

The Following Story Theresa wrote in the Fall of 1998 and she sent it to her husband while he was in jail. Since then the story has circulated throughout the prison system. In many cases the name was changed to "China White". Here is the original story. Black Bamboo

To cheat one needs only to tell a lie to thyself . . .

"Black Bamboo I'm glad you're here. No one understands me like you do." He said as he lay onto the bed. Letting himself go he became engulfed in the moment. Soon an hour had passed. He did not want to leave this place. It felt so good cradled in the arms of Black Bamboo. But he had to let go.

He arrived home before his wife. Not that he cared. For all his existence was frozen in time. He was numb. It was as if his reality was lost. He stumbled for his keys feeling rushed to enter his shrink wrapped existence. Why do I care he thought? His wife never thought about him and how he felt. Nothing he did seemed to please her. He tried hard and all she wanted to do was make everything difficult. That is why he needed Black Bamboo. To take all his troubles away. He smiled and closed his eyes. Trying to remember the feeling Black Bamboo gave to him.

Within moments his wife intruded his space. He wondered if he loved her. All he wanted from her was consideration. Suddenly he ached for Black Bamboo.

"What are you doing?" his wife asked.

He ignored the question, turned abruptly and went into the kitchen.

Standing there feeling more dead than alive, as if her reality was slipping away she began to consider that there another woman. She felt numb, stuck inside her own shrink wrap existence. I can't do this. I refuse to play second. I am not going to take it. She voiced aloud to herself.

She resolved to confront him.

She stormed into the kitchen where he was preparing that nights supper. "I'm no fool," she said. "There is another woman. I can tell." Her words were harsh and cold.

"What are you talking about? There is no other woman." He began to think of Black Bamboo. All he wanted now was to escape. He did not understand. Did she not trust him? He wanted to hold her, but not like this. Not when she was like this.

"I know you're lying to me." she shouted with an anger that tore at her heart. He was lying. She knew he was. "I can just tell." She began to speak but he ignored her. She wasn't going to convince him. She did not know.

"I do not want to talk about this, this crazy idea in your head." He looked around for an escape.

The phone rang.

"Have you seen Black Bamboo?" a voice was saying.

"Not since this afternoon," He responded. "But, I am looking too. I'll be right over and we can go together." He hung up the phone. Turning to his angry wife he shook his head and said, "I've got to go. I'll be home later and we can talk."

She did not know what to say. She knew he was going to her. She wanted not to care. She stared frozen in place. She decided she was going to have to leave him. But not now she just couldn't. All she could do was stand there and watch him leave.

It took an hour, but the two of them found Black Bamboo. His anticipation and desire grew. He had an upset stomach. He did not like to argue with his wife. He needed Black Bamboo. He needed to feel good again. He was tired of feeling bad. He was tired of being accused for things he did not do.

"Why doesn't she just leave me if she doesn't trust me?" he complained to his friend as they entered the darkened room. "Let me go first I'm really feeling bad," he pleaded. "Besides I put in the most money."

It took only a moment before he was alone with Black Bamboo. He took a deep breath and sighed. Pulled the needle out of his arm, and let himself go. No more pain, no more problems. Only he and Black Bamboo.

Now, everything was OK.

Something I can not accept is a lie. I have found everyone can lie to me, even my gut. Even though I knew there was a lie I did not know the truth. It is hard to see the truth when you're caught in the ground, not unlike the Black Bamboo refusing to grow. Not dead and not alive, but caught somewhere in-between.

Theresa 1998