

another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory



Jane's Final Piece by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | AUG 2016

Jane McLyndun was a slender, 28-year-old, half-Caucasian/half-Makah (a Native American tribe of northwestern Washington), black-haired, struggling visual artist. After painting on canvas with oils and acrylics for a decade with minimal success, she shifted to projection art when her dad, the white parent who now lived in Tacoma, showed her an ultra-high-lumen digital projector one evening.

She experimented with the outdoor-grade projector and came up with her own comical surreal style. Jane loved the fact that there was no cleanup with this art form, and that it didn't illegally mark a surface like graffiti.

Soon she was invited to present her first projection – on the side of a municipal building – in Hillsboro, Oregon, a Silicon Forest city, twenty miles west of Portland. Her projected artwork was just a static whimsical image at first, involving geometric shapes and assorted mustaches. Then the droll assemblage's objects slowly moved. And then stopped again. There were long, irregular pauses. It was strange, yet guffaw-inducing surrealism.

It was a well-received debut. There was a most favorable review in the local weekly by an art critic named Art Z. Sportzee, who said that her work 'revealed the innate hilarity of our modern absurdity'. Such excited Jane immensely, and she started to think that maybe she was finally on the cusp of something big.

However, after a few more amusing neosurreal projections in Beaverton, NoPo (North Portland) and Vancouver, Washington, the invitations strangely ceased. And, the local

critics seemed to turn on her. The reviews went south. Way south.

One particular critic, an acerbic fellow named Rudolph Z. Spietzmänn, characterized her work as 'deliberately canned from a most derivative tract of pop culture clichés with no meaning for any sentient being.' And another dissenter named Judith V. Owensbury called it 'a nursery rhyme that didn't.' Ouch.

That latter review was the stinger that really got to her. She got distressed and then depressed. Jane stopped creating her wryly humorous projection loops. She started drinking and taking sedatives. Jane wondered where she was going next. It seemed that her just-recently-soaring art career was now nail-in-the-coffin kaput.

Jane had been creating under the art-name of *čapaccaqil*, which translates literally to 'it looks like a canoe' in Makah, as she once overheard someone say that about one of her canvases at a co-op gallery opening in east Seattle. She had an internal chuckle when she heard it. Immediately she knew that it was a keeper for future deployment.

One thing that Jane especially liked about this particular art-name was its androgyny: No one knew if the artist was male or female. And her work reinforced this: It was decidedly bi-gender, and often times gender-neutral. It wasn't laced with flowers or rage. Moreover, Jane tried to keep her sex a secret as much as possible. She had been slighted by an avant-garde group, and was convinced that she was discounted just for being female.

However, when the bad reviews started rolling in, she began to wonder if word had got out in the Pacific Northwest about her identity. She imagined that her unstable, comic artist, meth-head (methamphetamine addict), ex-boyfriend from six years ago was behind it. It would be just like him to sabotage her art career when she finally started to gain some notoriety, she thought. After all, he was insanely jealous. She remembered how annoyed he would become when anyone liked her art.

And then twenty minutes later, with a change of rooms, Jane would tell herself that such was completely irrational. She resolutely renounced the unwarranted paranoia.

However, those menacing, doubt-creating thoughts began to steadily perforate her confidence. When mid-October arrived with its cool all-day rains, it felt like a dense, all-is-hopeless doom-cloud collapsing on her head. She would sit, slowly sip herbal tea, and ponder. *What was I thinking? A famous artist? Me? I only graduated from a community college for goodness sake! I really have no high-level art gallery contacts. No one in my family was an artist. Why in the world did I choose such a path? I know my dad is really concerned about me. Twenty-eight and still waiting tables in a decrepit diner. Going nowhere and arriving ahead of schedule. It's just like that nonperformance artist Galerie Parcouer said: "You only live once ... if you're lucky." Aint that the truth. Would never want to replay this life. That's for sure. Once is more than enough. My mom is so kind to me, but I know that she is wondering about what I'll become. Or, what I've already become. Or, failed to become. Just another drip. Yet another descending alcoholic. Another drug addict? This*

area sure is loaded with them. I don't want to end up on painkillers or heroin like most of my artist-friends. But, what to do? I'm not the corporate type. Face it, girl; you iz focked! [sic] You put your chips on the wrong square. Game over. You lose.

Jane slithered into the shower with her vibrator. None of the five men that she had had intercourse with came close to matching the hyper-orgasmic pleasure imparted by the Ultra-Vibrathon 4000. It had a genuine skin-like feel and pulsed in multiple directions with exquisite throbbing. The clitoral massager beat any tongue. It was a 9-inch column of heaven on Earth – worth every penny of the \$89 that she paid for it online.

Jane knew that she didn't want kids when she was fifteen. And now, thanks to modern technology, she knew that she didn't want another boyfriend, either. As far as lesbian curiosity, there was that 30-ish Caucasian lady that slid up her skirt while seated at her restaurant, and then stared at her a second too long. She returned every week. Perhaps she would take her up on her nonverbal proposition one night, she thought. Well, maybe.

As she towed off, she suddenly felt nauseous. She vomited in the toilet.

Then her belly started to ache – all the time, every single day. Jane lost her appetite and dropped 14 pounds (6.35 kg) in just two weeks. She needed a belt now to keep her jeans from falling off.

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