded with wall to wall hippies huddled in groups. They are discussing philosophies of religion, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement and Watergate. Explaining rhyme and reason above the din of conversations, Jim Hendrix and Isaac Hayes. Marvin Gaye and Gil Scott Heron. Griot Galaxy and The Last Poets. Between records, bongo drums play and Daddy's favorite blues recite their own revolutionary poetry. The air smells like love.

Can you see it?

Black light bulbs and day-glow peace signs. Posters of Che Guevara, H. Rap Brown, Angela Davis, Malcolm X and Fred Hampton.

Crouching on the floor in a dark hallway, Lily is almost stepped on as people pass her to enter her parent's bedroom. She peeps thru the crack in the open door.

Mommy and Daddy's friends sure did love each other. Lily could tell because they were all kissing and hugging. And they were naked. Their naked bodies were beautiful to her. Like the sculptures at the Institute of Arts where she and Mommy spent most Saturdays. Only this art was moving. And sweating. And grunting.

Unnoticed, Lily creeps back to her room slips beneath the coats and soon she is asleep. Warm and comfy and happy. Surrounded by so much love.

So much she could smell it.

Dane
2002

I have never had problems with women. Not from the first time I got some pussy from a girl when I was eight years old. All my life I was taught how to handle women, and dammit, they love me for it. First, you can't get no smoother than me. And I ain't trying to rub you the wrong way, it's just the truth. I got bitches from one side of Detroit to the other and if you ask any one of 'em if they was my number one lady, they'd be on it. My wife included.

It's all about giving these chicks what they need, and all any of 'em need to be under control is a

little attention. Trust me brothers, a little goes long way. Besides, it don't take much to control a woman's mind anyway. They all want to be told what to do. They been programed like that from birth. Man, I'm telling you, if you know how to handle yourself, and you got a plan, you can pull the bitch out of any woman, if you know what I mean.

Managing my pop's law firm puts me in contact with boatloads of women on a daily basis. But I don't usually waste my time on no chicken who ain't of some use to me. Take Kendra for instance. She's the docket clerk over at 36th district court. Every day, even if I don't have to go to court, I'll call Kendra and ask, "How's your day going Kendra?" Then I actually listen to the answer, or do a damn good job pretending to. I take Kendra out to lunch now and then, (usually just to fuck) and presto: the partners in the firm always get heard in front of "our" judges. This little move translates into hundreds of thousands of dollars. It's a beautiful thang. And it only takes an hour or less out of my day. Next you got Lily. She works at our bank. This bitch will deposit or cash any check I put in front of her. That's important. In this line of work. I come across all kinds of checks. They could be made payable to Joe Blow or anybody and Lily will take care of it. All I have to do is get high with her after work from time to time. It's a small investment that gives major returns. Besides, I'm gonna get high on my way home from work anyway, whether I stop to cruise with Lily or not. The only thing about her is, by the time she finally let me fuck her, I'd gotten to know her. I'd even started to like her little bit. Then she turned out to have bomb ass pussy. That combination can get a nigga shook, so I try not to fuck with her that much.

But listen, a good thing about fucking a lot of bitches is, it's like having your ear to the ground. You'd be surprised at what pussy can reveal to you. Like that one time I was digging out the new secretary at the firm. If I hadn't been in her bedroom, I never would have seen the checks that dumb bitch stole from us and had tucked away in her panty drawer. Yeah. I be looking in panty drawers. You should too. That's where bitches hide they secrets. Anyway, as a result of my discovery, in exchange for not telling my pops or pressing charges, I just made her work for free for three months and continued to fuck her. She had some good pussy, too.

Fellas, listen to me when I tell you this. Being married is the perfect way to keep several women on a string, 'cause they don't blame you if you don't spend any time with them. They blame your wife, they blame your kids. They don't even consider the possibility of you having other bitches. It's so funny.

