

Strapped & Packed

Written by

Nik Aberle

**INT. POLICE STATION INTERROGATION ROOM - EVENING**

We open on an empty police interrogation room save for the suspect handcuffed to the table. The suspect is EUGENE, who is in his mid 40s, wears a perfectly pressed postman's uniform with long sleeves. He wears a pair of black rimmed glasses and has close cut, dark curly hair. He carries himself with a fairly delicate air and currently looks unconcerned regarding the position he's in. There is a single unopened package on the table across from him.

The door opens.

In walks Detective GAMBLE, late 50s, walks with a limp, and wears a suit that may be older than him. Gamble sits down, places a file in front of himself, and is careful not to let any documents fall out.

GAMBLE

I can't believe you never thought we'd figure out it was you.

Eugene looks at him but shows no sign of interest.

GAMBLE (CONT'D)

I mean, all the body parts we found were along your route. You didn't think we'd notice that pattern?

EUGENE

So that's what this is about? I've told your officers before, I have no idea what's in the packages. I simply deliver them. Not only is it illegal, but it's improper etiquette for me to look in even a single package before delivery.

EUGENE

(incredulously)

You wouldn't want me to commit a felony would you Detective Gamble?

Gamble doesn't reply at first. He points to the package on the table.

GAMBLE

Shall we both take a look at what we found in your truck yesterday?

Gamble puts a pair of gloves on, pulls the package over and delicately cuts it open with a razor. He makes a slight face of disgust as he pulls out and unwraps a small package inside.

GAMBLE

I'm going to guess that is one of Inky Eddie's kidney's?

Eugene doesn't take his eyes of Gamble.

EUGENE

Spleen...IF I had to take an educated guess. Took a lot of anatomy glasses in Junior College.

GAMBLE

Educated guess. Right. Or perhaps, it's because you put the spleen in that package yourself and were getting ready to deliver it to Inky's girlfriend.

EUGENE

Detective, you and I both know the postal delivery worker isn't responsible for the contents of the packages they deliver. If that were the case I'd be in jail for felony drug charges, animal trafficking, and probably many other things. You know why?

Gamble doesn't respond.

EUGENE

Because humans are a very strange mammal.

Gamble just rolls his eyes and looks back at Eugene trying to figure out how to break him. Gamble opens the folder, rifles through some papers and pulls one out. Eugene was watching and a handwritten note catches his attention but Gamble didn't notice his interest.

GAMBLE

I've got 200 packages over the last year with no return address, using corporate prepaid postage accounts, all originating from your postal office.

EUGENE

And all of them were on my route?

GAMBLE

Not all, but enough.

(MORE)

GAMBLE (CONT'D)

I know you guys cover for each other and I'm sure if I check the delivery records, you would be responsible for all of them.

Eugene smirks and rolls his eyes.

EUGENE

So you think I'm some sort of serial killer? I don't even know who this Edward fellow is other than he seems to be missing a spleen.

GAMBLE

Inky Edward Solomon was a mob member and a confidential informant of mine. His body parts have been delivered to his family members over the last week. No, Mr. Miller, I don't think you're a serial killer. I think you're a cleaner for the Davis crime family.

Eugene scoffs and looks super amused by this accusation.

GAMBLE

I think they tell you who they have a problem with, and you make them disappear while sending a message to their family via the USPS.

EUGENE

You can't possibly be serious. Have you looked into my life? I literally live the most boring life possible. I work for the Post Office, my hobbies include antique vacuum restoration, and I have high blood pressure.

Eugene points to the package.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

Now I agree that you need to catch whoever is doing that. That's not a proper use of the USPS, and I want to see them brought to justice, but I think you're just taking your frustration out on me.

As Gamble is about to reply the door opens and a uniformed officer waves Gamble out. We stay in the room with Eugene as he slowly crosses his legs and rests his hands on his knees. After a few moments Gamble re-enters the room and sits down with a sigh.

GAMBLE

Well, you're free to go. We've had you in here for 36 hours and in that time more parts of Eddie have been delivered on your route.

