



2009

Of Distrust

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Recommended Citation

Knable, Kate (2009) "Of Distrust," *Cedarville Review*: Vol. 12 , Article 31.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/cedarvillereview/vol12/iss1/31>

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Of Distrust

I like Ed Uyesugi's Japanese heritage, his tall, athletic body, his bright brown eyes, perfect teeth, square jaw. I like it when he teases me about pronouncing his last name improperly. I like the way he drives three hours to visit me on a bright October afternoon and takes me out for hot chocolate, dinner at O'Charley's, and the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*. I like the way he sneaks his arm around me as we leave O'Charley's and the way he criticizes Anne's rudeness to her parents in the play.

~

Three years later, I will see a mug shot of Ed in the news. I feel shaken when I find myself looking into those brown eyes again. He has been arrested for allegedly beating a fourteen-year-old autistic boy during an exorcism attempt. In the mug shot, Ed's hair is still the way I remember it, tousled all the way to his eyebrows. His eyes and mouth don't smile in the picture. I look at that face and compare it to the photographs of him that I have memorized. Ed at the bottom of a yellow playground slide, laughing at me. Ed as Gideon in his high school's version of *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, dressed like a farm boy in a plaid shirt and rolled up jeans. Ed with morel mushrooms sticking out of his ears after a day of mushroom hunting with his dad. It was Ed who interrupted our date to stop by the side of the road to check on people in a stopped car.

"I just want to make sure they're okay," he said.