

Tables and Chairs

Alex Spear

There was that twinkle in his eye again. The one only Ismeralda knew. The one that made the sun dull and her knees weak. She hadn't seen that look in years. Never thought she would again, but there it was.

Jack had a wood shed out back where chopped lumber and made furniture. Tables and chairs, banisters. A crib. That he chopped into firewood, and let the flames burn the cobwebs. Ismeralda sat in Jack's chairs, rested her heavy head on his tables, and ran spindling fingers down his banisters. But they were never hers. She was a shell in his house, as hollow as the splice of wood out back.

Next to Jack's woodshed were three crosses. One might think for the father, the son, and the Holy Ghost. And one might be right, in a manner of speaking. In a manner of time less linear than life can transcribe, more concrete than fantasy can escape.

Ismeralda sat in Jack's chairs, drank gin, and tried to see the glass half full. But it only made her feel less drunk. She stared at the sun, wishing it would blind her like Jack's stare did so long ago. But it never did. It only disappeared and left her alone in the dark, with a half full glass of gin, and the rhythmic splice of wood cutting through her hollow shell.

Jack had a woodshed out back where he chopped lumber and made furniture. Tables and chairs, banisters. A coffin. That he laid at one of the three crosses. One of two without a mound at its feet.

There was that twinkle in his eye again. The one only Ismeralda knew. The one that made the sun dull and her knees weak. She hadn't seen that look in years. Never thought she would again, but there it was. And there she was, staring into the sun, left to be a Holy Ghost among tables and chairs that were never hers.