

# Butch Lullaby

Sun Kil Moon

Beautiful May day  
Just back from the house  
Checked on the roof  
Got a call that an old friend died  
His name was Butch  
He was tough as nails  
You couldn't kill him if you tried  
He was tough as an ox but there on the floor he died  
Next to a 40. and a hot plate  
Next to the sound of a band rehearsing through the walls of a rehearsal space  
Butch was always there and yet we took him for granted  
Butch was a cool cat from another planet  
We thought he'd last like a piece of granite  
On your grandmother's kitchen cabinet  
We thought he'd always be there like the stars and the moon  
But we're all gonna end up ashes in an urn or bones under a tomb  
He'd watch over us down there in the TL  
He'd watch us rock out to our music and was always supportive as hell  
He worked for Fishbone and George Clinton when he was younger  
To be around music Butch had an insatiable hunger  
(Butch) Butch could show you respect and uplift your spirit  
(Butch) Butch could lay down the law and make you fear him  
(Butch) Butch could make you laugh and smile if you earned it  
(Butch) Butch had that sunny (?) stare down if you deserved it

I remember Thanksgiving out at my house just a few years ago with Caroline and Butch and Nathan. We watched Drugstore Cowboy and Butch gave Caroline tips on how to cook a turkey. She thought Butch was charming and sweet and he really took to her too. Matt Dillon's character in Drugstore Cowboy was after Dilaudid, the Holy Grail of pharmaceuticals. Butch knew what Dilaudid was. He was older than me so there were things you didn't have to explain to Butch. There were things he just got and understood. When someone is older than you always take the time to listen to them. A person older than you knows something that you don't. At the very least Butch knew what it meant to be black and born in 1952. Do you? Because I don't know shit about that. I remember the wood burning stove and the heat was really cranking in the living room. Nathan kept getting up to remove himself from the heat and to have a smoke outside. But Butch didn't budge unless he needed to go to the bathroom. Butch wasn't the agile mother fucker he used to be and he needed a damn good reason to get up off of that cozy chair. Butch's favorite part of the turkey was the drumstick and when they left, at around midnight or so, Butch took almost all the leftovers with him. That was Butch. If he was in your backstage area forget it. He had a relentless hunger and thirst and he cleaned your backstage area out

Butch makes sure no one stole no microphones  
Butch makes sure that safely, you return home  
Butch makes sure no one stole your keys to your car or your wallet  
Butch makes you clean your own fucking piss off the toilet  
There's no fucking around with Butch  
He'd shake you down  
He'd put you in check until you felt like a fucking clown  
Every day he'd watch the pigeons flutter  
He saw the bums sleeping in the gutter  
And San Francisco's tenderloin  
He walked the streets but I couldn't say if he felt joy

And when my time comes for me to die  
I hope I see Butch again and to pass some time  
I'm sorry man I didn't get a chance to say goodbye  
But I hope you like my little Butch lullaby  
I'm sorry man that I didn't get a chance to say goodbye  
But I hope you like my little Butch lullaby  
This one's for you  
This one's for you

This one's for you (Butch)  
This little lullaby [x10]

(Butch) Butch was the resident mayor of the tenderloin  
(Butch) Butch was into Red Hot Chili Peppers Funky Monks video  
(Butch) Butch threatened a guy with a machete who was messing with Equipto  
(Butch) Butch was there when I cut Old Ramon in the studio

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I'm just back from Butch's memorial. I stopped and got a bouquet of poppies along the way. It was a sparse attendance when I first showed up but it filled up pretty quickly. I stayed out back for a while in the alley with a handful of people sharing stories about Butch almost directly under the room where he died. Stories ranged from Butch chasing people with sickles, to his times with George Clinton, to his always entertaining mood swings people encountered over the years. I asked a friend when it was exactly that Butch began working at Hyde Street and he said that Butch turned up with George Clinton's entourage about 20 years ago or so. That he just never left. He said that there were several times he wanted to strangle Butch but that he had an unexplainable affection for him that kept him around. Everyone had a lot of love for Butch, but seemed to have experienced some kind of confrontation with him except for me. All of my experiences with him over the years were pleasant and I asked someone why that was

Somebody said, "Because you're Mark Kozelek"

And I said, "No seriously really"

And they said, "Well, that's because you never told him what to do"

That was correct. In all the years I've known Butch I have no memory of ever telling him what to do. I mean I've seen him get serious and angry before but it was always out of protectiveness and he was never hostile towards me. At some point a couple asked me if I wanted to go smoke a joint with them, with a group of people, up in the echo chamber. I said well I don't smoke pot but sure, I'd be happy to join them and that I hadn't been in the echo chamber for years. The last time I was in the echo chamber it had been a storage room filled with amps and 10 inch tapes. We went up there and a girl liked the way her singing voice sounded with all that echo. She sounded like Janis Joplin and we all hummed along and tapped our feet as a joint that looked like a small wet cigar got passed around. When we left the room several of the people began climbing the long ladder that leads to the roof. They asked me to join but I said, "No fucking way, I'm too old". It was late and I was ready to go home. As I left a band was playing in the main room and lots of pizza boxes were everywhere and beers all around and girls were dancing. Butch would've loved it. I hugged a few familiar faces goodbye and headed out on to Hyde Street into the heart of the Tenderloin like I've done so many times over the years. This time Butch didn't follow me out like he would often do asking me to buy him a 40