

Dragon Eyes

by Dennis Hiatt

She had a bobbing pony tail, a neat mobile mouth, and, when she didn't know you were looking, cold eyes. Unanimated, her face was fresh, clean, and lovely-strong good-looking. On stage alive, her funny, clever face, seemed to say that she would forever be a surprised brave child. Her face protected her. It was like armor that deflected hurtful men by making them underestimate her. She was sly, very sly and she knew that. But, did she know that her eyes weren't windows to her soul, but fierce, angry dragons that stood guard over her heart?

Like all good dragons her eyes were beautiful, and strong. They were as blue as a Chinese sky, and as quick as mating cobras. We all know that dragons can be playful, but they never sleep. They would step behind closed lid when she kissed. They would laugh, or sigh, or even flare hot and wide when she made love, but if the man in her bed touched her deep, they would hide her heart far inside her. Then they would be the carefulest of sly dragons, and pretend to sleep. But they would not. They would watch this man from half closed bedroom lids. They would let nothing he did escape them. Was he a good man, or did he hurt soft, warm, loving hearts?

How could they know? They would watch, and watch, and watch, and if he raised a hand too quick they would be on him with fangs and claws. And, perhaps they would have been too quick. Perhaps he'd only reached for a cigarette. They might then be a little embarrassed, but they wouldn't really care. Her heart was their child. That child was beauty, and love itself. The whole world could be damned to fire, and frost, and every plague from Hell on low, and the dragons would not care a single fig so long as their child slept on soft grass, under a warm sun, in the garden of forever flowers.

But forever is only for dragons, and children need to be touched or they die, and year after year the garden of the dragons becomes colder and colder, until thick walls of stone have sprung up, and the high cold tower of their caring will hold nothing alive.

The dragons sense this in their bright scaled way. They camouflages themselves with artful colors and cute gladness. From under dark lashed, they coo, Strip yourself of shining armor. Leave your sword on your bed. Tonight come to us naked with chocolate, and smiles. Offer to our while fangs and long claws your bare throat. If you are truly good, we dragons they will let you into her garden, and we, will keep you both warm forever.

But we all know dragons always lie.

