

## Have My Lips The Sin That They Have Took

Dads cider stuffed inside a Sainsbury's bag. Eight percent and bound to numb the senses. Big, black cans, and Danny's got the vodka, Jack the wine, and Dave the other stuff to elevate the night.

Some cheap cologne applied behind a polo shirt and zipper flies. A G-Shock watch she said looked nice, at school a couple weeks ago. Baggy jeans and Nike trainers swagger tensley through the night.

Terraced houses ad infinitum—stretching out down streets and avenues whose names he vaguely recognises. Little bits of grey—illuminated by the summer moon—beset the evening sky. Locked out dogs and distant yobs provide the backing track to this suburban Friday night.

Down the hill and to the left. The one with little statues in the front. That was all he could remember. Every set of casement windows looked the same. The doors had personality but nil to help him ascertain the place that he was aiming for. Ah well, he'd hear it easily enough. And maybe see some people pouring in or having cigarettes outside.

First since Christmas—too much studying to break the peace of interbella Spring. She wasn't at the last one. Dull affair it was—without her there. Of course, he didn't see her then, the way he saw her now. Springtime had made her beautiful. The cherry hair that Winter deemed a ruddy nothing bloomed across his every reverie. Her littleness that hid her behind dreary clouds and early evenings now stood tall upon his dreams.

Whenever he saw her he got a tightness in his chest—a room without her was a room. And with her, everything. He was sure his brain, the crinkled mess of pink and grey, had warped and reformed in some way to quite resemble something of her face.

“Ay!” An intoxicated shout that bounced across the quiet concrete, snapped his head around to see a stoutish silhouette beneath a barely working light. He shouted something back and saw him clearly now—hardly silhouetted, it was Dave—doing something unbeknownst outside.

He bounced along the concrete, every step imbued with skittish expectation.

“Come on ya skinny prick.” Endearing words—spoken with a thick Glaswegian ictus. “Yav only gone an missed bout haf the bloody party.”

They walked across the modest lawn and laughed at all the little figures.

“Av one o these,” Dave says with arm extended.

“I’m alright,” He says. The look on Dave is stuck between unbridled glee and friendly mischief. He puts the medicine back in his pocket.

They pushed the door and went inside.

Affronted with some liquid drum and bass and pulsing lights, they stashed their shoes and coats and strutted down the hallway.

A pullulating pit of adolescent fantasy unfolded in the living room. Smiles and hugs were greeting them. They said, “Hi,” to the girl that owned the place and traded information about grades.

“A B? Good joke,” was Dave's remark as he left them to chatter on.

And there she was. A face among a crowd of faceless friends he'd known for many years.

He ripped away his gaze and found a quick escape between the fleshy maze of dancing, smiling, happy people.

He kissed her every day in science class. French and all, as she was sat across the classroom writing something in her book. She, like a tender apparition, haunted him unendingly. The spectral figure, locking lips and touching skin, was everything he thought about as elements unknown to him were thrown across the room. How

far apart they sat. A parsec seemed to separate themselves. A galaxy away and yet she smiled at him with no respect for time or space.

To cash those smiles in, the melty looks, the teasing stares, to make it real with flesh on flesh, to reify his every thought and feeling in communion with her supple breath: she's here tonight, across the room, just by the decks.

He went back in and caught another glimpse. Her eyes—more beautiful than ever he had seen them. So big and full of pearly lustre. Onyx gems of untold size—sitting upon little dishes. Her smile too, shone brighter than before. Euphoria exemplified.

“Ay! Lover boy!” Dave said behind him, “Come and av a smoke, would ya?”

They went outside and found their way through crappy booze and hand-rolled cigarettes.

“Get on it yous—it's proper stuff. She's on it too ya know.”

He said no thanks and chatted on about the useless stuff that they both loved.

He goes back in but she's not there. He heads up to the toilet for a break and sees her lying down alone upstairs.

He takes her wrist into his hand. The contact feels ghostly, like a waking dream. His every reverie is thrust into the prism of reality. So dainty—every vein and artery beneath the weave of lotus-threaded flesh—they seem surreal—intricate and unimpressed.

He moves his hand around her lower forearm. Feeling everything he can. And looking for a sign of life, something to know he isn't dreaming.

Now, he puts his palm against her chest. To find the thing he missed touching her wrist. Warm and still—the silent flesh beneath her Primark dress is standing there, against his hand. With all five fingers pressed against her steadfast breast, he

moves to actualise his fantasy. The mornings spent in science class were coming true. She was here—and beautiful—and he knew what he had to do.

Leaning forward, breathing over open eyes, he tilts his head just like the movies, going in to save a life—

And touch.

His lips are pressed against the delta of her soul. Two blushing pilgrims, ready stand to make her whole again.

It's not what he expected—never is. His pneuma rendered unto her own breast. He played Athena, she the clay, blowing youthful sin away.

They were not alone anymore. An audience screamed and cheered him on. So invested in his fantasy, they called up more to come and see. With sobbing, crying—phones were dialled in panicked vigour. Help was on its way as time was wearing thinner.

After an eternity, someone changed the party lights to blue and red. The DJ decks were playing something wailing and more guests were entering downstairs.

And now, the older people come, and ask him kindly what he's done. He tells them of the ecstasy, of touching lips, of her and he. So many questions, uttered quickly, in a tone that's meant to calm—to put him and his friends at ease. It's chaos though, around the house. Sobbing classmates pouring out and calling parents, friends, and anyone who doesn't know.