Eugene just looks at him with a smile.

GAMBLE (CONT'D)

But you already knew that, didn't you?

EUGENE

News to me Detective. While I'm saddened for Edward and his family, I am thankful to be done with this farcical investigation.

Eugene offers his hands forward, presenting the handcuffs. Gamble just slightly nods and uncuffs him before showing him to the door.

EUGENE

I presume my vehicle will be brought around front.

GAMBLE

Of course.

#### **EXT. POLICE STATION - EVENING**

Eugene exits the police station as a Postal Vehicle pulls around front. He shakes the hand of the officer and hops inside.

Eugene takes great care to adjust the mirrors, buckle up, and move his seat before taking out his phone and making a quick call. After hanging up, he cautiously pulls out into traffic and drives away.

#### **EXT. POST OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Eugene pulls up to the post office and pulls into an employee of the month spot. He hops out and heads inside the building.

**INT. POST OFFICE - NIGHT**

We follow Eugene through a dark building and labyrinthine shelves before coming to a bright opening. He walks into a circle of light with two people idly standing and chatting between themselves.

TIM, late 30s, has thinning hair and uses way too much hair gel. JILL, early 30s, still in uniform approaches and shakes Eugene's hand.

JILL

I assume they found the packages?

EUGENE

Right on time. Did you bring them in so we can have a chat?

Jill smiles and then whistles. Eugene gives a slight nod to Tim who nods back.

TIM

Boss.

A door to the side opens and three large postal workers in uniform usher in three bound and gagged smaller figures all still in uniform.

In front of Eugene are GARY, a balding middle aged man who's crying; TASHA, an early 20s female with tattoos and piercings; and STEVEN, a 14 year old paper boy in jeans and a hoodie. All three have various cuts and bruises, and are bleeding from a previous beating.

JILL

They all say they didn't do it.

Eugene smiles, starts to pace in front of them and roll up his sleeves. As he rolls, we see some serious ink in the Celtic style spiraling up each arm. Dragons, runes, and demons are common motifs.

EUGENE

Of course they aren't talking, that'd take all the fun out of this for me.

Eugene's demeanor has slowly slipped from light and airy to grim and serious. He looks like he has definitely killed before and doesn't lose sleep over it.

After he finishes rolling up his sleeves he walks behind a desk, pulls out a bottle of gin, takes a straight pull and sets it down.

He holds his hand out and Jill puts a large Celtic battle-ax in his hand. He starts pacing again, hefting the ax to his shoulder and back down with ease while he walks.

EUGENE

While only two of you are old  
enough to take the oath of the  
Postal Worker...

He points the ax at each one in succession

EUGENE (CONT'D)

All three of you took the oath to  
the Davis family. And it turns out  
one of you didn't take that oath  
very seriously. I don't know about  
you, but that oath means a lot to  
me. We aren't some common  
criminals, we have etiquette and  
standard operating procedures.  
When someone doesn't follow those,  
I end up in jail. I. Don't. Like.  
Ending. Up. In. Jail.

The tension in the room grows and the three realize one of them  
is not only a snitch, but likely going to die.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

Now. They are going to un-gag you,  
and you'll have a chance to  
confess. As a show of kindness,  
I'll promise to just dump your  
body in the river rather than send  
it to your family.

He makes a hand motion to the three large men who untie the  
gags on each of them. They all start talking at the same time  
trying to defend themselves.

Eugene picks the ax up to swing and makes a large circle as he  
drives it into the center of his desk.

EUGENE

(yelling)

ENOUGH! One at a time. Gary, you  
have 30 seconds.

The three all look even more nervous and no one's talking.

EUGENE

Tick tock Gary.

Gary snaps out of his shock.

GARY

Listen boss, I'd never do anything to betray the family. Remember last winter when I broke my leg and you covered my route so I wouldn't lose my house. I owe you my life. I wouldn't do anything to hurt you. Please, you have to believe me.

Eugene cuts him off.

EUGENE

I believe Gary, I don't think you're the snitch.

