

light reading series

featherproof



Brian Costello

DECEMBER 26, 2004

On Christmas morning, I broke my younger brother Thomas's nose. The right side of his face swelled up like a giant pimple. He hadn't even been home five minutes.

Regardless of whether or not he had it coming (he did), Mom made us put the Christmas decorations away first thing on the morning of December 26th. The homemade stockings tacked onto the mantel, the plastic holly coiled around the railings, and Santa's Florida Christmas Village annexed across a bookcase adorned with purely decorative editions of great works of literature were usually allowed a reprieve until January 2nd. Not this year. I guess Mom doesn't want to be reminded of a Christmas of blood, screaming, cursing, and a trip to the emergency room.

We stripped the family McMansion of its holiday cheer, packing the wreaths, ornaments, lights, and the million and one decorative displays into clear plastic boxes with blue lids, lugging them onto the shelves of the spacement connected to the side of the house, neither one of us saying a word while Mom wiped the kitchen counters and Dad sat in the recliner reading the business section of *The Orlando Sentinel*, his legs stretched over the ottoman. The TV blared rousing orchestral music, accompanying the slow-motion touchdown reception from some NFL film, heightening the announcer's drama and urgency: "... sometimes, in the unlikelyst of places, fortunes are reversed, and the defeated rise to unexpected victory."

Punching Thomas wasn't the sole reason we weren't talking that morning. We don't get along. After high school, I moved to Gainesville and attended the University of Central Florida. I went vegan. I pierced my tongue. I pierced my septum. I pierced my nipples. I pierced my ears many times over. I stretched my earlobes until you could stick exhaust pipes through the holes. Tribal tattoos quickly covered my scrawny arms. I joined a straight-edge hardcore band called Moe Green's Fucking Eyesocket. I worked for a bookstore specializing in leftist and anarchist literature. When Thomas graduated high school

featherproof
BOOKS



www.featherproof.com

Hey, Thanks for reading this
featherproof LIGHT READING mini-book.
For more swell stuff, pay us a visit at:

1



Brian Costello teaches Fiction Writing at Columbia College Chicago, drums, and hosts "The Brian Costello Show with Brian Costello," America's First and Only Live Talk Show. His writing has appeared in *Bridge*, *Maximumrocknroll*, *THE2NDHAND*, *Sleepwalk*, *F Magazine*, *Hair Trigger* and many others both on and off-line, including *The New England Journal of My Ass*. *The Enchanters vs. Sprawlburg Springs* is his first novel. We recommend it.



