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Cruz Kilpatrick, the Groundskeeper

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Cruz Kilpatrick, the Groundskeeper

Cover Page Footnote

Some weeks, club members have more creativity than they do time. In this case, meeting times are used for writing exercises, such as this one. The prompt was to create a profile of the character Cruz Kilpatrick; below are three responses.

Cruz Kilpatrick, the Groundskeeper

~Some weeks, club members have more creativity than they do time. In this case, meeting times are used for writing exercises, such as this one. The prompt was to create a profile of the character Cruz Kilpatrick; below are three responses.

Logan Collins

He vanishes into fronds like a newt, dragging moist clippers along the frosted crust. Cruz Kilpatrick pleases himself by counting the pinkish comets as his world spins, end over end over end again and again. Some people live in a metaphorical bubble, Cruz Kilpatrick lives in a plastic one on a tiny asteroid somewhere far out in the Kuiper belt, tending his gardens with the precision of a robotic savant. Protruding in delicate rows, from the branches of each and every shrub, his fruits glisten with mucous. Diminutive brainy-blobs and heart-ventricles and calmly breathing lungs twitch as he trims, trims, and silently trims. He plucks a heart and eyes it against the rapidly moving stars. It beats twice, then stops, so Cruz Kilpatrick opens his hand and it drifts away.

Katie Carithers

He spent his life repeating his name.

“Cruz.”

“Yes, like Tom Cruise. But with a Z.”

“Oh yes, I, I know it was a pun, and then –uh, oh yes quite clever. And Kilpatrick.”

“Mhmm, like Kill bill. Yes, but, but not. I- yes, yes I see the similarity.”

And it so happened that three conversations occurred like this before Cruz Kilpatrick, the Claremont greenkeeper, arrived at the police station that evening, repeating his name once again at the counter.

The first one occurred a little before 8 a.m. with the barista on the corner near the golf-course. It was before his morning coffee and she only needed his first name but it was before 9 a.m. and for a man who has heard the comparison all his life, the joke had already long lost his humor. So when he failed to muster a smile perhaps it had dampened the young girl’s spirits but his daughter looked awfully like her and she hadn’t called him when she said she would and her disappointment did not affect him much.

The second conversation occurred on the green near noon. When a young man who played at the club were discussing his old hat and called to the woman who he was trying awfully hard to impress that, “There went old Cruz Kilpatrick, can you believe it, Cruz, like Tom cruise?”

And she laughed and moved the hat on her face and remind him that, to her, “The named seemed to be Kill bill but kill Patrick.” And “what an awful amount of bad luck to have a name like that.”

The third conversation the man hardly noticed. In fact he didn’t notice, and perhaps that was the problem. For you see those two men had seen him leave the bar at 10 p.m. And

it was sometime between lunch and 10 that a girl had died and been found in an alley and no one had seen him between that time and that was what he was here about.

Isabelle Blank

Cruz Kilpatrick was an impeccably-bearded insomniac who lived in a dilapidated shingle style house in the middle of a golf course. The golf course had grown up around the Kilpatrick house, and since Cruz was a boy he had trimmed the golf course grass with a pair of gold plated nail clippers. He was a man of faded glory, a lost inheritance had left him well-groomed, lonely, and neurotic. He walked the aged golf course in New England island hazy mornings, white tennis shoes misty and grass-flecked from clipping the grass late into the night.

When Cruz was young, his family commanded the island. The island and his family's golf course used to be a destination for young couples honeymooning, for pretty bright families vacationing, for distinguished retirees to go to golf tournaments in the 60s and 70s. When Wall Street demanded in the 80s that everything maintain a flashy air of gold dusting, the understated island fell out of fashion and declining tourism sunk the community into depression. Cruz's father, seeing his golf course in a state of disrepair, drowned himself in a bathtub of whiskey, and his mother died of a broken heart and wallet.

Years later, an over-tanned man with big white horse teeth sauntered onto Cruz's island and offered to buy the golf course. Cruz hoped this man would revamp the golf course, bring the island and his family's name back to some semblance of former glory, but the man with the teeth found better real estate and left the golf course dilapidated and underdeveloped.

The people that still played the golf course were a motley old crew, grandparents and locals from the old days who knew Cruz and his family way back when, and who treated him with distance and bewilderment. Cruz ate alone in the moldy clapboard club every afternoon, clutching his gold-plated nail clippers, awaiting moonlight, watching grandchildren run around the course with abandon while their grandparents lazily tapped golf balls in the patchy grass. In the summer, Cruz would sometimes employ these grandkids, but they eventually all left for school on the mainland and milled in and out during their hours, listlessly ignoring his gruff directions to trim the bushes or fertilize the course. Cruz, on rainy afternoons, when nobody wanted to go to the course, would walk around with his father's rusted out driver.