

VINYED

DUNE

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Flash & Shorts Collection # 2

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Eduard Meinema

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Website: www.eduardmeinema.com

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Vinyed

Flash & Shorts Collection # 2

A collection of short and ultra-short stories with an unexpected twist (Twisted Tales). Imaginative, surprising and terrifying. In this issue you will find the following seven stories:

-The Bonding

Always a bit scary. Life after death. You either believe in it, or you don't. That's up to you. Or...is it? A story about the bond between a grandmother and her grandchild. A bond they never had until grandma passed away...

-Dune

Boy meets girl. Girl likes boy. The old story. Lust and desire drives them to a remote, quiet place where they can spend the night together. Alone at last. That's what they think...

-First Time

There is a first time for everything. And will you forget that first time? Forget it! The excitement; the lust for the unknown; the tension; the outloading... Everything is different. That first time.

-On purpose

Dirk Roodt loves the beach. He strolls the beaches near his house whenever he can. By occasion he finds a dead body of a

porpoise; a small, dolphin like mammal. When the number of dead porpoises is increasing, he comes to the rescue. A lonesome crusade against brutal fishermen who are protecting their fishing grounds. But is he fighting the real enemy?

-Rendez Vous

A lovestory for the brave at heart.

An encounter with an old love. Think about it. After more than fifty years he meets her again, his childhood sweetheart. Enjoy 'Dark Side of the Moon' by Pink Floyd (Us and them!) on the background. Apologies. Of course this is no background music. But it makes the story more exciting. And darker...

-Wannabet?

Would you dare? Accept an assignment from a stranger and make a few thousand bucks? John Masten is in doubt. He can really use the money. And the offer is tempting. Will he take the bet?

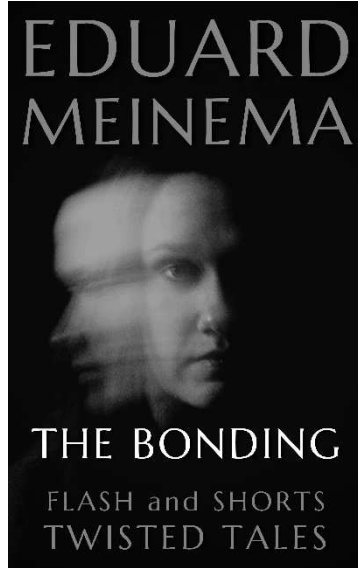
-Inniverse

Their biggest wish: to become an astronaut. Their mission: to explore the universe. Their story... seems to end right here. In an unknown world. Far away from civilization.

A three-man crew crashes in unknown territory. Without external help, they depend on each other to find out where they are and how to continue their mission. Or actually, how to continue to live...

Are you ready for the unexpected? Start reading!

1. The Bonding



Always a bit scary. Life after death. You either believe in it, or you don't. That's up to you. Or...is it? A story about the bond between a grandmother and her grandchild. A bond they never had until grandma passed away...

1.1

Wilson Dillinger strayed the darkened rooms of the ancient villa. The old lake house had already lost all its charm many years ago. Last week it also lost its last inhabitant. Now his grandmother had passed away, Wilson was the only member of the Dillinger family still alive.

“Holy shit,” Kelly said. “These rooms have not breathed fresh air for ages. What an awful smell!”

Wilson laughed at his girlfriend. “Granny did not like uninvited guests; she preferred to keep the house to herself.”

Kelly almost threw up. “With a smell like this you may invite anybody, but no one will show up.” She opened a few windows to let the air of early spring in and do its refreshing work. “When was the last time you’ve been here Will?”

“Phew...Must have been three or four years ago,” Wilson said.

“What? Three years?” Kelly said surprised. “Didn’t you go to see her with Thanksgiving or New Year’s Day then?”

“No. Why should I?”

“Because she was all alone.”

“Just told you, she wanted to,” Wilson said.

“Everybody needs company Will.”

“Grandma was not everybody Kell. She was... well, not like everybody.”

Kelly shrugged her shoulders. Not understanding her friend’s behavior. She walked outside to get some more fresh air and to enjoy the first sun of the season.

