

WHO'D HAVE PUNK IT?

Contains human woman TF, full MC/identity death, smoking/alcohol consumption/profanities

Octransfur 2024 story #2: Video - commission for JumpingSpider!

You can't believe it. In just a few moments, you were about to experience the Industry Plants live! Granted, it wasn't live *in person* (you neither had the disposable income nor the patience to put up with Ticketmaster to land actual concert seats), but a live streamed performance was definitely the next best thing. After all, you could just kick back at home, broadcast the video feed on your TV, and just enjoy the performance with a pint of Ben & Jerry's in hand. Honestly, watching at home would actually be preferable at this rate—for the loudest, angriest-sounding punk band this side of the new millennium, their concerts were equally crazy when they managed to show up. Key phrase being “when they managed to show up,” since oftentimes you heard they were late to the performance, the worst being over an hour long! And unfortunately, this seems to be the case for today, too. All the restless crowd members, from what you could see, were damn near climbing on stage to see what was going on at this rate. Truthfully, you couldn't imagine how mad you'd be if you'd actually paid top dollar to see these guys perform and was treated to an empty stage for thirty minutes. Well, at least you could just scroll on your phone as you wait...

...Wait. You just noticed, the audio cut out! Looking back up at the TV, that buffering symbol said it all. Damn it, it couldn't be buffering now! Pausing and unpausing the stream and fiddling around with any setting you could wasn't working. All you could do, really, was try to get a bit closer to the TV and hope whatever you were doing was working, when...

Zoom! Within seconds, you found yourself sucked in by some otherworldly force inside the TV, the screen rippling like you'd just dove into a pool. Immediately after, it was like you could barely see anything beyond your own hands. Everything in the background was just this blurry visual mush, and you couldn't tell if this was some kind of weird hallucination or if this was really happening right now. Actually, you could see things becoming a bit more clear for the moment...

You could feel that rush of dopamine as you exhaled that puff of smoke from the cigarette. Passing the pack among a few friends was something you'd started doing a couple of weeks ago, and it was a relaxing distraction from all those classes you totally weren't cutting by doing this.

“Hey! What do you think you're doing?” A gruff old man's voice boomed from beyond the alleyway you and your friends were smoking in. It could only belong to that fuddy-duddy narc of a principal you had. What the hell was his business intruding on you like this? It wasn't like you guys were even hurting anyone right now.

“The hell do you want from us, old timer?” You belligerently responded.

“Why aren’t any of you in class right now?” His cross expression wasn’t going away anytime soon.

“Tch...why should we? It’s not like we’re even learning anything in there anyway. Hell, you should learn something yourself, bitch...learn not to mess with us!” You quipped.

“That’s it! I’m calling your parents!”

Okay, it’s probably time to split. You and your friends began to sprint as fast as you could out of that alley, the principal yelling and shaking his fists at you as he did so. You were certainly lucky he was so old he couldn’t chase after you, especially after the group split up. Really showed him there...

The next thing you saw, it was your hands again in front of that blurry void. Yet, they weren’t looking the same as they did before, with how spindly your fingers were now, and how each nail had deep black polish sloppily applied to it. And did you remember wearing this outfit before? It was this leather vest with frankly, a lot of spikes. Hmm...maybe there were too many spikes, actually.

Nah, you figured after a moment. Honestly, this look was starting to grow on you. Yeah, even with how scratchy the leather was, it just felt more dangerous having this on than whatever the hell you were wearing before. Even with how high up you were wearing that belt, you couldn’t help but admire it. You weren’t like those other folks wearing it underneath their shirt, after all...

Before you could linger on that thought, though, you could see some more vivid imagery appear...

“...And nobody’s gonna tell us how we’re gonna live! Yaaaah!” You bellowed out as the rest of the band was finishing up their big ending for this song. You were working on this song, from the lyrics to the timing to the instrumentation for weeks in one of your friends’ garages for weeks and only now did you feel that you’d gotten it exactly right. You did feel like your voice was shot from all of those vocal runs you were doing in the song, though, so you quickly take a swig from a can of beer one of your friends smuggled from their parents’ fridge.

“So how do we feel about performing another song?” you ask your fellow bandmates.

“Nah, I think that’s it for today. My mom will probably kill me if she finds out we’ve been performing for this long,” you heard one of them say.

“Figures,” you say. The rest of the band was looking pretty damn tired after this anyway. There was some unfinished business you needed to get to before you came home, however.

“What the hell should this band even be called, anyway?” You wonder aloud to everyone else. It certainly was an important question: the lot of you had been practicing as a group for over a month at this point, and it was about as good a time as any to make things more official.

