

Sun Spots

Sam stared at his hand. He sat on a wooden chair in the corner of his living room in the dark. Outside, the neighborhood, was loud with people. People walked by after a long day at work, going home to change before heading back out to a bar to meet with friends. They were tired, but excited. Filled with promise for the rest of the night. Sam, however, sat alone in the dark thinking of nothing but the small brown spot on the back of his hand.

Sam had not spent much time looking at the back of his hand. He hadn't studied it, but he recognized the grey/blue smudge as new. It wasn't exactly grey/blue more white, but it wasn't exactly white either. It had a brownish hue. It was small and important and loud and next to his knuckles on his left hand and it was all Sam could look at.

He alternatively stared at it and then rubbed it with his right thumb. He rubbed it hoping maybe this time it would come off. He rubbed it hoping he would find out it was a bit of dirt from the garden or dust from the day. Maybe he would find out it was soot from the fireplace. But every time he rubbed the discoloration stayed.

He first noticed it a few days ago. At first he thought nothing of it. He thought it would wash off next time he went to the sink to wash his hands. He thought it would be gone after the next time he went to the washroom. But the next day it was still there. -I swear I washed my hands- he thought to himself -but maybe I didn't do a very good job.- He went and washed his hands again but it didn't come off. He tried again and again, scrubbed harder and harder, but nothing changed.

He thought a lot that day. He thought about illness and what would happen and what could happen. He thought about life and work and friends and how they would react. He thought about how crazy he could get, how worried. He thought it was nothing but then thought that's what you think before you find out it's something.

Then he thought about the sun and being outside and how warm the sun is. He thought about her and the time they spent all day out on that hill. He thought about how she came to him and asked if he wanted to have an early lunch and she had a packed picnic ready. He thought about how she showed him her basket in her hands and looked at him with those large blue eyes and smiled. He thought about how she had on a sun dress from the spring time, it had small poke-a-dots and in the light the

fabric would turn ever so slightly transparent. He thought about how that was all he needed. He called into his boss and told him he was sick and they went to the hill together.

She held his hand as they walked up the hill towards the noon sun. The trees dropped away as they climbed and soon they broke out into the clearing of grasses and small shrubs.

"This looks like a good spot to sit," she said.

"Yes, yes it does," he said.

They sat down and she pulled the food. She pulled out bread and cheese and sliced ham curried with brown sugar and salt. She pulled out a bottle of wine and slices of watermelon with a little bit of salt sprinkled on them. They didn't bother putting them together, instead eating each ingredient separately with their hands. They drank the whole bottle of wine and wished they had a second. Sam didn't say much, he just looked into her eyes and tried to speak with his eyes. But the more she drank the less she could hear them. They sat on the hill in the sun for hours. The heat made them sweat. They laughed and talked about nothing and then giggled at their own drunkenness.

"I think perhaps we drank too much," she said.

"That's always how you feel, drinking in the sun," Sam said.

"The sun magnifies it then."

"Yes, I guess it does magnify it."

"It's wonderful how something so sad during the night can seem so exciting out in the sun," she said. And Sam laughed at her truth.

She smiled big and mischievously. She looked around and looked back at Sam and said, "We are all alone up here."

"Yes, yes we are."

"No one knows we're here."

"No I guess no one does."

"We can do whatever we want," and she started giggling. She grabbed her mouth as if she were trying to keep them inside, but the giggles poured through her fingers. She leaned over and kissed him on the cheek. She stood up and turned around to face the sun. The light shown through her dress and Sam could see the outline of her legs and where the fabric clung to her hips. For a moment he could not feel his body, only where her wet lips kissed his cheek.

She looked over her shoulder and smiled a half smile and slowly unzipped the back of her dress. She pulled it down and leaned over to pull it down her legs and stepped out of her dress. She stood back up and unhooked her bra and pulled down

her panties. And then she lay down flat on the grass. She closed her eyes in the sun and slowly twisted her body in the grass and cooed.

Sam could not stop watching. He could not move until she quietly said, "your turn."

He quickly stood up. He stood up too fast and felt a little bit faint. He turned around and pulled down his suspenders. He unbuttoned his shirt and pulled it off over his head with his undershirt. He unbuttoned his pants and stepped out of them clumsily. He lay down next to her and closed his eyes as well. She reached over and grasped his hand.

He remembered the delicate feel of her hand, the sweat smell of the grass, the sound of birds flying overhead, the heat off the sun that made him sweat slightly. He remembered while sitting in the dark, his eyes closed, his thumb rubbing the spot on his left hand, a smile on his lips, but also tears welling up in his eyes.

###