

**a sweet and tender hooligan**

by Thomas Hunt

"I'm coming Mum." He said as he tried to open the door with one hand, balancing the tray with the soup, crackers and orange juice on the other. The soup spilled a little, but he got the door open.

"Here you are Mum, soup and crackers for the throat, Vitamin C for the immune system. Just like my mother used to make."

"Ahh Jimmy, you're such a sweet boy. Taking care of your old mum."

"Forget about it Mum, its the least I could do. Do you need anything else? I've gotta go in a few minutes."

"Nah, I'm fine laddy. Just switch off the telly when you go. I think I'm about due for bedtime."

"Alright Mum." He leaned over and kissed her forehead. "I'll come back tomorrow, see how you're feeling, okay?"

"I'm sure I'll be better by then sonny, but I'd love ta see ya anyway."

He smiled at her and left the room, careful to turn off the telly and shut the door quietly.

Back in the front room he got his boots out from under the coach and began lacing them up, one eye at a time.

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"Fuck you, you bastards!" The gang leader screamed at the pakistanis as they ran down the alley and away from the gang's territory.

"We're tired of you're kind around here!" Jimmy said, chucking his empty beer bottle at them.

"Them damn pakis have been around here too fucking long." The leader said. His followers nodded, cracking their knuckles and preparing. Their schedule was a simple one in the evenings:

1. Get Drunk.
2. Fight.

The leader had a few more beers and the gang followed his lead. Pretty soon the case was empty and it was time to go on to step #2.

The pakis weren't expecting a frontal rush. And a frontal rush was the gang's only style. Jimmy and the leader charged right in. They each grabbed one of the pakis and kneed them in the gut. The rest of the gang followed suit, punching, kicking and screaming "Fuck you", "Dirty pakis", "We don't want you around here", "Burn in

hell you stupid apes" The pakis were weaker and soon they were all lying on the ground, taking a beating.

One of the pakis kicked his way off of the ground and pulled a knife. He stabbed the leader in the leg and the leader fell to the ground, writhing in pain. He tried to fend off the rest of the gang with his knife. He was scared and was looking for a chance to run. He turned his head only for a second and Jimmy rushed him and knocked him to the ground. The paki swung back with the knife, slashing Jimmy across the cheek. Jimmy howled in pain, but only seemed stronger, smashing the pakis hand down on the pavement. The paki dropped the knife. That was his mistake. He dropped the knife. Jimmy smiled, pounding the man again and again in the face, converting a round shape into a cubist disaster. It was then that Jimmy saw the knife. He grabbed it and stuck it deep into the man's throat. The hissing sound of air and blood exploded from the hole.

The man's hissing and lack of screaming stopped the gang. Jimmy stood up. He seemed taller than before. He walked from one paki to the other, stabbing each in the throat. Five dead men in all.

The leader tried to stand "Jimmy, good job man. Help me up, lets get out of here."

Jimmy turned to him. The gang was petrified, they didn't move.

"No. You're not getting up. You're not in charge anymore." Jimmy ran toward him, brandishing the knife. The leader tried to defend himself, but Jimmy was too fast, knocking him to the ground. The leader lay on his back, defenseless. Jimmy held him down, ready to stick him with the knife. The leader begged for his life "Please, Jimmy, No."

"It's nothing personal." Jimmy said, plunging the knife through the leader's chest, into his heart. The leader's body shook, then he just laid there like a stuck pig.

Jimmy pulled the knife out, wiped the blade on his shirt and put it in his pocket.

He turned to the gang. "I'm in charge now. Tomorrow night, same time and place, but a new direction. Any questions?"

The gang shook their heads.

They had a new leader.

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The next morning at nine 'o clock, Jimmy heard a rustling in the kitchen. He turned over on the couch and looked to see what was going on.

"Felling better mum?"

"Yes dear. I was just going to make you breakfast.  
Bacon and eggs sound good?"

He sat up, "Sure, that'd be great Mum."

"My god dear. What happened to your face?"

"Oh, I just cut myself shaving."

"That looks pretty nasty. You should be more careful  
next time."

"I will Mum, I will."