

# Sunset Fray

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*Khalil Elayan*

When beaded algae like floating Styrofoam pebbles covers the pond, I know May is here. Nestled near a blue wood, perhaps or perhaps not fed by an underground spring and with low hanging marsh oaks and willows weeping into the pond's surface, empurpled bluegill males target all that come near nesting females and their eggs with the ferocity of great whites biting into seal butter. Bigmouths are known to interfere, to shoot like angry newspapers from teenage hands into the fray of underwater nest and egg and essence....

Unseen phalluses mean little in the midst of pointed fins and purposed mouths, and this is what I know best, this world of ripple and strike, of amber and green, of purpled empowerment, and of soft sunset on the surface of all that is holy to me. I take it with me, having been burned into my retinas, and it becomes a silent swing in my brain, lulling me to dream of what I did just hours before. As I amble the steps to the door, I regret not taking a little more time to see who would win the match between bass and bream. Bream pointing outwards from the nest's sphere like musk oxen in deep snow and the bass like wolves with big mouths yawning to eat the calf in the center of all that must go on....