

Fist to Face

is the

Motivating Factor

November 4th, 2014

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a work of fiction

WARNING
THIS IS A DEATH SCENE
BLOODY & GRUESOME
AND FULL OF SWEARING

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Stories are getting too long.

I find myself unable to focus for the days, weeks, and months on end that is required to turn out (and fine tune) a novel.

And in the end, there is often a single scene, a single idea that I find to be the motivating factor, the reason I wish to write the novel in the first place, the scene to uncover, deconstruct, find where it leads; and then, just as suddenly, leave it behind, alone, discarded, a story fragment in the *'Dustbin of Obscurity'*.

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Nathaniel is pounding the crap out of Natalie.

Parking garage, late at night, subterranean, deep below the city, fluorescent lights flickering, drip of water in the distance echoing, could be echoing, if it wasn't for the sounds of high heels clicking on the pavement, concrete, smooth, clean, this is no rundown parking garage, underneath the city center, revitalization, opera

house, they had a speaker tonight, ethics, philosophy, *Man's Duty to Man*, or some such nonsensical shit, the type of shit that Nathaniel doesn't buy into; and I suppose, Natalie was just looking for a fight, to get hit, because that is what fighting is about for these two.

Perhaps I should back up. You see, I know the story, the scene, the motivation, and I could trickle it out, I suppose I still shall, but still, I should back up. Nathaniel is old money, came across on the first ship... or maybe the second, the *Grand Piece of Shit Schooner* or some such thing, early years, *America: The Young and the Brave*, and while the rest of the crew, the cargo, the men in the shipment were busy dying of malaria, abuse, cholera, dysentery, small pox, malnutrition, and let's not forget the most dreaded of all -- Home Sickness -- Nathaniel's grandfather, I don't know, maybe it was his father or great grandfather, the timing's off, but who really cares, was busy making a fortune, buying up all that expensive land up on the coast, cotton plantation, tobacco farming, big house, went into mills, who cares, who knows, the thing is, this little shit in the parking garage, has it all, bored out of his skull, and the thing that he likes is pain, torture, listening to the screams and lamentations, the suffering of others; so of course, he hooked up with another of those old family grand daughters, Indian half breed, shame of the line, and perhaps willing to put up with a little shit, "Shut up!" "Don't Talk!" "Just Don't!" And of course, "You don't know what you're talking about," oft times as not accentuated by a slap cross the face, right on the lips, batting an ear, but tonight she took it upon herself to start the fight, get under his skin, saying how she liked the speaker, respected the speaker, thought he was more of a man than Nathaniel ever would be. And that, is about the when and the where the beating did but start in earnest.

Now, like I said, the only reason to write, for me at least, is to drop into a scene, to feel the gloved hand, fine Persian leather (is Persia

known for its leather?) but with a little reinforcement built in, a little carbon fiber, something to cushion the blow, still feel the blow, but eliminate any concern for damage to the flesh, one's own flesh, yes, one's own flesh and blood, inbreeding, I suppose if we were to take it back, back in the day, back to that big house, I suppose there was more than a little inbreeding going on, father and daughter, father and son, son taking after father, not falling far from the tree, so that sort of leads one to gramps, after all, the original pair, like something out of a Harlequin romance, or a *Death's Head Trilogy*, old man, ruling the house, only never really so old, and she liked the attention, and these two, named after those two, after all these years, almost exactly the same... because, of course, they are the same.

Vampires!

Probably should have put it in the title, but you'll forgive me the slip, don't know how he caught it, curse of the wild, Indian's revenge, some such shit, tainting the blood, they married into the wild, you know, didn't keep the stock pure, and strange things happen at that house, wild night orgies, and feasts in the night, and the slaves, oh, Lord, but did they go through the slaves.

