

BAD THINGS HAPPENED IN QUARANTINE

Flashfiction horror: Fight, Fight.

He was a white guy and we didn't get along.

It started off little shitty petty things he would do or say, and that summer, which to me, it's almost like people forget that in addition to quarantine bullshit we also had a little thing called civil unrest and the total collapse of civilization... but whatever, he added that racial stuff to the mix, too.

And he was a roommate I didn't want to begin with. I needed help paying rent after Pedro moved out, and so.

It started to become clear he was a supporter of a certain political figure--and the really weird part was, he would never say so, he would just push it to the absolute limit hinting at it, and he actually called the bastard Certain Political People, and not by his name. So he would say, "Certain Political People disagree with what you're saying about there not being a cure for the disease. There's household stuff you can use, according to Certain Political People."

I mean, that shit will drive you crazy.

"Why don't you just take it, then? Why don't you drink some bleach?" I would tell him. And he'd just laugh, big stupid Neanderthal cracker idiot.

That smirking damn smile all the time.

He would go out without a mask, never wash his hands, make a big show on purpose of being totally unhygienic.

Thank God, one day, he just said, "Let's just beat each other up."

I'm pretty jacked and so is he, so I knew we were talking about, like, a danger to the house, but I also could not resist it. I mean, I could not resist it.

We started fighting in the living room, just fists, and we just went at it until we were exhausted, and on that first day, both of us we're dying laughing from how good it felt to get that out.

We hadn't wrecked the room too bad, either.

So we sort of felt empowered to do it again the next day.

Problem was, a lot of furniture got messed up. So we fought about who should pay for that, and with the freedom of a thrashed living room--and later a smashed-up dining room after his over-microwaved pizza caused the smoke alarm to go off--we almost pretty much agreed I kicked his ass on that occasion as well.

We split the costs we were racking up, and moron that he is, he went out and actually got the replacement furnishings and delivered them.

Then I got inspired and ambushed him in bed in the middle of the night, and from then on, it was the best: 24-hour attack possibilities. Live with it.

Both of us laughed our asses off about it.

Sometimes one of us would just full on declare, "War," and we'd go at it.

Other times, no warning--it could be a 100-percent ambush, any hour of the night.

We started using weapons. Two by fours, lamps, tables, steak knives, hammers, just so long as you didn't bring anything into the house that wasn't meant to be there, but I got to admit, I started looking at furniture catalogs and homeware sites with an eye toward stuff with jagged edges and thick, sharp glassware.

I have no idea how we paid the medical bills. Or how we even survived it, really. No matter how much we messed each other up, it never got so serious one of us was going to die or need an amputation, but I got to say with a laugh that it came close.

The time I threw him off the second story I thought it was going to be bad.

But he was okay.

Then when it spilled over to the neighbor's pool and I full-on drowned him, I thought he was done, but guess what. He ended up fine.

Once he came this close, no joke, to chainsawing off my arm, and I can't explain it, but it didn't come off. Reattached good as anything and recovery was insane, not more than a few days.

It's just supernatural. It's like we were made for this.

It was harder on me, of course, because I didn't go anywhere. I was stuck with him. But all my anger and resentment went straight into hitting and strangling him and kicking his guts out and it was better having him around then not. I'd watch the news, and go straight into his bedroom to thrash him. He'd hear the news theme and know to get ready.

We put up webcams and people bet on the battles. It started to pay for itself. Eventually we got the medieval weapons and armor. That was when it took off.

This one nerdy white guy who was a crazy fan of it, he figured out where we lived. He came out and wanted us to beat him up, both of us. So we

did and everyone just liked us more for it. At that point, it didn't matter people knew where we lived.

And that's how it got to people in the neighborhood wearing the medieval armor and bringing horses and coming here just for the battles. You can't even tell the race of the people in the armor, it's just good old fashioned brutality.

Quarantine got over but we're still going at it, every night, nights only, stop short of homicide and you're welcome to come.