

lucy, the ghost who liked it

by Kevin Army

lucy had deliberately become a ghost many years before. attention had made his skin crawl, he had always much preferred when people looked away, averted their eyes, looked at anything and everything else.

lucy had simply taken a kitchen knife and removed the outer layer, the layer of things people notice, whether that be kindness, charisma, or some kind of beauty, though he had never really had much of that anyway.

so with outer layer cut off, lucy conducted a lovely ritual, disposing of the disembodied layer at ocean beach at 3 in the morning, while dancing and singing the kc and the sunshine band song that's the way I like it uh huh uh huh, happily invisible, just an opaque and gray body, basking in the joy of his future and beautifully present invisibility.

to test it out, lucy set a few buildings on fire on the way home, being careful that innocent people were around who could turn him in if they could identify him. sure enough, no-one could make out the mad shadow of an arsonist who destroyed random targets chosen with complete joy and abandon that night.

oh yes, how good that flame had felt, to find perfection and truth to oneself finally in the gasoline to the wood, from the match to the flame, from the flame to the air, from the ruins to the suffering. lucy knew suffering, it had permeated all his bones, all his veins, and so lucy knew that it did that in everyone else too, even those that didn't know it yet. better to feel it now, than then, lucy thought. believed.

and so lucy the ghost became a full time hauntress, a vehicle of truth, a thing of dark beauty that far surpassed any of that artificial beauty that old surface layer had contained.

lucy burned more buildings, blew up cars, killed random cats and birds, tortured a few homeless people. the world was becoming lucy's, and the more it suffered, the more his ghostness grew and blossomed, like a dark lily of the night, with the fragrance of itself to

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fuel the truth: the world is shit, and any effort that helps destroy a part of that world is vast and noble, is charity really, is a guide to propel more people to join the church of ghosts and go past what awful things they've become through the endless years of being human.

uh huh, uh huh, fuck beauty fuck beauty, lucy sang and flourished, danced into the midnight hour, went to his alley and slept well. he could sleep anywhere, no one would see, no one would care, uh huh, uh huh.

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CRIME SPREE IN GOTHAM CITY read the headline. lucy chuckled and jumped up and down. no one had any idea who was committing these random acts of awfulness. *it was hard to see. i felt something walk by, but i'm not really sure what it looked like. I think it was a man, but i couldn't really tell. it might have been short or tall, it could have been bald, though i think i saw long flowing blond hair, like jesus. it might have been a surfer.*

people were scared. they put extra locks on their doors, they put in the finest alarm systems. they suspected each other. lucy spray painted on every tenth door in the heights "you're next mother fucker". people abandoned their homes. TERRORIST AT LARGE read more headlines, articles speculated that several cells were spread out throughout each neighborhood. people started to eye anyone who looked different with suspicion, then they started to eye each other. politicians spouted off at first, but after a month they went into hiding, finally accepting their powerlessness, their futility. police walked around beating innocent civilians, shooting dogs and cats, driving around in circles and polishing their guns.

but nothing worked. the city came to a violent standstill, unable to move, unable to get anything done.

* * *

time moved on. the destruction remained but with less frequency, with less heart. half burnt houses, kittens left alive missing a tail or leg, terrible messages on half as many houses. the statement was made, the fear was instilled, but sadly, it was becoming just a way of

life for the city. lucy's fine work was moving down in the news feeds. lucy pondered what could be next, but wasn't really finding the inner strength to further his career, his disco dance of terror, his mirror ball of mayhem, his lonely crusade of hate.

the problem was, lucy was getting bored and lonely. he was alone, and though that felt powerful and right at first, something was changing, and things were feeling wrong. and then lucy realized, he had more attention than ever before. in fact, he'd become addicted to it; lucy was a fame junkie, an adrenaline addict, and the most notorious person west of the hamptons.

no-one ever caught lucy. but the crime spree had just stopped one day. lucy had tried to kill himself, but learned that he'd already done that, and that sadly, ghosts are immortal until they wither into dust. and since all ghosts are invisible, there were no other ghosts to ask what the future would bring, or how long that awful future would last. who would have known that ghosts can't see each other. if there even were any others.

and so lucy sat on the beach, watching the waves, longing for that outer layer, if for no other reason than to be able to put on his boogie shoes and drown. uh huh. uh huh.