He likes hitting. I like hitting. Her kneeling, slumping over, the pain is real, oh, yes, the pain is real, looking up, blood coming out of her mouth, licking her lips, bruised cheek, crushed cheek, she'll regenerate in an hour, I suppose that was the original tag out, end of the script, but she knows, I know, Nathaniel knows, and so should you, she'll regenerate in an hour, maybe two, maybe three, it matters how much he hits her, and hits her he does, the fist sinking in, meeting the flesh, that cold crack, echoing through the garage, meat smacking, and her talking smack, "Is that all you can do? Is that all you can do? Beat up little girls?" Only she's not a little girl, haven't we established three hundred and fifty years old, a smile on her face, a bit of mirth when she licks the blood, yes

after all these years, she can still get him riled, like that first time, whips in the yard, slaves all around, usually it would have been one of them, but even the Big House can screw up, and she's spread eagle, tied in the yard, the old whipping tree, and he's going, and going, and going, and she's going, "Is that all you've got?" not caring about revenge, only to make him seethe, to suffer, only tonight, he does not suffer.

It's just a game, a prelude, an introduction of sorts.

I mean, they are Vampires, after all, sick sort of shits, this is what they get into, night after night, feasting on blood, it sort of taints the soul, warps the mind, cooking your own child, your own flesh and blood, stew in a pot, well, it seemed like a good idea at the time, but the curse was already in effect, saving the poor thing from the curse, and those slaves, all those slaves, dead, dying, "He's got a bad attitude. Won't get much work out of him." But then, they never cared how much work they got out of them, at the worst, an object lesson to the others, flayed alive, screaming to the night, no one sleeps, there is no sleep, to sleep is to die, the summons of the night, like a ceremony, around the flagpole, and at the Big House they do it to each other, but then, they never die, only laughing in delight.

I go in circles. I am the fist hitting the girl, the voice that screams in the night. I am the speaker, the ethics, the philosophy, the man who spoke, who was to speak, or who just wandered in from the crowd, overheard a snippet, some atrocious, backdated, backwater, cold-hearted, live and let die, cruel world mentality, and he could not help himself but to speak. I shall call him Samuel. I am Samuel. You are Samuel, mild mannered, almost meek, but no, wanting more, OK to stand up in a fight, a verbal fight, battle of wits, but this, no one expects this, next to his car, yes, just glancing, looking around the corner, concrete column, the surroundings suddenly harsher, the smack of the flesh echoing

loud, he's going to kill her, and her laughing loud, is it a game, it sounds like a game, but even from here, he can see the blood, threatening death, "I'm going to kill you!" and the retort, "You're not man enough," not anymore, you'd need help from someone else, blood soaked face, leaning over, backwards, held up, Nathaniel's embrace, and catching his eye, your eye, smiling, laughing, spitting up blood, spitting on the man, "Oh, look. I've gotten your precious jacket all dirty. What are you going to do now?" Comically overstated, but perhaps, just motioning, nodding, indicating with her eyes, vampires have that way you know, the steel beam, column, post, I think it's like a car part, crowbar, long greasy metal pole, bent this way and that, Samuel grabs it, can't help himself, a man must act, he must, in times, cannot turn one's back, she's crazy, death's door, must be in shock, only way to save her, and he picks up the steel pole, greasy bar, is it just me, or am I the only one in the audience who doesn't want to get their hands dirty, I mean, that bent metal, implement of death is covered in grease, deep grease, thick grease, not going to get that out of your hands, like a sissy, like a girl, like an author who doesn't want to get his hands dirty, picking up the spike, too long for a spike, crooked not straight, crank shaft, hefting it high, forgetting for a moment, almost slipping, walking over, matching slap with crack, his footsteps matching the renewed vigor of the man's assault on the poor girl's face, she's probably already dead, too late, running now, jogging, forgetting it all, almost falling, he's out of shape, damn that pipe's heavy, bringing it down on Nathaniel's head, not hard, not a crack, the split is there, the damage is real, the man keels over, now that's a good word, he keels over, metal rod landing next to his feet, the loud clatter, solid steel, and Natalie, slumping against the car.

Covered in blood, fucked up, this is fucked up, she is fucked up, blood on her dress, fur coat, high heels, diamonds, jewelry, it can't really matter, but Samuel takes it all in, the smile on her face, the touch of her hand, "Thank you," her shining knight, golden hero...

And that's about when (or exactly when if you want to know the truth), Nathaniel returns the favor, the blow, to the back of the head, grazing the fool, and as he staggers, impaling Samuel, shoving the pole clean through, into his belly, chest cavity, midriff.

What can I say...

