

JIMMY [“POOTUS”] AND HELEN & TOM GREENE

Jimmy wanted to be a bully but he was skinny and just wasn't that big, was barely older than us and was a “mama's-boy” from the git-go. You know the type – talks a good line but just as soon as anybody calls him on it, he runs away like a scalded dog, screaming for his mommy.

He was a bit older than the rest of us, had this faint, scraggly sort of “excuse-me-beard” that was a beard in name only but was really a mix of stubble and peach fuzz. He thought that and a cigarette made him look older.

The older teenage boys thought Jimmy was fun to pick on and Jimmy somehow got the nickname of “Pootus” (maybe it wasn't really off-color but “Pootus” sure sounded like it was to us). The older boys would hide his bike or hang it about six feet up on a telephone pole. You'd ha' thought that Jimmy'd quit comin' around. He always got the raw end off the deal.

Then enter Helen Greene, Jimmy's mom, if it concerned little kids. She looked pretty average except that no matter what time of day it was, she had curlers in her hair (I never saw her any other way). She had real sharp features and those black-brown horn-rimmed glasses

didn't help. She's a little taller than most women but not much.
(Apparently she was fearless if the situation involved kids that only came up to her elbows.)

Now Tom, Jimmy's dad, always stomped uptown if it involved older kids. But, for some reason, his shoes were never tied. Maybe he just couldn't reach 'em—Tom wasn't a small man. The Greenes lived on the far end of town. By the time he got, all red-faced, to the middle of town to rescue Jimmy's bike, all the kids had scattered. You could hear him huffin' and puffin' half a block away.