

Pool Party

Part of the Scene Stealer Series

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In my dreams, I often go barefoot, dressed only in jeans. I don't really know why. I suppose I'm barefoot most of the day, working from home as I do, but jeans, not in this hot clime.

In the days of my youth, I always wore jeans. I lived in mosquito country, a swamp, really; and I liked to roam through the back woods. Shorts were never an option... nor was going barefoot.

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I am almost dreaming, writing is like that, virtual trance, almost, sort of like reading, only better. And in this trance, I am standing barefoot, alone in the dark, wearing jeans, bare-chested, for some reason. I feel it would be more appropriate to have a shirt (un-buttoned, plaid, long sleeve) blowing in the breeze, but I can't quite muster the will to give it substantiation. I suppose the reason is that I'm a little self-conscious, even alone, in my dreams.

I am standing before a pool, backyard, shallow end, facing the wilds, on the patio of a house I knew in my youth. It was on the way too and from the creek. They had a dog. They had a big yard. But they didn't have a pool. I cannot tell you why I've reinvented the place with a pool.

I touch my toe in the water. Please, feel free, step into this body with me, and touch your toe into the water as well. I am here to find a companion you know.

I could be the young boy, looking up at you, two, three years younger, it made such a difference then, and being out late at night like this, past curfew, past midnight, not where either of them were supposed to be, draping your legs in the water, kicking about, feeling the stir of the water, cool breeze, it's always a cool breeze when it's late at night, feet in the water, it's the magic of the water.

Or I could be a girl, would the girl be swimming? No, that could lead places. Rather, instead, she is running up, Frisbee in hand, gathering up the Frisbee from the bushes mere feet away, "I thought we would play?"

She can run, go long. Let the Frisbee fly off your thumb, perfect shot, right where she is, going, just enough stretch to make it interesting, fun. In another world, she might jump in the water, but not here, rather she catches, disappears, while a dog reappears in her place.

The house had a dog. I think the house had a dog. Maybe it was a neighbor, well, at least, in the neighborhood, there was a dog. I never really knew the dog, just enough that it didn't bark when I walked by, late at night, middle of the day, call it's name, I think I was introduced once, twice; me and the dog, we were never great friends. But now he is at my feet, panting, wet from jumping in the pool, shake it off, nudging the Frisbee, the ball, ready for more, but happy to rest.

I have a bottle in my hand. I don't like whiskey, wine seems pretentious, a whiskey sour sounds more like my drink, back in the day, over easy, over ice, swirl it around. I'm house sitting. I know the old man, bachelor, his wife, the details don't matter; but then, that's all that there is, so I guess they do. I watch the place for them, clean the pool, cut the grass, a ridiculously labor intensive chore, certainly not worth the five bucks, but sipping a drink, endless supply, ice rattling in the glass, ready for more, well, yes, this certainly is worth the price of admission.

I am drunk.

I am swimming, wet hair, standing by the edge, drink still in hand, this is perhaps the only thing that doesn't change, me by the edge of the pool, slumping a little, it's the wet hair, that makes me look drunk. It's the slurred words that make me sound drunk.

I'm tossing peanuts to a family of raccoons, we had raccoons, vermin... or friends, it depends on your point of view, almost like cats, wild dogs, they'd take the foot out of your hands, if you were soft, slow, in no hurry, put the drink down, sit down, feet in the pool, wearing swim trunks now, no, jeans, it's better with jeans, wet, holding me down, feel the resistance as you swirl you legs about, and the raccoons, waiting patiently, squeaking, chirping, gargling their words.

We could make it sad and say it was supposed to be a party, but nobody came, all alone. Or we can be alone, happy, at one with the world with a brace of drinks set to the side, a little whiskey for the little buggers, they like their drinks sweet with nuts and popcorn, but the ham sandwich was too much, just lay back, relax, enjoy the cool breeze, the coming of autumn, insects all dead, and a baby raccoon coming to lay in your arms, when its time to fall back asleep.