Nathaniel is staggering, the pain is real, oh, yes, Good Lord, Dark Lord, the pain is still real, and he took it right to the head, "Fuck but that smarts!" Still, all the same, smiling, delighting, licking the blood from his own wound. Should he explain, do we need to explain, that a man owns what he owns, his wife, his daughter, his child, his slaves, and if he wants to crucify them one by one, well, by God or by Else, that is exactly what a man can bloody well do. But we do not need a lecture and time grows short.

Imagine if you will for a moment, crankshaft through the midriff, blood trickling out, perhaps a trickle would be a bit slow, so flow, blood flowing out, and this dead man, this man with his skull cracked open, head not quite on right, broken neck, snap it in place, licking his lips, own blood, then yours, yes, then yours. Let the pain slip away, shock will do that, the shock of knowing.

Vampires, you've heard, stories, just fiction, or the news of the day. I'll let you create your own world, but Sam, Samuel, can I call you Sam, is fading fast, a man licking his lips, blood trickling out, spitting it up, kissing, drinking, enjoying, savoring the look in his eyes, almost shock, not quite, it's no fun when they're dead, his life passing before his eyes, future life, past, what will be, never to be, and Nathaniel loving it, licking it, whispering sweet nothings, telling of the way to redemption, give it all up, ask for my blood, the giver, receiver, "Of course, it's not all fun and games," look at poor Natalie battered and torn, face beat to shit, broken hands, broken bones, kneeling, staggering, getting up, clutching, "But I

wouldn't trade it for the world." "What are you talking about, I gave you the world." Licking lips, both of them, "We could use a man like you?" "Join us. Join us." And Natalie going down, what does a man want, always want, last wish, final embrace, yes, what does a man want.

Stare into Nathaniel's eyes.

Or rather, for that is little fun, stare into Samuel's eyes, the terrified rabbit, death on the run, hold out, as long as you can, if you hold out long enough, maybe you'll live, but you won't, you can't, his words, not mine, staring into Samuel's eyes, enjoying the focus, a million miles away, "That's it. Try to hold on," hold out, savor every last drop, tracing the veins in his neck, "But we don't do it that way," down his belly, to his groin, hand reaching up, in, strong hands, vampire hands, fingernails, claws, tearing the belly, ripping the belly, the look in his eyes, raised on his feet, tippy-toes, yes, this is it, hand reaching up, oh, the pain, they give up you know, they just up and give up, make it quick, fade from the pain, wrapping the hand around, beating heart, that's what we're going for, beating heart, feel the pulse go, thump-thump, thump-thump, hand gripped around, strangling tight, the constriction, the fear...

We are all animals, you know. A man's will is to breed on death's door, one final wish, last supper, I know what I want, give me the whore, at funerals, they tell me it's great, and in closets, late at night, strangulation, yes, the last thing to do, if I should die before I wake, the body is made for it, it cannot resist it, forget everything else, all that you know, and at the last, the moment, the will gives in, let's go, big mistake.

Indians went for the liver, full of blood, hunter's prize, soft, full of fat, but to be a vampire, the heart is like, is like, is like a rib, best of the best, rich with fat, carefully chosen, slow cooked, heaping with sauce, this is good eating, greasy chicken, flavored just right,

covered in salt, oozing with juice, and for a moment Samuel sees it, his own heart, beating once, beating twice, blood spilling over, Nathaniel making a mess, and Natalie joining him, done with her bit, *made a meal out of me and came back for more*, eating his heart out, just eating his heart out, and that's about where Samuel slumps over and dies, the last of the last having left him, and as Nathaniel considers this, Natalie's hunger, hoping for more, but it is just dead meat now, nothing more, nothing left.

And with that, discard it, throw it away, leave what's left of the heart to rot on the body, blood soaked, vampire's feast, call in the dogs, as the pair walk away, the dogs, always the dogs, and in the paper the next day, tragic accident, dog pack, ripped to shreds, fending them off with a crankshaft, dead by his car, keys in his hand, in fear, last gasp, dropped, scattered, down the drain pipe, and Nathaniel and Natalie millions of miles away... as with I, on to my next book, chapter, death scene, or whatever I might wish to write about, why ever I might wish to write about it, not really knowing who I should focus on in the last, maybe a dog, licking it's lips, looking to camera's eye, or the author, for more, next victim please...