

A Day in the Life of a Heroin Heroine

Hello, I'm Maria. At 7:00 am every morning I get up and go to work as a stenographer and word processor for the Federal Electric Commission (CFE) here in Chapala, Jalisco, Mexico. My 400 pesos per week is far from a great salary, but it keeps me in the heroin I need daily to survive. I'm a heroin addict and functional. I've been shooting up for four years now, ever since cocaine and marijuana knocked me out of prep school. I was functioning then too, but I got caught in the ladies' room snorting coke and that was my ticket to ride somewhere else. That's a nightmare that I'll only briefly share. Suffice it to say that my parents were appalled and drove me from the house. You'd think I had gotten pregnant or something! I was a "disgrace" and I brought "dishonor" on the family name. Maybe if they would have put me in some government clinic or something...but, alas, there are none! They could have had me "detoxed" from crack cocaine and the other crap and I wouldn't be in the situation I'm in now? Apparently they just didn't give a shit, because they knew there were private clinics and God knows they could afford it. The latter seems to be the only logical explanation. They just didn't give a shit!

At any rate, as I was saying, I'm a functional addict. That means I have a crappy job and support myself, using my income --yes, all of it—to keep myself on brown heroin. My also functional-addict boyfriend pays the rent so there's no problem there. The heroin--it's my life! No one knows about my habit except my boyfriend of three years, Carlos, and his two junkie friends, a "married" couple who are as wimpy as they consider themselves cool. They live on the streets mostly, and Gloria sells her ever-thinning body for a few measly pesos a shot and her husband Juan robs the local homes of the rich and mugs people for a living. I just hope that if he ever gets caught he doesn't give out our address as his sometimes flop house. That could cause real problems with the "Federales".

When I first started heroin I felt nauseous all the time. I'd throw up again and again and I'd still feel sick afterwards. I'd be dizzy and I always had this "weird" feeling in my head. I'm over that now Thank God, or who or whatever, but I'm hooked on the "cheap" brown stuff. It's heaven for me, or it has been until recently at least. I notice my tolerance level rising, and I am beginning to get scared. I need more and more to get that pinky fuzzy feeling, and I'm wary of matriculating to the purer stuff. The brown horse is fucking shit to begin with, but it's inexpensive enough to be affordable even for me, and besides it gets the job done. At least it used to. The purer varieties of heroin are more expensive and dangerous and there-in lays my hesitation. That's what keeps me from my junk-heroin graduation day—fear!

As I was saying, I get up at 7:00 am every day, shoot up, shower and off to work for a big fat big shot at CFE. I think he's the one who thought up the motto "Compromised to Honesty". Ha! The possibilities are endless: "Compromising our Honesty", "Honesty Compromised", "Dishonesty Promised", you name it! CFE sure in fuck is not a bunch of *honest* hoods. At any rate, I'm at work by 9:00 am and either taking shorthand or at the keyboard till 1:30 pm. At that time I take my lunch break, which means I'm in the ladies'

room sticking a needle in my arm for the second time that day. Paradise gained. Hell that and a roll with Carlos (did I mention Carlos is my boyfriend's name?) a couple times a week is all I have. I'm twenty-one and I should be more sexually active in my situation, but I think the brown horse has thrown me off. Nothing sexually turns me on. Sure he's a hunk, what's left of him after 7 years of gradual advancement up the heroin ladder, but I can't get the sex out of my mind and into my body. Sensuality has nothing to do with a sweet caress or a tongue in my crotch anymore. It's become a bizarre head trip. I'm sure Carlos feels the same because his ejaculations are pretty weak for a twenty-six year old man. He's thinner now than when we first met. But that's not where it's at anyway. The brown, powdery shit keeps me from going insane with boredom. And that's that!

I can't go for more than five hours without horse. Fortunately there are only four and one half hours from 9:00-1:30 and that is just under the gun. My day ends at 4:30 pm so there's still "high" time to get home and eat a piece of fish or some cake and get back on my "high" horse once again, ha ha, for the rest of the evening. That means I inject again at about 6 o'clock, more or less the time that Carlos gets back from a boring day of driving taxi in the Jocotepec--San Juan Cosalá area of his lake-shore Lake Chapala gig. For Carlos, the stage is set for an accident someday. He keeps the same clock as I do, more or less, but his track is more prone to disaster since he's on the almost pure stuff now. I wonder where he gets the money... I'd pray for him but who would listen...? Fuck! I wish I'd never him! I think I have feelings for him, but I don't know for sure.

I need my sleep. I can't lose my job or I'll be out in the streets like Gloria. How could I even look for a new way to support my habit without the cash to pay for the horse in the meantime? It would probably be much too painful, like withdrawal. Tomorrow will start out nice as usual. Not the fresh morning air but a fresh needle. I've got be careful with needles. I'm not sure if Carlos is all that faithful. This just occurred to me: I wonder why people don't ask me why I always wear long-sleeved blouses to work?

Anyway, that's my day. Someday I'll kick the heroin monkey off my back, but not until after I've tried Carlos' purer stuff. I think methadone would be my best bet. There's nothing like a lifetime of free "junk". Carlos is, as I may have said before "dead meat".