

Mr. Natural and a Little Opium On the Side

by Lillian Ann Slugocki

It was a sloppy little factory town that could be beautiful, but never bothered. Sits on a big lake. More bars than churches, and too many of both. Racist. We hated anybody who didn't believe in white Jesus. There were 2.5 too many kids in the house, upstairs and down, but we had the bong going in the back of the garage, playing hoops in the front. Watching. Watching. Waiting for the car to roll up in the driveway.

But there were moments of grace. I think we can agree on that. A drive along the lake in the summer. Deep forest out west, and the witch's castle. The water. The sky. Or downtown after dark, a head shop, a pool hall, a dive bar, and the thrill of buying an ounce of black hashish with a little opium on the side. Maybe a new batch of acid had come to town. Maybe it was Mr. Natural, and the Valium was free, except you're stuck in some maniac's car who's been up for three days doing drugs and selling drugs.

Or maybe you're hitchhiking to a party, and you run to catch the ride, but it's a guy with his dick out. Jacking off in the moonlight. Or 14 and puking in the shower downstairs. It was all good. Whatever. I got the scars, too. Never doubt that. We made it out alive. The party is over. But its not over in your head. And that's where the problem begins.

