

Costa Rica

By Jaymes Young

Cast:

Brad Levingston

Mrs. Windham

Setting:

The living room of Mr. Brad Levingston and Mr. George Windham

Time:

The present

It is night and the living room is dimly lit. Mrs. Windham, a matriarchal woman in her sixties, is busy scouring the room, pausing from time to time, evaluating various objects. Some items she picks up and puts into a box that rests on the glass coffee table. She pauses when she comes to a picture of two men, arms around one another, smiling out from a tropical destination. Brad, an attractive, well-dressed man in his forties, enters from back stage, he is holding two coffee cups. He stops and looks at her staring at the picture.

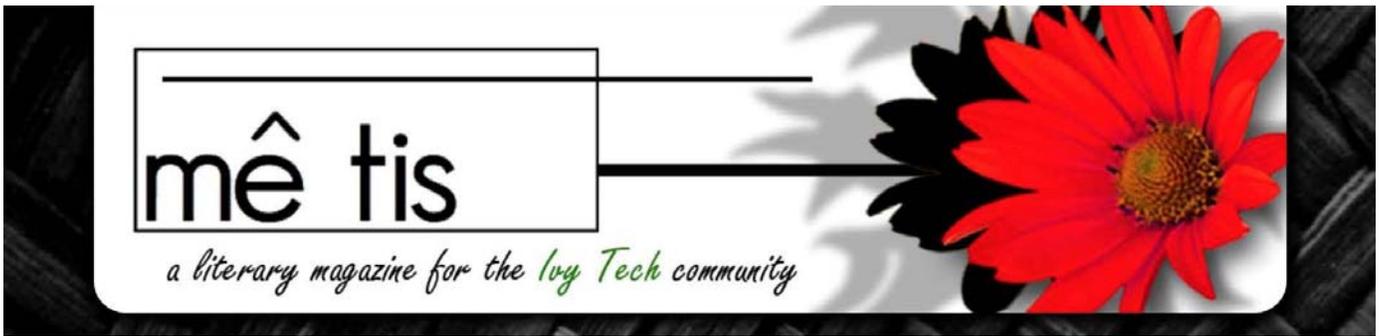
Brad: Costa Rica.

Mrs. Windham turns suddenly towards his voice, clumsily replacing the picture on the buffet. Brad begins to walk in her direction. She looks past him, around the room, anywhere but AT him.

Brad: That picture was from our Christmas in Costa Rica. The first Christmas we were together, just before we moved here.

Mrs. Windham bristles slightly, but stands straight.

Brad: 22 years ago, just after you and Mr. Windham refused to see him any longer...because of...me.



Brad approaches her and offers her the coffee cup, a bright colored mug with a palm tree painted on it. She takes it.

Brad: How was the funeral?

Mrs. Windham looks at him for the first time, visibly clearing a lump in her throat and then nervously sips her coffee. She looks at the coffee, then looks up at Brad in surprise.

Brad: Cream. Two sugars. Just the way he took his coffee.

Mrs. Windham turns away from him, becoming nervous. She sets the cup down on an end table and begins to pace around the room, trying to busy herself with the task at hand.

Brad: He always wanted a big service. Nothing too formal though. Something more like a social gathering, he'd say. One last party with his closest friends and loved ones. *(Brad begins to pace behind Mrs. Windham)* He made me promise once to bury him in a Hawaiian shirt. We had a big fight about it. And of course I relented in the way I always did when it came to George.

Mrs. Windham picks up a vase and walks towards the box on the table.

Brad: An antique...

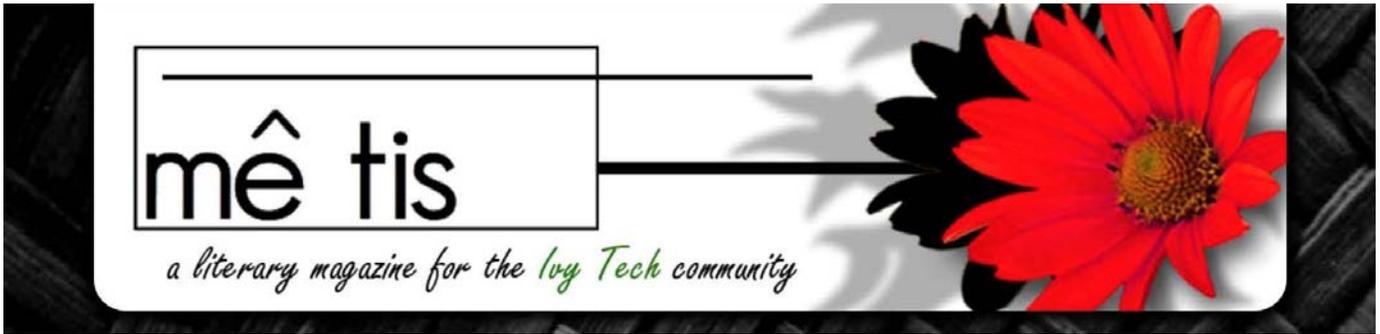
Mrs. Windham pauses for a moment then puts the vase in the box.

