

## Fortune Telling

by Nick Sansone

Somewhere near Casadega—a small town outside Daytona that's known, primarily, for its psychics and palm readers, but also, at least among your friends, for the Mystic Mini-Mart, a gloriously unscrupulous store that sells beer and cigs without checking IDs, a useful resource whenever you cut class and spend a day at the boardwalk—just outside of town, all your heady notions of romance and adventure vanish, when, at seven o'clock in the morning, driving up I-4 with Sandy, you have a psychic vision of your own, maybe produced by the special magnetic wavelengths rumored to surround Casadega, or maybe simply by the sign for an exit two miles ahead: it's nine minutes into the future, and your parents are waking to the snooze alarm, getting ready for work when they realize you've absconded at some point during the night with your father's truck, and you wonder then if you should turn your cell phone back on and await the angry, panicked call, the order to come home, and the thought enters your head that maybe Sandy, the girl you met at the beach a few weeks ago—who just a few hours earlier had punched out the screen of her bedroom window and climbed into the truck with a duffel bag filled with clothes and maps slung over her shoulder, the strap resting alongside a bruise you hadn't noticed before—is perhaps also thinking of turning back, a thought Sandy seems to read, because she says, "Just drive," and places a hand on your leg right before you merge for the exit that will take you both home.

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## 200 Words for It

by Stacy Muszynski

I slid my purchases across the counter to "Jerome," my Sav-On cashier.

"Just a quiet night at home," I said.

He laughed and bagged my stuff—micro-wave popcorn, a 2-liter of Coke, and a pregnancy test—and handed me my change. His smile was friendly.

"Hey," he said. "I know how it is. Gonna get a movie from next door?" Blockbuster was next door.

Jeff sidled up next to me. "Let me get it," he said, and he paid the bill. Sun through the dirty windows turned his brown eyes gold.

We watched all of some movie I don't remember anymore. The test was negative.

\*

Not one emergency clinic I called was open. Everybody was partying. It was Fourth of July for them, too.

"Well," said Alessandro. "What do you hear?"

"Heartbeats in a few days if someone doesn't help." I smiled, hopeful.

Ale kept his eyes on the knot he was tying in the sloppy condom he dug out of me.

Finally, an office with a message service: I explained the mess. "That's not an emergency," said the operator.

"No, it's not your emergency," I said back.

A doctor finally responded, filled a script for a killer dose of birth control.

Ale wouldn't name it, but I did.

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FICTION & POETRY

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