

This Place

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From pool table's perspective it was just another fist stuffing two-bit coin into silver-coated slot, punching, balls tumbling down and beginning new game.

But to me – sitting, as was my pleasure, in my own dark corner – it appeared to be grey preparation for a bad dream so many times rushing previously through my head.

It appeared – as History's cycle burped again in perfect rhythm – that I was going to witness a fight – a common sight in this place...this place...where pool cues break in sharp two...melt down like icicles...all hot night long...this place...beers served cans...not bottles...so less fresh wet blood stains tattered canvas carpeting...and in this place...where a little squirt who is anything less than pool-mad-prodigy-child had better find a dark corner...where he can drink his illegal drinks...watch the Biglife...and hope like hell that nobody notices him...doesn't care for his face...pale tight skin...tells him to leave, tail tucked and running from the laughter of the big boys.

But nobody notices this little squirt one night many times for two years alone, so I myself front row seat to real world – no TV set to absorb physical implications of physical violence should physical violence become change in weather.

Forecast looks bad...

I huddle into my corner and melt out of light to see sides divide naturally by color, which is a given as this place has its sole purpose for existence the notoriety of being that where men of different color could attempt to determine which color shoots pool better: Red or White.

Realworld worked that way within these walls.

...So many times, I, in that corner, bourbon and beer, watch sights splash violently before my eyes when I's a kid, but I's adult now all I remember is a wash of images blurred - a collage – of the tenseness that was the atmosphere of this place everytime.

For this particular place (particular only to me) is up north – still full of stout white men and Indians, tradition, family and seclusion.

Up there, where weather wages heavy and harder comes reward, is need to be tough...and tough are those who live their lives Up North – to many in Milwaukee as familiar as White House...

There, firm attention paid to past ancestry...to pride nationality...and to punishment delivered to those who don't adhere or appear right. Punishment to children who are forced to grow up like this. Punishment everywhere.

Fifteen balls on the table...forecast looks bad.

Energy gets up and blood gets spilled, splashes down and dries away. Time passes that way in this place. Notorious for war. Fighting. Men only. Young men should listen to father...stay away...until proper age...size...thickness...then...you can participate...in the ceremony...the rights of men...

But young man see faces feels tenseness as allegations fly at high-decibel exchange. Zeroes huddle behind heroes and heroes get clobbered...no one keeps track of balls on table...eight ball gone and everyone still shooting...then-

Now.....all I remember is a collage...blurred...men fighting...different languages...pool cues like cruise missiles separated by green felt sea...shrinking...everyone getting smaller in this place...I always wanted to leave this place...I always was a hopeful fool...this place *is* always...can't leave this place...must choose sides...fight...that's this place...this place...*sucks*...this place.....