

my future, maybe yours

by Anthony M. Powers

She went for the typewriter first.
She'd never seemed that strong before,
but she picked the damned thing up
like it was a piece of bad fruit in the grocery store
and threw it at my head.
It bounced off the wall over my shoulder,
knocking two or three assorted prints and photos from the walls
of our small loft apartment.
I didn't look to see which ones.
It caught me on the heel as I was ducking out of the way
and I fell
face first
onto the hardwood floor.
I lifted my head and she was standing over me
with a lamp in her hand-
the one with the ugly floral pattern on the shade-
and she held it above her head and shrieked,
WHO THE FUCK IS SHE?!
and I asked WHO?
and she threw the lamp across the room,
where it shattered quietly on the coffee table she'd bought at a flea
market
with my money
the year before.
Then she was at my desk
tearing pages out of notepads and spiral notebooks
and shrieked again,
WHO THE FUCK IS SHE?!
so I got to my knees and lied and said
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!
and she started throwing pages at me in crumpled balls

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that fell to the floor maybe two feet in front of her
and she was crying and screaming nothing in particular at me.
I wondered if she'd gone through my drafts
or if she'd snatched the old ribbons from the trash
when I wasn't looking,
not that it really mattered at this point.
Her arms fell to her sides
and she stood there with slumped shoulders,
crying like a 3-year-old
in that brown sun-dress
that makes her breasts look ten years older.
I crawled across the floor,
reached up for her hand and kissed it once
and we stayed like that for a while.
When I went to kiss her hand again
she snatched it away
and it came back across my face, hard and fast.
She shrieked and cried and asked WHY?!
so I told her
SWEETHEART... IT'S ONLY FICTION!
and before I could say anything else she had the letter opener in her
hand
and then I was slumped over on the floor
bleeding from my neck
and I hoped whoever found me would still be able to read
the crumpled pages scattered around the room-
even the ones with blood on them
YOU NEVER WRITE ABOUT ME, YOU BASTARD!
and I would have thought of something witty to say
but I was busy drowning in myself,
wishing like hell I could have had one last cigarette
YOU SON OF A BITCH!
and she started tearing more pages out and throwing them at me
WHY DON'T YOU EVER WRITE ABOUT ME?!
and I couldn't help but sort of laugh a sick gurgling sound

because I always said this one would be the death of me.

