

Boys

by Jamie Iredell

This is the common moniker in English for males in the growth periods from newborn to young man. After this period boys are typically referred to as men. Boys can be characterized by their extreme emotional swings, their propensity to violence, and their desperate attempts for attention. For instance, there was a little boy who dwelt in a housing development called Oak Hills, on a drive also called Oak Hills, and one day he got mad at his mother. This was because his mother had taken his stupid sister's side in that fight in the game of Candyland. The boy decided to run away. Before he ran away he slipped on his Superman Underoos, and stuffed his High Sierra backpack with his Batman Underoos and a pair of socks, and other details that would normally be left out. He came to a spot on the edge of the strawberry fields where he liked to sit with his brother and watch the turkey buzzards circle overhead. So he crawled up the embankment to where they'd rubbed the wild grasses flat with their asses, and he took off his backpack. He stared into the sky, and over across the strawberry fields to Meridian Road, where—in a few years—another boy with whom our protagonist played football, would die in a fiery crash, the bumpers and fenders of his Mustang wrapped around an oak. Over there on Meridian Road the boy could see cars sidling by at safe and reasonable speeds. The boy looked again into the sky and this time a cloud floated past. The cloud was little, and did not look like anything, other than a cloud, but the boy determined to keep watching the cloud in the hope that it might eventually look like his dog. He kept watching the cloud until the cloud was just over Fremont Peak. Then the boy became distracted by Fremont Peak, and the radio tower way up at its peak part, near where the boy and his Tiger Scout troop had camped the summer before. They'd played night tag with flashlights up there on the peak. It was fun. By now the boy was feeling a little hungry. He swept up his backpack again and again

looked at the sky. Now the cloud that had looked like a cloud looked just a little bit like an evil face, a face that the boy knew the world needed eradicated. So the boy slung his webs to the oaks around him and he pulled himself into the air. He swung from oak tree to oak tree until he reached a trail. Then he lowered himself to the ground again. There he ran into two vampires who tried to bite him, but he knew they would try to bite him because his intuition told him so. So he told the vampires that they couldn't bite him. The vampires looked at each other and said, "Okay. Do you want to come live with us?" The boy thought for a minute, then he said, "Okay." And he went and lived with the vampires and their families. After a little while, the boy went back home to his family because the vampires only ate blood, so the boy was always hungry. His mother was happy to see him, and she said she would never take his sister's side in Candyland ever again. Later the boy would play football, and this kid he played with would die in a car wreck on Meridian Road. But the boy did not know the other boy that well and when it happened the boy did not cry.

