

Scene:

(Could make it more of a dialogue between her and the cops but for the sake of the monologue feel I kept it so she would be speaking over scenes instead.)

This is a woman in her 60's. Not particularly attractive or unattractive. Long greying hair and eyes that are still bright blue under a lot of wrinkles. Speaks in a country accent. Has a dry disposition but will smile in moments that she is baffled by her own epiphanies. This is a flashback for her. Scenes of her talking to two cops in her living room. Scenes of her house. The country around her house. Set out in a desolate country area. Storm brewing outside. Policemen are outside and two are sitting with Susie questioning her. Yellow tape is outside around a burnt up car. Her husband Darl sits beside her looking sorry and a little scared.

~~~

Susie:

What drives me to anger is baffling. It's only the smallest things. A key that gets stuck in the lock for a second too long. Forgetting laundry detergent once you already walked to the garage with a dirty hamper. Stepping on a damp floor in socks. Forgetting a towel for the shower and having to walk stark naked and dripping wet just to get one from the linen closet. Which inevitably leads to stepping on a damp floor in socks.

I've thought about this much in the still moments. The bland moments. Getting older you think you have a grip on what makes ya happy. Makes ya mad.

But still, what drives me to anger is baffling. Ya see, I've been surrounded by blowhards in this town my whole life. Kind of place just breeds em' out of boredom I suppose. Maybe that's the reason I've never learned the kind of loyalty that lingers. All my friends, best ones and the rest of em', every lover too... Bound to piss on my leg and tell me it's rainin'. But these things. These things don't make me lose my temper. Don't know why. Let it roll through me like a wave, so to speak.

People gonna keep being people. The key is learning the difference between expecting and accepting. You get hung up expecting people gonna do what YOU want them to do instead of accepting they gonna do exactly what it is they wanna do? Biscuits are burnt 'fore ya put em in the oven.

In reality, the secret is somewhere in between learning acceptance and learning to lose quietly.

And I always have.... Lost quietly.

Darl, blundering fool. Had a time with my sister after the accident last year. Said she came to him for support and he didn't know how it happened. Told him I could imagine well enough the particulars. Told me right there at that kitchen table. I just sat there for a while. Quiet. Turning my glass of water in circles on the tablecloth. Looking out that window at the clouds over that hill. I remember thinking one looked like an armadillo with its head and hands just barely poking out of its shell. Must have been watching those clouds for a time too cause I didn't hear much else of what Darl said. And then he got up and left. But no yelling. No big scene. Darl and I even worked it out. Moved back in with me shortly after.

Ya know, I got more than one oar in the water, but hell, I'll never understand human nature, including my own and Lord knows I've spent enough time with me. All along I've lost quietly. Suppose there is some dignity to that. Perceived or otherwise. But no logic.

And then... This morning. I come down and see this on the kitchen counter. An open bag of Wheat Thins that Darl was snacking on last night. The cardboard flaps flung open. The bag ripped and wide. Now a half a box of stale crackers all cause of the lack of sense to roll it up and put it away.

And that... now that... boy.

I did the only thing that made any sense.

I rolled up the bag of crackers. Put them back in the cabinet. And lit Darl's car on fire.

~ ~ ~