The Introvert

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Abstract

As I sat dreaming, a child came to me and asked, “Why are you happy?” I turned away and felt foolish for smiling in the sun...
up the sketch again. _Damn_, he thought, _why can't my fingers put down what my brain demands?_ The highlights on her hair are good—really not bad at all. But the details—her lips—_damn!_ His eyes flashed from the charcoal and found the framed oil painting of a city street. _My best_, he thought. He strode to the other side of the room so his eyes could blend the dabs of oil into the desired effect. _Maybe it's too dark. The judges might not feel as I do about a city street. Can't lighten it, though—wouldn't be mine. Damn! Maybe I won't score at all! The frame on that landscape looks so amateurish. Well, hell, that's what I am—maybe not even that._

He stalked back to the charcoal, trying to channel his torrential thoughts. He gazed at the sketch, studied it, absorbed it into his heart, then into his brain where he stared at it through the barrier which had leaped up to cloud his deep eyes.

Carefully he picked up each piece of work and put it in the crate addressed in bold, black letters. Tension pulled his muscles taut across his wide but thin shoulders as he carried the crate to a half-door across from the stairway. He did not pause as he shoved the crate into the stale blackness of the attic storage room.

Sunlight pushed through the window on the west wall and placed its rectangles around the barren studio.

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_By Peter Proul_

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a child came to me
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