

SEVERAL SMALL YET SIGNIFICANT DISASTERS

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1.

Carlos sat cross-legged on the storage room floor, hurriedly ripping open boxes of books with a black and yellow box-cutter, nodding his head in time to the radio. Sue stood just outside the door, punching numbers into the computer.

"Ah! Jesus!" Carlos yelped, grabbing his left hand with his right.

Sue leaned through the door way to investigate.

"You Ok?" she asked.

"Cut my thumb open," Carlos whined.

"Keep pressure on it," Sue yelled over her shoulder as she dug through the drawers underneath the counter for the 1st aid kit. Kit in hand, she found Carlos still sitting on the floor, tightly gripping his thumb.

"Ok. Lets see the thumb," she asked.

"I'm keeping pressure on it," Carlos explained weakly.

"Just for a sec, so I can bandage it, Ok?" Sue asked in a voice built for small children and animals.

Carlos nodded and released his thumb. Sue stared at the tiny, thin red line that ran almost three centimeters down the pad of Carlos' left thumb.

"Paper cut," Carlos explained grimly, holding his wounded thumb closer to Sue's face.

Sue looked from Carlos' thumb to his pain wrinkled face and back again before walking wordlessly out of the room.

2.

"I met this girl today."

3.

Driving down Montford you'd expect it to become Lassiter fairly quickly. But fucking no, it does fucking not - though the party's invitation/map seems to hint otherwise. Now you're all the way across town and the street is still Montford. Then you're out of town, skirting the suburbs, and still on Montford.

Now, finally, you're on Lassiter.

Now you're at the party.

Now you're bored.

4.

She said, "I've never dated a rock star."

And he said, "I've never been called that before."

"Honey," she said, "honey, *we* are not dating."

5.

Beer in hand, Carlos felt he was doing well. The blonde at the bar seemed to be laughing at his jokes. Her amusement seemed genuine, which was uncommon.

He was attempting to light a cigarette. Carlos didn't smoke, but somehow the flirting had come to involve him smoking.

He couldn't light the cigarette. The damn thing wouldn't light. He would put a match to it, have no luck, say something funny to the blonde, and she would be laughing as he tried to light the cigarette again. This pattern repeated, but the blonde was still happy so Carlos wasn't worried.

Carlos felt a finger jabbing at his shoulder and turned around to see his friend Neal.

"The other end, man. The other end," Neal said.

Carlos stared at him blankly.

"Your cigarette," Neal explained, shaking his head.

Carlos looked more closely at his cigarette and saw that he had indeed been trying to set fire to the filter. The cigarette was burned beyond usability so Carlos bummed a new one from Neal.

When Carlos turned back to the blonde, she was talking to a suit with a tan and a turtleneck.

6.

As it turned out, it was much, much easier to move the piano downstairs than any of us had imagined. It didn't take any time at all.

7.

"So I told her I loved her."