

A TRUE DEMON

By Jim Archuletta

My nightmares never go away, and yet my lips are sealed to the world and especially to her. God willing, the truth needs to be revealed, but I remain silent. I've studied my own weary eyes in the mirror many times, and see the lifelessness and fear within their depths. They are the eyes of a sick man. I clearly see that they are the eyes of a haunted and tormented man, and they are black from many sleepless nights. They are the eyes of a true demon.

But my wife's eyes are different. They are bright and blue, without a hint of question; they are completely trusting. A fire of life burns within them, and they peer into my very soul. Yet, they cannot see the monster within me.

I live every day in fear that the truth will someday be revealed to her, and I'll lie to keep her happy as long as she continues to believe that I am her loving husband. I am a dutiful husband when it comes to keeping her content, and I go to great lengths to conceal my treachery.

A simple form of communication with us is our eye contact, and it is something that I have been able to avoid for one full year now. When we are at dinner I dare not sit across from her, and I have masked other encounters by similar measures. I spare nothing to keep her unaware and remain my unknowing bride.

If I were to make eye contact with her, then I would remember. There would be no hiding my deceit, and our lives and our world would come to an end. I would not be able to continue living a lie and I would buckle under the accusations and questioning that I would suffer from her. I cannot lose my love, so my demon eyes grow darker.

What is my fear? What monstrous act must I have done to choose living a life like this with the one that I love? One year ago we were visiting my family in another state. It was a pleasant trip, one that she had insisted on. My wife has always been so loving and supportive of me, and I'm so undeserving. I do not understand how what happened next happened, but it did. I knew at the time

that it was a disastrous mistake on my part, but God forgive me I was weak.

Everyone in the house had been asleep. My brother and his wife were in their own room, and my sweet unsuspecting wife slept peacefully in our chambers...a converted guest room. She slept without her husband and eagerly awaited my warm embrace, poor thing. Yet I had not been with her. My heart was elsewhere and I lusted after another. I stood alone in the kitchen, thinking about what I was about to do...the horrible act I was about to commit. I knew very well that I would be forsaking my loving partner, but my fire of desire could not be doused!

As she lay alone in a bed of trust and love, I crossed over to the evil side of temptation. At any given point I could have stopped the event from unfolding, and saved my marriage from a true slide into the abyss, but I consciously made the decision to do wrong! Oh, if only I'd been strong! She would have been strong, there is not a doubt in my mind!

I felt a thousand eyes watching me as I prepared to engage in the point of no return. That was when it happened, and my life has never been the same. I took my loving wife's Reece's Peanut Butter Cup from within the deepest reaches of my brother's refrigerator, and I ate the whole damn thing! She had been saving her favorite sweet treat as a special snack before the next day's departure, but for her it was not destined to be. I...her demonic husband, deprived her of that joy.

The next day, she questioned all about her missing bliss, and that was when I could no longer look her in the eyes, lest she know the truth. I blamed my brother for taking it, but you must understand...My wife's a real bitch when it comes to her Reece's Peanut Butter Cups!