

Sun Demons

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in a small South American town
shopkeepers locked up their doors with big brass keys
and everyone went home at siesta time
and slept while the sun-demons
 laughed and wept, like fire
 in the village square
 and along the orchard rows,
 and mocked the panting strays
 who barked twice at them
 before returning exhausted
 to the shade of banana trees

mothers locked their doors against the sun-demons
and warned their children not to stir
but you could still go out and play with them
they would dance with you
 and whisper dirty secrets in your ear
 on red-tile roofs
 in the feverish hours of the sun

but you'd best leave before you dance too long
 or they'll fill their thirst with your body juice
 and lick your salt with flames
your body will join the dust of the square
and all that will be left of you
 will be the sun-demon
 condemned to dance at the noon hour
 to rise and shimmer from white-hot stones
 and suck the sweat from living men