

Nonfiction
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 •
 Written By LaTanya McQueen

Portrait of an American Male¹

He is a Proud Boy. Polite and low-key, his midwestern manners would please anyone’s mother. He works with his dad around their modest yellow house on Second Street, fixing up a newly purchased home in an old-fashioned, close-knit neighborhood—the kind of place where residents check in on one another. He seems like a normal kid.

He is handsome, cute, but quiet. Shy. His tattoos are innocuous pop-culture references: A slice of cherry pie adorns one arm, a homage to the TV show *Twin Peaks*. He is a big *Seinfeld* fan. He likes to gamble, listens to country music. He is not a star.

This is a nice, handsome-looking boy, like an articulate and well-dressed former football player with prom-king good looks. His face is narrow and punctuated with sharply peaked eyebrows, like a pair of air quotes. He looks like any 20-something or 30-year-old with his short-on-the-sides, long-on-the-top haircut. He is dapper, a buttoned-down millennial, in his dark suits and ties, or he is decked out in white polo shirts and khakis, or he wears neat jeans, button-down shirts, cargo shorts. He wears jeans and striped pullovers that look like they could have come from the sale rack at a local Gap. He wears clothes that are acceptable and appropriate, clothes that make him look like he belongs.

He was a former Boy Scout, played varsity football and baseball, and hung out with the popular crowd. Sometimes, he could be like those mischievous boys who want to have some fun, but he was never in the principal’s office for trouble. He attended solidly middle-class, racially integrated schools, grew up with black friends, and came from a respected family. He is a tough person but has a very big heart.

Many afternoons, he will sit silently on the curb in front of his roomy yard and, when he is tired of it, move to a different curb. He helps neighbors with their yard work.

When something bothers him, he likes to go for a hike.

He does not want for anything.

¹ As told through the compilation and arrangement of quotes taken from various news articles on neo-Nazis, white supremacists, white nationalists, the KKK, Dylann Roof, Darren Wilson, and Mark Conditt. This material has been lightly edited for narrative clarity.

Sources

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