

MARCUS' PORTRAIT

I hate sentimental novels, but Marcus' mother really died.

The entrance to our place was on the outside, up wooden stairs leading to a mini-porch, and through a screen door to a living room, then into two rooms, one of which was too small, and the other one on the way to the bathroom.

Marcus lived next door. He was letting us borrow coffee cups from his garage. His father was famous because he'd made the sculptures in front of the library, on the little hill, where I was taking pictures, not even knowing they were by Marcus' father. Marcus was helping me write the credits for my film - I wrote them with purple crayon on the back of the house like graffiti, then shot them, but didn't use them, I wanted something slicker.

Marcus was painting, and we were doing all kindsa things. There was also this lunatic who was following the girls and whistling after them, plus got inside their place. Even I saw him once. The house was packed. There was stuff belong to all of us. Two slept in the living room, two with a dog in the little room, and the two of us in the room on the way to the bathroom. I woke up and saw his pale face at the door. I thought I was sleeping, so I fell back to bed, but I got up right away. He was gone, but I knew he been there.

Marcus was painting his mother's portrait. I didn't like the portrait. Marcus was letting us use his phone. When I was looking for my lost passport, I used Marcus' phone a lot. Once even my not-meant-to-be professor was visiting with Marcus. Once later he asked me what's happened with Marcus, since he used to be friends with the parents, and now the boy was all alone. Frank Paine's question surprised me.

Marcus had black curly hair and blue eyes. He was, actually, a good friend, but who was noticing that then. I was cramming film theory.

These weirdos lived downstairs. One of them was working himself to death, had an eagle-nose and moss for beard. He was a perfectionist and very delicate. We thought he was a virgin. The other one was even weirder. He was a regular guy, but always sorta smiling and tricky. At one point they had a fight, so they cooked every man for himself. Neither one ate your typical steak and veggies with milk.

I think Marcus knew them, but no way I can remember what their relationship was like. We were using their phone, too.

Marcus didn't finish the canvas with his mother's portrait. They knew she was gonna die, but I wasn't taking that seriously.

Later, Tori hung the unfinished portrait over the window, it fit nicely, but I still didn't like it.