Gary lets out a visible sigh of relief and smiles. He glances at the man holding him in place who still isn't smiling, and Gary gets grim again. But at least he isn't visibly shaking anymore.

EUGENE

Tasha? What do you have to say for yourself.

Tasha doesn't seem to be as rattled as the other two but is still defensive.

TASHA

Well, I didn't do it. I'm not going to grovel, but we're literally family. I wouldn't betray you Uncle Gene, you saved me from my deadbeat dad and gave me a live.

Eugene smiles and just points at her while laughing.

EUGENE

(slightly annoyed)

It's Eugene, Tasha. You know I hate being called Gene. But I do believe you.

Eugene paces a bit before pointing the ax at Steven.

EUGENE

What about you Steven?

Steven looks the most terrified of them all. He has the least amount of bruises, but has soiled himself.

STEVEN

(with a nervous stutter)

S-Sir, you can't honestly think it was me. I'd be a fool to snitch on you. Y-You paid for my mom's chemo and I'm your best delivery boy, I-I-I move more heroin than anyone else. Why would I jeopardize all that? With today's student loan r-r-rates, I'm relying on you to put me through c-c-college.

Eugene suddenly gets a grim look on his face while looking at Steven. You could hear a pin drop.

EUGENE

Fucking student loans. You're god damn right I'm going to put you through college Steven.

Everyone looks relieved again as the tension eases.

JILL

Wait? So you don't think it was any of them?

EUGENE

It's not a matter of thinking. I know it's not any of them. The snitch is in this room, but it isn't one of them.

Eugene walks back to his desk and grabs his ax.

EUGENE (CONT'D)

This was just a chance for the rat to confess, but of course they wouldn't have the spine, I mean they're a snitch. Right Tim?

TIM

(Stuttering)

Wh-wha-what? It wasn't me, I swear.

EUGENE

Can't get out of this one, I got you dead to rights.

Tim's eyes get large as he turns and runs for a door. Eugene hefts the ax above his head with both hands and lets it fly, landing it directly in Tim's right hip, dropping him with a cry.

Eugene looks to the three guards.

EUGENE

Strap him and pack him, he gets  
delivered tomorrow.

The three guards head to Tim, pick him up screaming and carrying him to a large strapping machine. In the background of the next conversation we hear the strapping machine followed by an ax chop.

EUGENE

(to Jill)

Help me untie them.

They start to untie the three suspects and Eugene gives them each a kiss on the forehead as they are released.

JILL

I don't get it, how'd you know it  
was him?

**Strap Hack Scream**

EUGENE

When I was in the  
police station...

**Strap Hack Scream**

EUGENE (CONT'D)

Gamble opened up his file...

**Strap Hack Scream**

EUGENE (CONT'D)

and I saw a piece of paper...

**Strap Hack Scream**

EUGENE (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Will you stop fucking around and  
take his head off. I can't finish  
a goddamn sentence with his  
screaming.

**Strap Choking sound Hack Silence**

EUGENE (CONT'D)

Thank you. Christ, where was I?

JILL

Piece of paper.

**Strap Hack**

EUGENE

Right. There was a piece of paper that had been addressed to Detective Gamble telling him about our operation, specifically naming me.

**Strap Hack Scream**

JILL

(understanding)  
And Detective Gamble is on Tim's route.

EUGENE

And it was in Tim's handwriting.

**Strap Hack Scream**

JILL

Yeah, he has super recognizable writing. I think he uses a ruler every time.

EUGENE

He did. I'm honestly a little surprised he made such a simple mistake.

**Strap Hack Scream**

Eugene & Jill head towards the side door while we see and hear the strapping machine still working and the three guards start packing up Tim's body off to the side.

**EXT. FRONT PORCH - MORNING**

A paper thuds on a front step as Detective Gamble steps outside in a robe with a cup of coffee and picks it up. He leaves the rolled up paper on the floor, but reaches inside to pull out a hand written note.

He reads it while sipping his coffee and nods his head satisfactorily. After a final nod he glances up and waves to the paperboy, Steven, as he rides off down the street. Gamble picks up his paper and turns to go inside.

END.