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Feeling Like I'm in a William Holden Movie

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Feeling Like I'm in a William Holden Movie

The woman across the street is sexy
but volatile, like a .45 revolver

sitting on the coffee table—you don't dare
grab it too quickly. I bet she walks

around the house naked, drinking
Martini Five-Os in the afternoon.

Sometimes around midnight, I hear her
screaming at him. I've watched her

toss baskets of clean clothes
out the upstairs window, chunked

passion floating like rider less parachutes
exploding on the lawn, his shoes

tumbling into the street.
She might be the answer

to all that seems wrong
in a man's life, in my life,

but I can't stop dreaming about her.
She's as nice a stray cat, then

a soft hiss and explosion
like the Mont-Blanc that leveled

Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1919.
And maybe if I could just

see her naked once, my curiosity,
my desire, would fade. Perhaps

I'll grow a goatee. Or, maybe
if I could just touch her

deeply with my poems
her body would hum

a different tune.
He drinks too much, always

wants to go to strip clubs, always
tells me what he figures I don't know

and borrows from my tool shed
whatever he doesn't feel like buying.

It's a law as constant as gravity:
if he wants her, he can't have her,

and if she wants him to agree
with her opinion, he disagrees

just to annoy her. In all honesty,
she's not the kind of woman I'm looking for,

but no matter how pleasant he tries
to be, I want to bash him in the head

with a hammer, snatch her up
then call him on the phone

at two a.m., "Guess what?
Super Hero Soup

and burnt toast! I want
to marry Jenny Lou."

An hour later, after he's
eased back into a comfortable

R.E.M. dream, call again,
"Lard casserole with Grape Kool-Aid.

I've tied the house down
with ropes." He yells,

"Just keep her!" and slams
the phone in my ear. . .

. . . and there she is
in my cream-colored oxford

button-down shirt, legs
curled up to her chest

in my leather chair, sexy
in her flowered underwear,

sipping a cup of herbal tea,
her brown hair bouncing

off her shoulders, green eyes
of cat-glow purring, "What now,

Pussycat? ". . . and I think,
Ann Margaret, and I wonder, too,

"Now what?" but know
her cotton panties

are just minutes from circling
her left ankle. . . .

In the background of our new life
Jackie Brenston and His Delta Cats

tickle the ivory of "Rocket 88."
The weather outside is calm.

Then, through the window—a tuft
of breeze, a wisp of air

begins to slightly move
behind the curtains.

About William Walsh

William Walsh is a poet and photographer who has published five books: *Speak So I Shall Know Thee: Interviews with Southern Writers*, *The Ordinary Life of a Sculptor*, *The Conscience of My Other Being*, *Under the Rock Umbrella: Contemporary American Poets from 1951-1977*, and most recently *David Bottoms: Critical Essays and Interviews*.