“Hmm...the Underminers? ‘Cause, you know, we’re trying to poke a hole in the establishment and all that. Sounds like a pretty rough name to me,” you heard one of your bandmates reply.

“You know, that sounds good and all, but I don’t like the word ‘miners’ being in there. Sounds too much like we’re fucking with kids or something,” you shoot the idea down.

“You’re sixteen,” you could hear a retort. Probably just gonna ignore that for now...

“How about Firebrand? Like, we’re fiery and shit. We’ve got that burning energy to say, ‘Fuck everyone who’s gonna stand in our way!’” another bandmate proposed.

“Now that one sounds a bit better, but how about this?” You could feel an idea start to come to you. “We’re gonna be the Industry Plants!”

“Industry Plants?” The other bandmates incredulously raised their eyebrows to that name.

“Do you guys, like, not get the irony there? You know those fuckers, the Flight Jackers? They claim they’re all punk like us, but they know as well as us that they’re just these sheltered rich kids who had mommy and daddy give them their own band so they could feel cool for the first time in their bitch lives. And I know there’s gonna be people saying the same shit about us, so how about we beat them to the punch? Nobody’s gonna fuck with us now, right?”

After that explanation, the confusion became a set of nods and “mm-hmm”s from each bandmate.

“Yeah, you tell ‘em!”

“That’s why you’re the boss around here.” Yep, it certainly felt good to be the boss.

“Ahem!” An unfamiliar voice could be heard right behind you. “May I have your attention, please?”

You made the most unenthused look back at whoever was trying to start shit with you this time.

“I’m with the Homeowners’ Association and I wanted to come to you because there have been multiple complaints from the neighbors of excessive noise from your music outfit here,” the man dryly went on, handing you an official noise complaint form. *Music outfit?* What kinda dumbass refers to bands like that? You didn’t have time for people like him.

“You think we’re too loud, huh? Well, is this loud enough for ya?” You retorted as you signaled to your bandmates. What followed could only be described as a mini-sonic boom of their instruments being played as aggressively as possible. The man quickly flinched and hobbled away as you ripped up that noise complaint paper in front of his bitch face.

Ah, those were the good old days. Despite never having recalled such memories in your life, you didn’t doubt they happened for even a second. They just felt so real...so *good* to remember. You were almost chuckling with glee with how the dude just ran away like a coward. It was almost enough to distract you from how your legs were looking right now. Yet, the presence of that prosthetic leg was enough to lock your attention on it. Yeah, it all made sense now.

Speaking of cool, look at those boots you were rocking now! You could only give a self-confident smirk at how they matched your vest perfectly. Granted, they weren't the most comfortable things in the world, but only one foot could really be bothered by how they were, so you couldn't complain too much. Similarly, how about those pants? It was just yesterday that you were tearing them up enough so that you looked hard as hell without the damn things falling apart, and it was so satisfying seeing them like this. You even pulled one of the pant legs up so that everyone on stage could see that prosthetic. Despite the reality of you getting it, as far as everyone was concerned, it was just another part of you that screamed "hardcore."

...And right on cue, you could feel another memory coming to the surface...

"What prompted you to start this band in the first place?"

Yeah, it was this guy. You heard the stories about him from around the musical grapevine, and you certainly weren't amused by this interviewer guy's questions. Just his voice that sounded like something out of a cartoon, how personal he was gonna get with these questions, and not to mention how he smelled. Yuck. You certainly knew a way to shut the guy up, though.

Snatching that bag he was carrying in his hand, you quickly broke the contents of it over your knee, laughing in the dude's face while doing it.

"Wh-what? You fucking piece of shit! Why would you do that?" the guy screamed.

"Tch...what was even inside, anyway?" You replied without any remorse.

"It was the Greatest Punk Songs of All Time bootleg curated by the band Nil! I thought those guys were your heroes! There are only five copies of that in the world!"

Eh, you thought. His loss, not mine.

As that memory was stewing in your head, you could now see the background for what it was: the wardrobe room backstage! Immediately your attention was now on your hair. You'd just styled it rather haphazardly, and you were satisfied cutting it yourself for the five years you've been doing it for. Similarly, those piercings and makeup you were applying were certainly striking as you glanced at yourself in the mirror, smoking another cigarette as you made sure you were ready for the show. Sure, it was, like, forty-five minutes after it was supposed to start, but you were Janice Kayo, lead singer of the Industry Plants! You didn't wait on anyone, everyone was supposed to wait on you.

"Yo, Janice! I think the rest of us are ready! Let's go on stage and show 'em who's boss!" You could hear your bandmates from beyond the door. Hell yeah, you figured. Let's go spit on all those ingrates in the audience for being so damn impatient!