Now about my wife. She's perfectly suited to me. She knows what's important. My wife was a virgin from a wealthy family when I met her in college. That was rare, so I chose her to bear my sons and married her. She's quiet and she don't bug me. I don't give her a reason to. Every morning I get our boys dressed for school. (Even if I've just crept in myself) I cook breakfast and we eat together. I go to every play, football game and parent teacher conference. I make it a point to be home by six o'clock every night. I help my sons with homework and spend quality time with my family. We eat dinner together every night. By 9:30 my wife and kids are in bed and I'm out the door. My wife receives a weekly allowance of \$500.00 that don't include bill money, plus she gets to keep her paycheck. She drives a Range Rover and we travel at least once a month, even if

it's just a weekend trip to Toronto. She don't have nothing to complain about.

Lily
2002

I've know Dane since I was nineteen. I meet him while working as a teller at a bank in Detroit because he handled the banking for his father's prestigious law firm. I guess I sort of ended up with Dane because even though he was fine as all get out, none of the other tellers liked to wait on him because he could be a little stern and demanding sometimes. Ok, truthfully, he was a bully. He was mean and impatient all the time. He had to be sure you did everything correctly, so he's make you do these giant transactions over and over before he'd be satisfied or he might need a check cashed that belonged to one of his clients or something. I never gave him any trouble because his father's firm was one of our branch's biggest accounts. Eventually Dane and I began to hang out together. He'd be waiting for me when I got off work, sitting in the bank parking lot with the top down on his Mercedes. He'd have some weed and beer and we'd cruise the streets of Detroit for a little while, getting high and listening to music. We would listen to Jill Scott, India Irie or Eryka Badu if I got to pick music. If Dane had his pick, it was Christopher Wallace, John Coletrane, Miles Davis or whoever he thought was pimpin' at the time. We'd cruise to the island park on the edge of town, park near the river and spark up a joint. We used to call it ghetto strollin. Dane was a cool dude once you got to know him. He could be so funny. He'd be cracking on me the entire time we were together. If I was having a bad hair day, he would be merciless. "What's up with the schwing schwing?" he'd ask "Part of your hair schwinging this way, part of your hair schwinging that way. Wass up wit that baby? Why don't you just buy a wig?" I remember one day we was doing our normal hangin' thang. He'd picked me up from work, we snagged our sack, and then he asked me,

"When was we gonna fuck?"

"What!? Nigga please." I told him, "I don't fuck married men."

I didn't mention he was married?

Anyway

I told him we were friends and that's how I liked it. He told me he didn't have any female friends

he hadn't fucked. I told him I had plenty of male friends I hadn't slept with because I didn't go around passing my treasure out to any Tom, Dick or Dane who wanted some. I told him my best feature was between my ears, not between my legs. Even though I've been told I got some of the best pussy on the westside of Detroit.

Dane didn't press me about having sex, but he still came around and picked me up to get high after work. He was always so cool.

As our friendship grew, so did our love for each other. But it wasn't that "in love" kind of love. It was that "you're my first choice love" the "you're the one I like to hang with" love. I mean look, he was picking me up from work at least three or four times a week. I'm sure he could have been doing any one of a million things. He was running a successful law firm and was a devoted family man. Nonetheless, he would make time to spend with me. The bonus was, I never had to pay for weed. By the time we actually had sex, I was really and truly in love with him. And that made him my man. To me anyway.

Dane

Every night I go out on rounds, checking my various hustles.

Check it. I have an entirely different life outside practicing law, because frankly, that was my father's dream. Not mine. It's ok, and the money is good, but all that acting humble to asshole judges with that, "Yes your Honor", shit and having to deal with murderers and thieves and babysitting dumb ass clients gets on my nerves. Besides, there's lots of ways to get money.

