

## the man with the beautiful eyes

when we were kids  
there was a strange  
house  
all the shades were  
always  
drawn  
and we never heard  
voices  
in there  
and the yard was full of  
bamboo  
and we liked to play in  
the bamboo  
pretend we were  
Tarzan  
(although there was no  
Jane).  
and there was a  
fish pond  
a large one  
full of the  
fattest goldfish  
you ever saw  
and they were  
tame.  
they came to the  
surface of the water  
and took pieces of  
bread  
from our hands.  
our parents had  
told us:  
"never go near that  
house."  
so, of course,  
we went.

we wondered if anybody  
lived there.  
weeks went by and we  
never saw  
anybody.

then one day  
we heard  
a voice  
from the house  
"YOU GOD DAMNED  
WHORE!"

it was a man's  
voice.

then the screen  
door  
of the house was  
flung open  
and the man  
walked  
out.

he was holding a  
fifth of whiskey  
in his right  
hand.  
he was about  
30.  
he had a cigar  
in his  
mouth,  
needed a  
shave.  
his hair was  
wild and  
uncombed  
and he was  
barefoot  
in undershirt  
and pants.  
but his eyes  
were  
bright.  
they *blazed*  
with brightness  
and he said,  
"hey little  
gentlemen,  
having a good  
time, I  
hope?"

then he gave a  
little laugh  
and walked  
back into the  
house.

we left,  
went back to my  
parent's yard  
and thought  
about it.

our parents,  
we decided  
had wanted us

to stay away  
from there  
because they  
never wanted us  
to see a man  
like  
that,  
a strong natural  
man  
with  
beautiful  
eyes.

our parents  
were ashamed  
that they were  
not  
like that  
man,  
that's why they  
wanted us  
to stay  
away.

but  
we went back  
to that house  
and the bamboo  
and the tame  
goldfish.  
we went back  
many times  
for many  
weeks  
but we never  
saw  
or heard  
the man  
again.

the shades were  
down  
as always  
and it was  
quiet.

then one day  
as we came back from  
school

we saw the  
house.

## the man with the beautiful eyes

it had burned  
down,  
there was nothing  
left,  
just a smoldering  
twisted black  
foundation  
and we went to  
the fish pond  
and there was  
no water  
in it  
and the fat  
orange goldfish  
were dead  
there,  
drying out.

we went back to  
my parents' yard  
and talked about  
it  
and decided that  
our parents had  
burned their  
house down,  
had killed  
them  
had killed the  
goldfish  
because it was  
all too  
beautiful,  
even the bamboo  
forest had  
burned.

they had been  
afraid of  
the man with the  
beautiful  
eyes.

and  
we were afraid  
then  
that  
all through our lives  
things like that  
would  
happen,  
that nobody  
wanted  
anybody  
to be  
strong and  
beautiful  
like that,  
that  
others would never  
allow it,  
and that  
many people  
would have to  
die.

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