

Four

'Knows exactly what I'm thinking-'
'They reckon it's rubbish of course-'
'Not that we're telepathic, you understand'
'Christ, no!'

I was slowly being consumed.

'Dad thinks so.'
'Since we were kids-'
'Playing sardines.'
'Always knew where she was.'

Nibbling with the tips of my teeth.

'Found her straight away-'
'Don't know how.'
'She'd find me, too.'

'No messing. Straight there.'

Tongue toying.

'Always kept our eyes shut.'
'Daren't even think.'

Tasting.

'We both knew where to look.'
'Instinctive, like.'

At first it was just visual: both identical in beauty. But now the perfume and their voices, equal too in tone and pitch, were being entwined in the mix. Like nibbling chocolate. *Lindt* chocolate with intense coffee, orange or mint. Their actual words had ceased to be of importance. I wasn't listening any more; I was hearing cocoa solids. They'd had me hooked at seventy percent, and now it was eighty-five.

Why me? I'd only come for a quiet think and a drink or two, and now for the first time in the terse twenty three years of my life, I was tasting love. Real love. My only concern? I didn't know where one girl stopped and the other one started. It was both wrong and right at the same time.

Chilli in chocolate.

'We like your eyes.'

My eyes.

'Grey.'

Me. They were talking about *me*.

'No silver.'

I studied their pupils.

'Definitely silver.'

First one...

'Definitely different.'

Then the other. Both blue. Blinding blue. And now it was my short wiry hair.

'Copper, auburn or red?' asked one.

'Or just ginger?' the other added.

‘Ginger,’ I mumbled. At least they’d commented on my eyes first. Nobody else had.

Something somewhere advised me to miss my usual starter about being orphaned when I was five, and so, sensing the pause, I ventured with: ‘I was a twin once.’

‘He was still-born’, came the reply. ‘Yes, you said.’

Had I? I couldn’t remember. It was late in the evening but I was sure I’d only downed three pints prior to their arrival; maybe four.

‘So, er, what were your names?’ I continued, cautious. Concerned I’d already asked and forgotten.

The twins glanced at each other and burst into simultaneous giggles. Obviously I had.

‘You are silly’, they chimed.

I dived deep into my near empty glass. How many had I had? A sinister section of my brain promptly announced they’d spiked my *Magners*. Through the bottom of my cider the blurred beer mat mixed with instant imagines of the girls driving me away in a mess and dumping me naked in a far-flung field. Well, why else would they be interested in me? A ginger nut. A fat foodie. A dead end databaser....

I looked up, wondering. And they smiled.

‘I’m Nicky, she’s Sam.’

And choice chilli chocolate melted in my mouth all over again.

I swallowed nothing. ‘My name’s Josh’, I announced. ‘And I’m sorry if I’ve already told you.’

‘Funny,’ said Sam, serious. ‘Yesterday you said it was Peter.’

...Ends

500 Words

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