Brad: ...we picked it up during our trip to Martha's Vineyard, the year before he got sick.

Mrs. Windham turns her back to him, touching her mouth with her hand.

Brad: Of course, you probably didn't know that...about the funeral. It was more than likely some solemn service in the traditional Protestant way. Whatever Mr. Windham wanted...of course he was busy challenging the will...so the planning was probably left to you.

Brad moves closer to her. She moves away and begins to pick up items at random and put them in the box.



Brad: Some last vigil in hopes of saving his soul. I don't suppose many of the Windham family were there to pay their last respects though. Of course no close friends...no death notice published...no obituary.

Mrs. Windham has become more agitated, her pace has quickened and she has involuntarily begun to weep.

Brad: *(following behind her, matching her hurried pace and getting as close as possible, as she picks up random objects and puts them in the box)* Maybe just grave side services Mrs. Windham? Nothing to call attention to the dearly departed, once prodigal, wasted-life son...huh, Mrs. Windham? Did you know what poem he wanted read at the service? What music he wanted played!? I did! He told me, several times. Made me swear not to let you... 22 years! Not a word. 10 years since his diagnosis. Surgery, radiation, chemo, experimental drugs from Holland. Two remissions and countless numbers of letters returned marked returned to sender...not a word from any one of you!

Mrs. Windham picks up a lamp from the end table, jerking the cord from the outlet. They both stop and stare at one another for a moment.

Brad: *(indicating the lamp)* A birthday present...for my 35th.

Mrs. Windham places the lamp on the coffee table next to the box and turns and sits in the high back chair next to the end table. She sips her coffee, Brad moves to exit but stops next to her as she places her mug back on the table. He picks up the mug and holds it out to her.

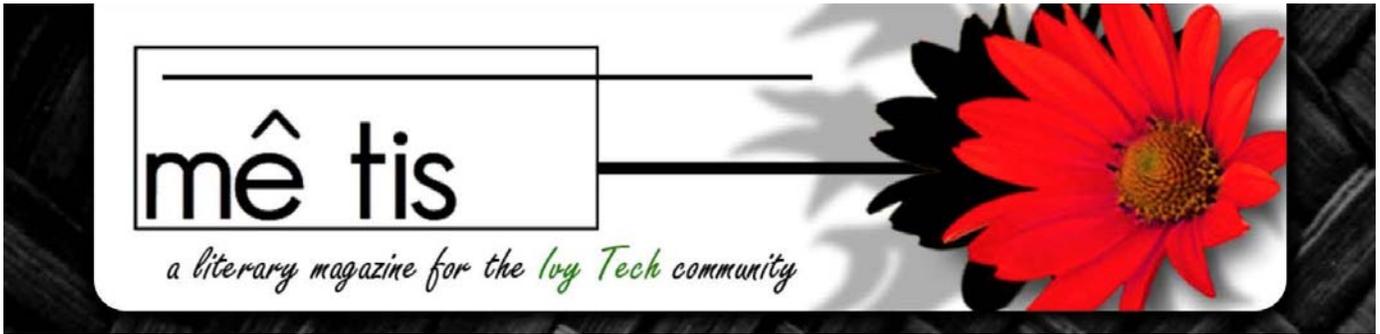
Brad: Costa Rica.

She moves her head towards him, peering at the mug.

Brad: We were merely two kids just out of college. Could barely pay for the trip. George spent our last dollar on this mug. I got angry with him at the time. Who knew it would be all that's left of our life together. You'll pick this place clean like vultures on a carcass...auction the rest I suppose... sell the house... just leave the bones here to rot.

Mrs. Windham opens her mouth to speak, Brad cuts her off.

Brad: *(whispering through tears)* OUR home--OUR life for almost twenty-two years.



Brad exits, pouring the coffee into a potted plant on his way out.

Brad: *(offstage)* The movers will be here tomorrow. I'll be out by Thursday.

Mrs. Windham rises, rubs her hands over her jacket, straightening herself. She moves determinedly back to the table, picks up the lamp and moves to place it in the box. She stops herself and stands motionless for a few seconds. She then moves back to the end table, placing the lamp back in its place. Mrs. Windham sits once again in the high back chair and begins to weep.

Stage goes black.

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Jaymes is originally from Indianapolis, Indiana, and has called Bloomington home for the past ten years. He is the father of three. He is currently enrolled in the Liberal Arts program at Ivy Tech-Bloomington and hopes to complete a BA in Social Work in the very near future. He is a write and HIV/AIDS activist.
