

The Director

By John Grey

I was there
when restraint took to the hills
and the self-stayed behind
to indulge the autumn sunlight
with a woman named Sarina.

I was at the center
of small snaps and near tearing,
buttons and zippers and flesh and hair
and maples shedding
and pines too serene to indulge.

Without me,
there'd have been no exuberant baying,
no writhing, no rolling,
not a clue on the wet grass
to know anyone was there.

I scripted the nakedness.
I directed the sex.
Every breath, every sigh,
every sound of twigs cracking,
each gargantuan moan.

That was the day
no one else was doing anything other than me.
And Sarina, of course,
though she didn't know that.

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This Is Why First Sex Should Be Left To the Experts

By John Grey

You'd think that,
with this brand new point of view
offering itself,
I'd see what was really there.
But no,
first face on sex's scaffold
is of the pretty girl
I really want to be doing this with.
And then the half-obliterated image
of a laughing friend.
And then my father
with his wide brow,
gray beard,
stolid brown eyes,
and my mother,
always at the point of weeping,
anxious love the only love
she was ever good at.
And then it's teachers,
priests, actresses and football heroes.
Some of them are even dead.
Some, I'm sure, are not even born yet.
By the time I arrive at the one I'm with,
I have to run my fingers down her cheeks,
to make sure all others have vanished,
that this, indeed, is reality.
"Are you okay?" she asks.
Thankfully, I am okay.
Sadly, no one else is.

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A Personal Growth

By John Grey

You no longer ride the bus to school,
head buried in a book by some Russian anarchist.
Now you drive,
twiddle the knobs on the radio.
And long gone the dungarees, the blue workshirt,
the scruffy sneakers.
You've in tweed jacket, an inherited tie,
gray trousers, shiny black shoes.
No longer the impressionable student,
you're the professor who impresses upon.
It's a long way from naive to arrogant
but you've made it.
Your first book is in the college library.
Hasn't been taken out once.
Now if only you were a Russian anarchist.

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MS French

By John Grey

Why can't the clouds clear,
leaving just your tongue.
And your mind, that rain forest,
the only old growth on the planet
that could use a little clearing.
Your eyes are like a three day beard.
And your hands are a cheap puzzle,
but still no solution.
There goes your body again
dissolving like a pill in lemon juice.
But who can separate the goodness of you
from the tartness of all else.
Maybe it's true that it's impossible to know people.
So I read your diary.
You've written nothing in it.
That's as honest as you get.

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