Shortly after the riots, like many other white Detroiter, my parents began looking for a house in the suburbs. The suburb they had their sights on was the affluent lakefront district of the auto magnates: Grosse Pointe.

It was much harder than they ever expected. In the Cadillac, scouting the five Grosse Pointe (the Park, the City, the Farms, the Woods, the Shores), my parents saw FOR SALE signs on many lawns. But when they stopped in at the realty offices and filled out applications, they found that the houses suddenly went off the market, or were sold, or doubled in price.

After two months of searching, Milton was down to his last real estate agent, a Miss Jane Marsh of Great Lakes Realty. He had growing suspicious.

"This property is rather eccentric", Miss Marsh is telling Milton one September afternoon as she leads him up the driveway. "It takes a buyer with a little vision." She opens the front door and leads him inside. "But it does have quite a pedigree. It was designed by Hudson Clark." She waits for recognition. "Of the Prairie School"\(^1\). Milton nods, dubiously\(^2\). He swivels his head, looking over the place. He hadn't much cared for the picture Miss Marsh had shown him over at the office. Too boxy-looking. Too modern.

"I'm not sure my wife would go for this kind of thing, Miss Marsh."

"I'm afraid we don't have anything more traditional to show at the moment."

She leads him along a spare white hallway and down a small flight of open stairs. And now, as they step into the sunken living room, Miss Marsh's head begins to swivel, too.

Smiling a polite smile that reveals a rabbity expanse of upper gum\(^3\), she examines Milton's complexion, his hair, his shoes. She glances at his real estate application again.

"Stephanides. What kind of name is that?"

"It's Greek."

"Greek. How interesting."

More upper gum flashes as Miss Marsh makes a notation on her pad. Then she resumes the tour: "Sunken living room. Greenhouse adjoining the dining area. And, as you can see, the house is well supplied with windows."

"It pretty much is a window, Miss Marsh." Milton moves closer to the glass and examines the backyard. Meanwhile, a few feet behind, Miss Marsh examines Milton.

"May I ask what business you're in, Mr. Stephanides?"

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1. *Prairie School*: 20\(^{th}\) century school of architecture made famous by Frank Lloyd Wright.
3. *Upper gum*: pink flesh inside the mouth above the teeth.