



[Flash Fiction: 'Lunch Money'](#)

[Suzanne Brazil](#) May 14, 2014 [6 Comments](#)



I was heading down the highway after the robbery, not highway robbery, just the old fashioned gas station kind. The kind where I shot the guy right between the eyes and he looked up at me creeping me out until I could get into my truck and drive away.

I'd just wanted the turkey sandwich with cheese, and a strawberry Quik. Maybe some Cheetos. I wasn't trying to take all his money or anything. I'm not a crazy person. That's what I told the human resource lady at the bank where I used to work.

She said Jenny and Michael complained because I kept leaving Jenny notes. I told the HR lady there was nothing illegal about leaving a pretty girl a note and Michael was just jealous. He had this frat boy haircut and wore those little alligator shirts under his blue bank uniform jacket. I kept telling him he was just a bank teller, like me, nothing fancier even though he had a business degree from Missouri State. He thought he was *all that*, driving his brand new Ford Fusion. I laughed, asking him, if he was so smart, why'd *he* pay thousands of dollars for a college education, while *I* got my high school diploma for free (with honors)—and here we were with the same job?

Poor Mike would just get all red in the face, then go to HR saying he thought I was crazy and dangerous because my notes were vaguely threatening. I laughed and told the lady that maybe I was just vaguely crazy. Eventually, I sat up straight, put on my serious face and told her that I understood her concerns, and I'd refrain from doing anything that made anyone uncomfortable.

Of course, that lasted until Jenny giggled when she heard me say good morning to Michael in my dead-on British accent like Lord what's-his-name on *Downton Abbey*. They were standing at the back by the coin counter machine, where we picked up our cash trays in the morning. I just walked in, giving Michael a slight bow, and a "Cheers, Old' Chap!" His face got that squirmy red color, and I saw Jenny try to hide her smile behind her pretty blond hair.

She thought I was harmless, and I'd heard her tell that to Michael. I guess once they got engaged he thought he knew what was best for her. Poor Jenny. I just couldn't see her married to a stiff like that. She actually seemed to have a sense of humor. So, when I left what turned out to be my last note, I had no idea she'd react he way she did.

It was more a cartoon than a note and I'm not much of an artist. Just a couple of stick figures really. A guy and a girl with long yellow hair in a truck and another stick figure guy laying on the ground with a knife in his chest. I guess she freaked out because of the tiny alligator on the shirt of the dead guy. Whatever.

Next thing I knew, Madam HR had me in her office with two of the bank security guards. She said she'd always liked me, and to be fair, other managers would have called the cops. But, she'd never had any problems with me before Jenny and Mike complained. She mumbled something about not hiring relatives or married couples as they were always causing problems. She said goodbye and stuck out her hand (which I took as confirmation that she'd rather keep me but maybe didn't have the authority). The guards walked me to my locker to get my coat, and I was "escorted" out the back of the bank. I didn't see Michael or Jenny again. Knowing that little preppy, he was probably hiding crouched down behind the water cooler. I guess Jenny gets what she deserves after all.

Madam HR said my last check will be mailed to me. So, I had some gas and \$2 until payday. I stopped at Blaine's Gas-n-Go (Blaine is the dead guy) and was just going to get a milk, drive down to the river and maybe fish for an hour or so. Then I heard my stomach growl and remembered I hadn't had lunch. Two bucks wasn't going to buy much. I started thinking about those jerks at the bank where I'd left my bologna sandwich in the cafeteria fridge.

I'd loved that job. They were impressed with my grades during my interview, and no one asked about my juvie record. That's sealed and, after all, I was just a kid. I'd been doing great since all that mess in high school. I liked my apartment and was actually having fun at work. Now some stupid frat boy ruined it all because his fiancé thought I was funny.

I tried to tell Blaine I wasn't after his money; I just wanted some lunch and I'd be back in a week or two to pay once my check came in the mail. He started the whole thing when he picked up his aluminum softball bat and came out from behind the counter. I had my 9mm with me every day for a while now because I never knew when Michael might give me trouble. But here it was Blaine causing me to use it.

Now I'm about 40 miles outside of town and will have to find a way to get my paycheck. The gun wasn't registered, and I'd thought to grab the security videos. I wonder if my fingerprints might link back to that trouble in high school. If so, they'll also notice I got straight A's. How many times does a lunatic get straight A's? I wasn't crazy, just hungry.

Looks like I may have to go back to the bank to pick up my lunch after all. I hope Jenny's still there.

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About Suzanne Brazil



Suzanne M. Brazil is a freelance writer and editor living in a recently empty nest in the suburbs of Chicago. Her work has been featured in *Writer's Digest* and many local publications. She is a frequent blog contributor and recently finished her first novel.