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Self Portrait

By Allen Gary Palmer

I am the man women do not want their husband's calling "friend"—
Somewhere along the way I became a bad influence.

I am the man men do not want their wives or girlfriends even knowing—
I promise not to pilfer, but I cannot be held for those who follow my trail.

I am the man from whom parents shield their children—
I have very few sharp edges, yet somehow I am a danger.

I am the man forgotten—
The empty space in the photograph nobody notices—
Or remembers.

Expendable by the practical order of society,
Most have trimmed the fatty shell of my relation
From the rich roast of lives filled with dedication and occupation I cannot
understand.

After work,
Lacrosse practice,
Brownies,
The PTA,
Sleep,
Food,
And the occasional romp in the hay,
What little time remains is precious.

I revel in my new place in the world—
Like a wolf running through the spring snow in pursuit of a stray fawn—
Or the sweet scent of satisfaction from a warm female craving his time.

I live and prowl with the shadows,
On the outskirts of reality,
Where noise and light and movement
Play and script fantasies beyond the comprehension of Most,
A group of which mercifully has never claimed me as one of its own.

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