Wilson joined her. Took of his T-shirt and sat down beside her on the grass. “I hardly knew her Kell. In fact, most things I know about her, are memories about the time I still lived here. And that’s quite some time ago.”

Kelly didn’t react. She watched a grimly old man slowly walking uphill to the old house.

“Young Dillinger?” the senior citizen asked exhausted.

“Who’s asking?” Wilson said.

The old man looked him straight in the eyes. “Well? Are you?” he bluntly repeated his question.

Wilson hesitated shortly. “My last name is Dillinger, that’s right. And you are...?”

“May your grandma rot in hell!” the old bastard suddenly yelled. Without waiting for a reaction, he walked away as slowly as he had come, leaving Kelly and Wilson behind in surprise.

“Yes...Thank you!” Wilson shouted, not knowing how to react and probably too late for the old man to overhear him.

“What a creep,” Kelly shivered. “I start to understand why your grandma wanted to be on her own.”

“Old people, old secrets,” Wilson mumbled. He hesitated for a while. Then asked her: “Would you mind coming with me? To the cemetery?”

She took his hands in hers. “What day is the funeral?”

“She’s already buried,” he answered.

“What?” Kelly said and got rid of his hands as if she suddenly realized she was holding someone with a terrible, contagious disease. “But she only died two days ago,” she acted flabbergasted. “And you were not even here...”

“It’s a strange, little community Kell. Grandma was not accepted by the locals; well, you’ve noticed that yourself,” he laughed. “I think they were glad to get rid of her.”

“Wilson! You don’t talk about the dead like that. Certainly not about your grandmother!”

“I hardly knew her!”

“Well, it seems to me, you’ve done nothing to get to know her.”

They sat next to each other. Quiet. Upset. Offended. Lost in their own thoughts.

“Maybe you are right,” he finally broke the silence.

Kelly didn’t answer him. She stood up and returned to the old house.

“I’m sorry?” he tried, not knowing what else to say.

She didn’t stop walking. “Come on asshole. Let’s go and find your grandmothers grave,” she said not even bothering to see if he was coming after her.

1.2

The cemetery was old and small. Just like the village. The oldest tombstones were overgrown; some partly fallen or broken. In the clear light of sun, it was a peaceful place. Not scary at all. They walked along the small pathways, reading unfamiliar names on the monuments, till they reached the end of the field.

“I couldn’t find her name,” he said. “Maybe the stone wasn’t ready yet.”

“Did you order one?”

He looked caught and ashamed.

“Of course not. What did you expect Will? You thought those villagers would do everything for you? They didn’t even like her.”

“Okay, okay. How was I to know they would arrange her funeral so quickly?” he said offended.

“The thing is, you should have been here to arrange everything in the first place. You are the last relative she had. You should have been here much, much earlier.”

“Point taken,” he said. What else was there to say? What was done was done. “I will check at the administration to find out where they have buried her.”

She took his hand and followed him.

“Are you afraid?” he grinned.

“Just don’t like these places. No matter how lovely they are and no matter how sunny it is.”

*

If eyes could kill, the lady at the administration would be working overtime. Her eyes almost pierced into Wilson’s greenish eyes.

“Young Dillinger, eh?” she groaned.

He was in doubt how to react. “Correct,” he said worthy. “I’m looking for the grave of my grandmother...”

“Francis Dillinger...,” she interrupted him abrasive. “Gooood, ooold, Francissss,” she spoke slowly and sarcastic.

Without any notice she turned away from the desk to get a pen and some paper. Slowly she wrote down an address. Even slower, she pushed it along the desk.

Confused by her behavior, Wilson read the note: “Woodsend?” he said in surprise. “That’s twenty miles from here. Why wasn’t she buried here?”

The mordacious look in the woman’s eyes, withheld him from asking more.

“There’s no place for Dillingers in our community,” the witchy woman replied. “Alive or dead...,” she added with a low voice.

Kelly pinched into Wilson’s arm. “Let’s go,” she whispered.

Wilson hesitated. “What is wrong with you people?” he finally asked.