Naturally, I have to run two shifts of bitches. Just like in the day time only at night it's a different set of chicks. It stands to reason that a different type hustle would require a different group of bitches, right? For instance, I got this one bitch named Dawn. Her father owns a pharmacy on the eastside. She'll get me boxes of Viagra, Valium, Xanax, Vicoden, Oxycontin or any other shit I ask for. Dawn's a special kind of girl. She got suction in her mouth like an Oreck eight pound vaccum cleaner. Plus she got this long thick ass tongue. It's like a friggin' cow tongue. I swear to god. She'll have my dick down her throat and be licking my balls at the same time, no lie! She can suck and slurp all at once. She has absolutely no gag reflex. I'm telling you. This bitch is bad.

And I got another night chick too, named Vannette. I met her through the firm when we repped her husband in an attempted murder case. This guy also happened to be the biggest prescription and designer drug dealer in Michigan. After her husband got popped on the that murder rap, the family business fell to Vannette and I'm her best connect. She buys all the stuff I get from Dawn, plus stuff I get from this chemist dude I know from college who makes X and crystal meth in his barn in Bellevue. Another one of my nightshift honeys is Angela. She works at the hotel downtown where I keep suites to conduct all the business I can't handle in my father's offices. The rooms are paid for with cash, monthly. Plus she gives me the travel industry rate. What I like about Angie is,

she got one of them pussies that was built for punishment. It's deep, soft and wet. I be banging the shit out that thang. I love the way she puts her thighs on my shoulders so she can suck up all thirteen inches of thick dick. She never says, "Oooooo. Stop. You're hurting me." I hate it when bitches say that.

Anyway, between the various deals I cut at night, it gets tiresome running around to two and three different houses getting pussy, so it occurred to me. Why not get two of my girls together permanently. You know, like in a relationship. That way I can save some time and energy at night. Ain't nothing like two pussies at your disposal with no static. Plus I figure, since they'll have each other to fuck, no other nigga'll be able to dip in on my shit.

My first choice is Lily. Number one, she ain't got no kids. Plus besides working in the bank, she hustles at night in a tittie bar, and though she'll deny it all day, I know she's into that girl-girl shit. I've seen her at the club letting those dancers feel on her, plus she loves my dirty draws and when a woman love you, and you got any type a game about yo' self, you can get whatever you want from her.

Lily

I really don't have that much time to hang out with Dane. Number one, he spends a lot of time with his family. Number two, I've got a second job. Three nights a week I tend bar at a topless club called Velvet. After a nap and a shower, it's off with the nine to five clothes and into my hustle gear. Tonight I paired a hot pink g-string with a black cotton mini skirt to show off my shapely caramel legs and fat round ass. The tight midriff is on display in a black baby-t with the word PUS\$\$Y printed across the front in hot pink letters. No bra cause I don't need one. I pull on some black calf length vinyl boots and a pastel pink faux ostrich feather jacket with matching purse and I'm out.

This is how I hustle. I can make anywhere from \$350 to \$500 dollars a night. It's wild. I sling beer while girls sling ass. It might surprise you how much money can be made with your clothes on in a topless bar. But listen, a guy will sit at the bar all night if he's convinced he's getting a sneak peak down my blouse or if he thinks "I don't know" my g-string shows when I get beer from a certain shelf. It gets so bad, sometimes the club owner will rotate the beers to get rid of the ones that don't sell so good.

Personally, I think I make such good money in the bar because the guys get tired of the shit you have to go through with the dancers from time to time. Or maybe it's the draw of the pussy you ain't had yet. Number one rule in bartending: If you want to keep getting paid, never fuck anybody from the bar.

I pulled up in front of Velvet and the parking lot was full, thank god. More cars meant more

potential money. I parked my car, got out and walked across the gravel parking lot. After I climbed the cement steps leading to the entrance, I pulled open the big wooden door and stepped inside.

It was business as usual. The club was dark and smoky with fifty or sixty sexy girls walking around in various stages of undress. Some were lounging. Others were giving table dances. A few girls were making out with each other, tucked away in corners and in booths and up against walls. Customers weren't allowed to touch the dancers, but that didn't stop the dancers from touching each other. Club Velvet had the hottest girls in the city, too. There was every kind of girl you could think of. Tall girls and short ones. Some petit, some stacked, some skinny and even a couple fat ones. From café au lait to indigo. And there were just as many different types of men as there were women. Men in business suits and men dressed in jeans. Doctors, lawyers and independent street pharmacists. Cops, perverts and always, always the underage boys who managed to sneak in.

