

# POSEY'S POND

*by* Ramon Collins

Droopy cedars, skirted with huckleberry underbrush, lined both sides of the canyon. Somewhere, high in the trees, two cranky crows cawed and below them Salmon Creek glistened in the late afternoon sun.

Josh hurried back from lunch and slipped and slid down the steep trail that led to the creek. Halfway down, he turned left toward a clump of bushes where he and Amy built a hideout that morning. Amy sat in the cleared-out center of the brush. She ran a sleeve across her brow.

"It's hot -- let's go up to Posey's Pond."

"We ain't got swimming suits."

Amy wrinkled her nose. "Don't need any."

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They sauntered a half-mile up the road then approached a well-worn trail that made an easy descent to the creek. Years ago, Frank Posey and his neighbors had built an earthen dam across Salmon Creek to create a pond for their irrigation water pumps.

Josh looked worried. "Will Mr. Posey get mad if we swim here?"

"Nah -- I come down here all the time and he never yells at me or nothin'."

As Amy took off her clothes and folded them Josh turned his head. She strode out on the dam, then looked back. "Come on -- you

chicken?"

"What if someone sees us?"

She shook her short-cropped hair. "Who cares?" Amy dipped a toe in the water, then straightened up. She was slender with a slightly arched back and small breasts. She faced Josh, jammed her hands on hips, pointed her elbows out and moved them back and forth.

"Come on, buk-buk."

They slid in and the cold water made Amy squeal. Josh held his finger to his lips as he looked up the side of the canyon. They dog-paddled and splashed around for a few minutes, then climbed out and sat on their clothes in the dappled sunlight. While Josh looked for pan trout, Amy laid back with closed eyes.

She leaned up on an elbow, smirked and touched his leg. "Want to do it?"

"Do what?"

She frowned, "Well, duh? You know -- IT. Aw, you haven't done it, chicken."

"Have too. Lots of times."

"How many?"

Josh picked up a pebble and flipped it into the pond. "Don't remember how many. Just lots of times. Have you?"

"Sure." Amy sat up and looked down at him.

"You're gettin' hard. Do it with me."

"Someone will see us. Might be somebody up there."

"So? Who cares?"

Josh rolled over on her and she guided him in. A few wiggles, a small grunt and he slid out and off with eyes jammed shut. "Come on -- let's get out of here."

Amy stretched out on her clothes. "You go on, buk-buk. School starts next week and I ain't done swimmin'."

"Meet ya about five at the hideout." Josh pulled on his jeans and tied his tennis shoes, then hurried up the path.

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Josh sat in the hideout and muttered . "Amy said she'd be here right at five o'clock. I've waited almost an hour. Bah, girls -- I'm goin' over to the ball field and see if the guys are there. Girls . . ."

Leaves drifted by on a darkened Salmon Creek and a crawdaddy kicked up puffs of mud as he hurried home for supper. The smell of damp ferns wafted through the the air as water swirled over smooth stones.

Silt collected in the ashen body's belly button.

