

## Andreson's Angle

by J. Michael Miller

I'm gonna die tonight. Sound was so sparse in my room that the air ate my words. A suitcase sealed in the corner contained all of my earthly possessions aside from a clean, fashionable set of clothes I would want to be caught dead in. I laid in bed with my legs spilling into the air between the end of the mattress and the floor. I had gotten myself into a mess no amount of soap and water could clean. The Killers would find me soon enough. My mama already is going to have to live with the disappointment of my actions. I just had to be as little of a burden as I could be for her in my death. I relived my life as memory flashed rapidly inside my mind.

A fist pummeled the wooden door separating me from my punishment. My heart hopped up my chest and stood frozen as my eyes darted towards the unwanted company. This is it. This is the end.

"Who is it," my voice shakes as I question.

"It's somebody to see you, Mr. Andreson," Mrs. Bell replied. "It's Nick Adams."

"Come in."

The bulbous bronze knob slowly turns. The door shoots open as Nick from Henry's lunch room strolls into the room.

"What was it," I asked.

"I was up at Henry's," Nick said "and two fellows came in and tied up me and the cook, and they said they were going to kill you." My heart sinks as my veins feel the warmth of blood pumps. "They put us out in the kitchen," Nick went on. "They were going to shoot you when you came in to supper." I look towards the wall trying to push the tear in my eye duct back inside. "George thought I better come and tell you about it."

"There isn't anything I can do about it," I mutter.

"I'll tell you what they were like."

"I don't want to know what they were like." Another traitorous tear tries to leak from my eye as I look back towards the wall. "Thanks for coming to tell me about it."

"That's all right." I felt the piercing pang of Nick's stare. "Don't you want me to go and see the police?"

"No, that wouldn't do any good.

"Isn't there something I could do?"

"No. There ain't anything to do."

"Maybe it was just a bluff."

"No. It ain't just a bluff." I turn away from Nick and nestle my head against the top pillow. "The only thing is, I just can't make up my mind to go out. I been in here all day."

"Couldn't you get out of town?"

"No, I'm through with all that running around." My eyes dart back towards the wall. "There ain't anything to do now."

"Couldn't you fix it up some way?"

"No. I got in wrong. There ain't anything to do. After a while I'll make up my mind to go out."

"I better go back and see George."

"So long." I can't bring myself to look at Nick one last time. "Thanks for coming around." I hear the door shut behind me and latch. The shuffle of steps grows fainter as Nick and Mrs. Bell walk away. I don't know why the wall is so interesting, but I can't look away.

"The Killers will come next," I whisper aloud. I squeeze my eyes and sink into the blackness of empty thought.

Hemingway, Ernest 2005. The killers. In *Adaptations* (pp 421-429). New York: Three Rivers Press.