La Coco was on center stage showing off her new breast implants. A middle eastern looking dude walked up to the stage and handed her a mink coat with a big red bow on it. That might sound crazy to you, but for here it was normal.

Walking through the mirrored, velvet draped club, I had my ass grabbed by just as many girls as by guys. Dancers are funny like that. It's all about the visual for them. When you sell visual sex for a living, it's all about what looks hot and sexy. And it certainly doesn't hurt when the men in the club see a girl touch my ass. It just fuels their fantasies about me. Next thing you know, they be sitting at the bar all night buying beer from a certain shelf.

Dane

Things couldn't have been going better.

I'd starting getting Lily used to the idea of being with a female. I hadn't said a word to her about us fucking someone else because it wasn't time to do that yet. I wasn't sure who the other girl was going to be anyway. All the girls I considered for my program acted stupid when I mentioned other women to them or if I asked them out to a strip joint. I don't have a lot of time to play around convincing anybody to do shit. You either with it or you ain't. Since Lily was already used to it, I just focused on her. Then my choice was made. Out of the blue this chick named Maya calls and tells me her traveling doctors program transferred her to Detroit. Yeah right! Traveling doctors program my ass. More like a traveling for dick program.

I came across Maya this one time I spent a week in D.C. when one of my boys got married. Some sorority was throwing a homecoming party near Howard campus, so we went to check it out. Maya was on the door. At first I walked right past her cause I wasn't paying to get into no bullshitin ass party. I opened the door and walked right into a ballroom filled with overweight thirty-somethings,

all looking like they wanted way more than a dance or a cocktail. I turned around and walked right back out. When I came through the door, there she was, staring at me with this dumb look on her face, like she wanted me to pay to get into the party or something. I just went into pimp mode. I acted like I thought she was a young cutie. She was cute. Small waist, big tits. But I could tell she wasn't that young. I flipped her quick, told her I'd be back to pick her up later. Actually, I had no intention of going back. But as luck would have it, the bitch I ended up with that night gagged on my dick trying to deep throat me and threw up on my shoes. That shit really pissed me off so I ditched her ass. Then I remembered the other trap I'd laid. So I went back to the hall and sure enough, she was there waiting. That meant she was stupid. I like that in a girl. I took her dancing that night and freaked her right on the dance floor. I hadn't even told her my name but she let me grab her up, and rub on her titties and shit. I knew she was a freak right then. I threw some line on her. I can't even remember what it was, but I know I saw her knees buckle. I waited a couple of days to fuck her.

I tell you. Sometimes my game is so tight it surprises even me. I mean, I went to D.C. met this bitch. Took her out to dinner, fucked her one time and the next time I hear from her, she's moved to Detroit. But seriously, it couldn't have happened at a better time. She was the missing piece to my puzzle. She was new in town and she didn't know anybody. Everything was falling perfectly into place. If I hadn't known better, I would have thought it was a set up.

Lily

Over the next few months it seemed like Dane and I were getting much closer. He came around to my house more often at night and he even started coming to the bar while I was at work, and he hardly ever used to do that. We started hanging out on my off nights at different strip joints around the city. And since I knew most everybody on the club circuit, we never paid to get into any of the clubs. I figured that was the reason we only went to strip joints. It didn't matter to me. I loved all the extra attention Dane was giving me. Even in a room full of naked girls, he knew how to make me feel like I was the best one. We'd be drinking and he would look at the finest girl in the club and say, "Look at her ass baby. It looks good, but not as good as yours." He would be pointing out girls and asking me what I thought about this body part or that body part and did I know my "whatever" was hotter than that. We would hang all night, too. We called it hanging New York

style. We'd go to tittie bars, pool halls and private clubs. It was so easy to be in love with him because we were having so much fun.