

Dreams Bright White Smash

by David Lindsay

She was there then gone then there again. We were naked and wet and touching, she let me touch her, but she didn't want to be there. But she was, despite herself. It was my dream.

You can go if you want.

I never loved you. I was too young.

We were both too young.

You stole me from my mama.

I looked away. Even in dreams it comes up.

We were both young.

You were older. You never protected me.

I dipped the cloth in the water. We were in a tub. I sensed we had been there a long time, it only seemed a moment. I squeezed and water ran down her back. I always loved her back. I reached for the shampoo.

Don't wash my hair. I'll do it.

You never let me wash your hair. Why?

It's my hair.

Oh.

We were in a bed, as sudden as a man blinks. The wetness of the tub, the wetness of lust, the wet spot on the sheets. The curve where her buttocks met the top of her thighs and the pillow of her breasts and the endless brown hair and the lushness of her lips and the sound, holy, the first time she said my name that way.

Oh...and she had said my name and her hands were on my back. In darkness I heard her say my name that way, over and over, an echo in a cave and I can never find her.

She walks away from me in a field. She is wearing hunting clothes. Her shotgun is loaded.

I don't hunt.

I do. Girls can hunt. I never loved you.

A buck breaks the thicket of briars behind her and she wheels and fires.

Is this now? I don't know anymore. Or is this then?

I look at her. She is disgusted. Disappointed. The look the first time I broke a promise, the first time I hit her, the last time too.

A burst of light from the sky. White. God. I raise my arms in praise and she says You never meant it.

Is this now?

Your made up world meant more to you than me. Wake up. I'm gone. I never loved you.

I can't find my children and I run and run and my mama is there saying You can't do a woman like that son! and her mama is beside me saying I wanted to believe! and I run into a clearing and she is there again saying screaming crying I never never never never loved you.

But I loved you.

You didn't, never, not ever.

The buck she shot is dead. A perfect shot. Can you skin it?

No.

A man could.

I can see her, the sun shining on her face, on the porch swing. Pleasant and serene, the face of Pocahontas, the turbulence invisible.

The sun shining on her face, beneath me.

It feels so good it hurts.

Hurt.

I am flying. She is falling. I can't fly fast enough. Then I am distracted. You were always distracted, she says. A story, one more beer, some other girl, distracted. I don't see it but I hear her crash to the ground, the breaking of bones, a shattering like fine china thrown to the floor.

She's wearing the yellow dress, the one she wore the first time I kissed her. I can taste her breath, sweet from candy. The children are there, little, little, their blue eyes like mine staring at me. I look

away and look back and they are grown. They don't answer my voice
as they did when they were younger.

You loved me. You did you did you did you loved me.

No. Never. Not for a second.

You did, the children say as a Greek chorus. You, Mother you
did, loved him, sadly and hard you loved him, until you could love
him no more.

No.

And she vanishes.

