

Suburban Amsterdam

Apparently, the whole block is outside our window, possibly the whole town; mostly the men, actually. Pup tents pitched in their pants. Chubs. They're wandering, under the auspices of walking dogs or checking mailboxes, taking a stroll, having a smoke. Really, they are looking through the lace curtains. Beyond the windowpane and lace, it's low lit. A table lamp. The blaze of fire-place flames gradually dropping down a notch. Two bodies are flickering in the illumination of orange flames, going at it. And they seem to be on a narrow stage of sorts, above the windowsill, above eye level. The spectators have to tilt their faces skywards, as if reverent—and why not reverent? This sight answers prayers. Private masculine magazine prayers. Not palm to palm, exactly, but the belly of the palm warm with radiant energy.

If at first they stole glimpses, finally, they realized there was no point in pretending. To gather, standing as one pulsating audience, spoke to an honesty better than shame, and anyway, that way there was no chance of missing anything. The one on all fours, ass in the air, the other kneeling behind, hands discovering every hollow and curve. The position change, both kneeling, bodies melding into one goddess with multiple arms. The separation, the pull, the arching, the St. Vitus seizure, and another one coming up on the heels of the first like galloping horses out of the gate. Place your bets if you like, but you're already a winner because you're watching.

At least that's my version of my husband's objection to the show, as he called it, which just sounds paranoid to me. We live in a quiet town. When I drive home at an hour past the collective bedtime, bass bouncing against my windshield, most windows are dark; maybe there's an occasional TV screen with some active colors—the rare night owl in a sleepy town. I don't think anyone saw us. My husband barely watched. He was asleep in the den most of the time. Jaded. More into monogamy after a few adventures. Open, sure, but he'd just had a massage on the table where she and I intertwined ourselves, and she gives an otherworldly massage, so he was still floating around. He walked

past us once to go upstairs to take a piss, and on the way back to his nap, he looked on for a while, joined in a bit, and then went back to the couch.

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