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Sex On Hold

Once we started doing it we were going through a box of condoms a week. Fucking like we'd find the cure for cancer. One afternoon, like a lot of afternoons, we were alone at her house in the living room. Her back pressed up against the wall next to a framed portrait of her family, while she held onto bits of my white t-shirt stretching out the cotton, pulling me close against her breasts. We exchanged kisses back and forth like the comings and goings of the ocean's tide. My hand slipped under her shirt to find the touch of her skin. Skin foreign to daylight. Our lips entangled, I unbuttoned her jeans and she undid mine, then I began pulling her away from the wall towards the sofa behind me. On the way, there was an echo of zippers being pulled, slowly, down. We peeled our shirts off and let our pants drop to the floor in wrinkled piles of black and blue, then fell onto the ivory sofa in our underwear. Her bra and panties, matching reds like crimson. I settled on top of her and our flesh seemed to melt together. Smoothed out, her blonde hair lay behind her over the sofa's edge, and she held on tightly to the back of my neck, kissing me constantly. Our breath became heavy. My lips were bound to hers while the whites of my fingernails, lightly and gently, scraped along her thigh to her hip. My fingers then spread out like spider's legs and took hold of her waist.

Breaking from the moment she asked, “Do you have a condom?” I replied, “Yeah, hang on.” I quickly pushed myself up and walked over to my wrinkled pile of jeans and grabbed my wallet from the back pocket to get the “emergency” condom within it. And to my disappointment it was not. I had forgotten we used it the night before during an unexpected craving in her bedroom, not ten feet away. She noticed my expression and asked, “What is it?”

I said to her, “I’ll be right back.”

She asked, “Where are you going?”

“Across the street to Winco. I don’t have any condoms.” I started getting dressed.

“You want me to come with?”

“No that’s okay. I’ll be right back.” I walked over to her lying on the couch and gave her a long kiss goodbye.

She said with a smile, “Hurry.”

And like that I was out the door in a sprint. The heat made it a run in hell. That week of summer the temperature reached into the upper nineties through to the lower digits of one hundred. That day it was 102. I stood at the sidewalk waiting for a break in traffic, breathing heavy with half of a hard-on. Sunlight gleamed off of the passing windshields, with harsh reflections, making my eyes narrow. I could feel the heat from the cars as they passed by and had a light glaze of sweat on my forehead when the road finally cleared. Running across the street, then up the side of the grocery store, along the blue railing and

concrete exterior, all I thought about was her lying on the couch, her skin, unscathed by the sun, exposed, her desire for me, and my want of her.

In the store I passed the produce and maneuvered around carts and some of the elderly shoppers, my shoes making a streaking sound against the white tiled floor. I went by the chip aisle, the cracker aisle, and the greeting card aisle, before arriving at the health aisle. There my eyes began scanning every item looking for what I needed. Tampons... no. Maxi pads... no. Deodorant... maybe later, but no. Then there they were! Up high on the top shelf, above the toothpaste. Out of the reach of children. I guess you had to be "This Tall" in order to buy condoms at Winco. There was a very limited selection of prophylactics. I saw the Magnums, in their black box, and thought, "Don't kid yourself. Getting condoms that big I might as well wrap a garbage bag around my penis." Next to the Magnums was a yellow box of Trojans, ultra-ribbed. I grabbed it off the shelf and hurried down the aisle in the direction of the registers, and on my way I reached for my wallet to get the money ready but my wallet disappointed me again. It was gone. Left it at her place.

I stopped to think, with sweat dripping off the tip of my nose. The security cameras stared at me. Winco's sentinels. I rushed back to the chip aisle and, with the hand holding the box of condoms, reached into the many bags of Fritos, hearing the crumpling of the plastic bags, and started opening the box. The idea was to make it seem like I was grabbing a bag of chips from the back of the shelf. My five fingers struggled to get the box open and I started to get nervous with the security cameras looming over me, constantly looking over my shoulder to make sure there wasn't a security officer ready to take me away and further prolong my return to her. The collar of my shirt was doused in

sweat, along with the bangs of my hair. Then I, impatiently, thrust my right hand into the many bags of Fritos to assist my helpless left and, with the five extra fingers, the cardboard was torn open, and I rapidly ripped off a few links from the long yellow chain of condoms and palmed them into my pocket leaving the box buried among the bags of chips.

Exiting the chip aisle, I passed the produce, and rushed out through the exit, back into the heat, and ran along the concrete exterior and the blue railing of the store. Without waiting for traffic to clear I blindly ran into the street and a green Honda Civic swerved and nearly hit me. The driver honked his horn and gave me the finger, and I just kept running, being led by my penis like the needle of a compass.

Arriving at her house, I charged through the front door and found her sitting on the sofa back in her clothes. She stood up and before she could say anything I pressed my lips on hers with one hand holding the back of her neck and the other grasping her hip. Stripped off my shirt, now drenched in sweat, and began ripping off her clothes while she peeled off my jeans. I was gasping for air, but didn't want to waste time to catch my breath. All I wanted was her.