

I don't know how many people here have had the experience of sneaking out of the house at night. If its successful, it can stay with you your whole life.

This is what I remember. Walking then running across front yards. The darkest shadows I have ever seen were at this time in my life. These shadows have hidden the edges of sidewalks and sprinkler heads and sharp toys left in the front yard by little evil elves we call little brothers and sisters.

You can stub a toe, or twist your ankle, but I don't this time. This time I'm telling you about. Destiny hangs in the air, not really, but you felt like saying that and so you do. For a while, both you and your friend who is with you tonight are rapid-talking, and then you stop, and a cricket is chirping and that strikes you as incredibly cool. Your friend agrees. Superlatives all starting with fucking are strung together.

Down the streets that feel so familiar and safe during the day. Piping Rock. Claremont. Chevy Chase. Mockingbird Lane. Diving into the bushes when you see headlights. Cops.

Running from tree to tree for a while, and then just walking down the sidewalk like you're out for a stroll.

Which you are, except you have a destination: you're going to the golf course. Going to meet a girl, and her friends, if they can get out. Not sure if she likes you or she's just out for adventure. You only know what her friend told your friend and it was at best uncertain. The field of suitors is crowded. But not the golf course. Its beautifully empty.

You are on the golfcourse. And now you have crossed into criminal activity. Not just pretending. You're trespassing. And you're running with sticks and yelling before you're cursing at each other to stop yelling. Do you want to be caught? No, you want to see her in the moonlight. Is that the moon? Fucking Motherfucking Fuck. That's the moon. Look at that. It's the moon.

You've never seen it before and suddenly your friend feels like he's irreplaceable. Inevitable. As solid a part of you as your arms and legs.

He's a good guy, you decide in a way that feels almost like you're saying he's the son of God. Everything feels religious on an illicit moonlit romp on a golfcourse on an errand of love.

Then, you see them: a witches coven, an Amazonian tribe, led by Joan of Arc, she's got a flag from the one of the greens. She's hoisting high in the air as they run and yelp. They've got sticks, too. Its Lord of the Flies. Someone says that, and we're all literary for the moment. You want to kiss her right then. It doesn't matter what the others say.

Instead, all you can think of to say is: We saw a monster turtle.

And its all downhill from there, for the next hour. Someone throws up. Someone gets pissed off. Someone sings Hey Jude, badly. Someone gets bored and lets everybody know how stupid it is to be here on the golfcourse drinking crap wine. How adolescent. Even says that word like its her big sister talking down. The others are talking too much about whose a slut and whose a dick. It feels sad. Not triumphant and daring.

It doesn't seem like anything can happen now, and you feel this in your stomach, whereas before it felt like you were skydiving into Club Med, Christmas and the Beach all rolled together.

That's when she bumps into you accidentally while you're traipsing along, and you lean over to her and whisper something you hadn't thought to say, you hadn't schemed, something that you just felt in that moment: I love your laugh.

You're still both traipsing along, but she's quiet for a moment, smiling into your eyes, and then she shrieks and grabs you in a hug that cinematically ends with you both collapsing to the ground in a bunker. Seconds later someone yells Cops! And its pandemonium. And she's looking up and puts her hand over your mouth, unnecessarily. Shhh. The others scatter. There are adult voices, threatening shouts, flashlights. You don't care. You really don't care. She is lying on top of you, has you pinned to the ground. Its less sexual than expedient. She's still got her hand over your mouth. You will never need to speak again.