The lady was not amused and called for assistance: “Jooohnnn... seems we’re having unwanted customers...”

Out of a darkened room at the back, which appeared to be deserted when Wilson and Kelly entered the administration, a head showed up. Its tall body took considerably more time to get into the light. “Who’s bothering you?” the man spoke with an incredibly dark voice. The voice’s grievous vibrations thrilled the young visitors. When she saw the giant rising, Kelly stepped behind Wilson. The grip of her hands almost pulverized his hand.

“Thanks for your help,” Wilson said fearful. The man in front of them was almost two heads taller than Wilson himself. Quickly he pushed his girlfriend out of the room. Into the sunlight.

“Jesus Will...”

“Not now, Kell. Just walk,” he said, pushing and persuading her to hurry up.

1.3

In the safety of their car, they rushed back to grandmother’s old lakehouse. They drove through the little town of Lakeside; then passed the impressive, new hospital at the outskirts of town. Kelly was the first to start talking.

“I almost pissed my pants.”

Wilson couldn’t avert a grin.

“Not funny Will,” she said, trying not to laugh. “You were no Braveheart either...”

“That guy scared the shit out of me,” he laughed.

“Bigfoot is alive,” Kelly joined his laughter.

“Still... I don’t know what’s wrong with these people. Grandma was the sweetest person I ever knew.”

“That’s the way you feel. You can’t judge the people downtown unless you know what caused their aversion.”

“No. She was the sweetest...”

“Says the guy who came to visit her once every four years.”

“I told you she preferred to be on her own Kell.”

“Well, seems she’s having company now,” she said uneasy. “There’s someone in the house. You see?”

“I’ll be damned,” Wilson said. He parked his car close to the house and ran into his grandmother’s home. “What do you think you’re doing?” he yelled at the slender man. His eyes had

quickly scanned the uninvited guest. Smaller than Wilson himself. Easy to beat.

The stranger was not even impressed by Wilson's sudden appearance. "And you are...?"

"Wow, let's not turn this thing around mister. You are in my grandmother's house. So, you'd better tell me who you are before I call the police," Wilson said. His arms still hanging next to his body; his hands already folded into fists.

"Young Dillinger?"

"Says who?" Wilson asked with anger. He stepped closer to the unknown man.

"Yes. Young Dillinger," the man said still not answering Wilson.

"That's it. Kell, call the police. I'm throwing him out."

The man turned to Kelly: "Please don't bother miss. I am the police." He took his badge to identify himself. "Robin Cook. Pleased to meet you both."

Wilson's fists relaxed. "Why are you here? Why did you break into my grandma's house?"

"I'm sorry mister Dillinger. It's a quiet neighborhood. People usually don't get upset when I have a look in their house."

"Well, where I come from, we are not used to policemen running into our house. At least not uninvited. And certainly not without a search warrant."

Robin Cook only gave him a faint smile.

"Why are you going through my grandmothers' belongings?"

“You haven’t been around here recently, did you?” Cook asked.

Caught in the act, Wilson looked at his girl. “Depends on how you define recently...”

“Right,” Cook said with understanding. “So, you haven’t been here for... how many years?”

Uncomfortable Wilson reacted: “That’s not of your business. You still haven’t told me why you are searching my grandmother’s stuff. Without a warrant.”

Robin Cook’s fingers pulled the little beard on his chin. Not much hair; just enough to make him look a little bit older. “Have it your way mister Dillinger. I’ll be back with a warrant,” he smiled polite. Greeting Kelly on his way out, he tipped his fingers against his forehead. “Ma’am,” he said, ignoring Wilson.

Kelly walked to the kitchen. “Don’t know about you, but I can use a drink. What kind of crazy shithole did you bring me to?”

Wilson opened a cabinet. “Just like I thought. Bourbon,” he said relieved.

1.4

They emptied a bottle of Bourbon on the porch. Went into bed. A bit tipsy but fit enough to make love.

She was riding on top of him. Her legs folded around his; pushing him deeper inside of her. Her hands resting upon his shoulders; her nails digging deep into his skin. His hands followed her body from her belly up to her breasts. His