

The Body
The ghost
The archive

The archive

In a way time haunts us all

And in an instant it falls around you

What is a body?
Without a name, without a distinction
An empty vessel
Simply biological
A cadaver
Skin covering bone
Hair, teeth, nails
In truth a body could be devoid of all of those things
Of all of its biological distinctions
And yet we can still consider it a body
The home,
Raw
Unmarked by anything biological,
Is in all cases a body
Living even
consuming

The scene opens on

A standard single family home, unassuming, it looms indistinctly between more of its kind.

An assertive silence warming the air around it.

There used to be a forest surrounding this neighborhood,

Now densely tufted trees gnarl beside guard rails, overlooking rivers, like clotted veins feeding the weakening landscape.

And the local wildlife, displaced, make frequent appearances on the morning news, climbing over mossy back fences, or attempting to cross the highway by the megamart.

This home is just a body, like the rest of us.

Skin bone white,

There's a door, like a mouth it yawns, cautiously accepting morning, breathing in contaminants that litter the entryway. You'll notice, there is nothing special about this front door

It matches all the rest on this street

This street, a cramp of homes

Hungry mailboxes lining the cracked asphalt, sidewalk dusted in concrete

The front steps are aged and dew dropped stacked just before

A lawn of freshly cut grass, who's sharp scent sticks in your nose clouding everything else, (the neighbor's strong perfume that wafts through her open window, the trash cans overflowing with rotten fruit and old newspapers)

THE LAWN

Imagine it: The power of grasping a piece of nature, of containing it.

Domesticated earth.

The land has been trained to bloom pale pink hydrangeas, blue bells, and rosemary to keep away mice.

An orange tree

(overgrown)

looms just before the pathway

(untrained)

It challenges the lawn and its master.

Casting long winding shadows,
dropping overripe fruit like bombs
flaming highlighter orange
and emitting strong citrus gasses.

Cameras roll as

The cool breeze blows white sage air against the home's suntanned siding and bright colored leaves dampened by days old rain water litter the sidewalk. Wooden chimes clank against each

other a deep sound like footsteps receding down a long winding stairwell. Somewhere off in the distance a bird is singing, or maybe calling to another, in response there's a rustling in the trees, branches hitting against branches, a commotion, then silence returns to the morning.

This is how it feels to be consumed

There's a bloat to everything
A buildup of tension
In turn the home sweats
Internalizing discomfort
A humidity that seeps through the walls
In turn the family sweats
Encased in cotton sheets
Dampening
Marinating

A Haunting is persistent
Marked by the frequency of each *disturbance*

Routine is persistent
And daily the family is awakened by the sound of a door slamming
The foundation wheezing in its wake
Imagine the home
Howling in pain

The miasma of tropical perfume permeating the halls
A mist lingering over the treacherous surf

An ancient rage torments

THE MIND -THE LAIR

The room they don't enter
Because it's *hers* (the apparition)
The lair of the beast
Imagine Grendel
In his undersea cave
Surrounded by the bones of those unfortunate Danes
It reeks of sweat, smoke, coconut lotion,
Warm hair oils and something deeply rotten
Suffocating as water, flooding the thing's den
Ash stains the corners of the ceiling an ever present shadow
The spirit lingers here, its essence like particles hovering in the atmosphere.
A beast who's treasures are all plastic, and artificial wet
Brightly colored t-shirts with large printed designs lay strewn over furniture (the bed, for example, unmade, missing pillows, one grasps the edge, pleading with its pillow lord for salvation), a shoe on the window sill, its pair MIA. A Barbie guitar glows in the middle of the room, batteries weeping, an electrical hum playing over each rigid string. socks of every texture litter the floor like algae poking through the surface of a lake.

This lake, a shaggy beige rug, disheveled and threaded with long strands of hair. You could pick through it and have enough to create a whole new rug. The family didn't want a dog because "dog's shed" but never imagined her beastly nature. She forms a tumbleweed of bitten nails and dead skin. Skin transferred on pillowcases soaked through by Wet cheeks. and Pulled out eyelashes clotted with mascara speckle every hard surface.

A casualty:

The fish bowl, tipped over: watering the carpet, leaving a dense wet spot that will never be the texture it once was. Mutated. The goldfish flops around in what is left of its home (a shallow puddle). Gaspng against the clear air. Gurgling, bubbles forming from its jowls. It is experiencing for the first time, what it feels like to be heavy. The weight of the world. No one will notice until much later.

Evidence :

The apparition left behind a damp toothbrush
Primordial saliva coating the edge of the sink

Ectoplasmic foam bubbles down the drain, as the oily residue of its fingerprints stain the polished tops of the bathroom counters.

No message is left in the steam that fogs the mirror,
Only a fading handprint.

She oozes down the stairs

The sound of her bracelets, like bells, follow her like a warning

There's a gentle, almost serene, clinking to her beaded prayer strand hair, the sound of a different wish contained within each piece of rounded plastic.

And again another slammed door, a sigh lingering in the space.

An unnecessary alarm is ringing,

And the clock in the dining room incorrectly reads 3:00 (the witching hour)

They'd been meaning to get it fixed for years, but it has always been more of an heirloom than an object of utility. No one ever looked at it with the purpose of telling the time. Guests mostly went on about its gaudiness, the gold trim around the face, and the carvings of swans and river reeds adorning its deeply aged body.

Int. Dining room

The room is overall unremarkable. Simple. A modest nook, where a long oak table sits surrounded by matching chairs, it remarks on the great tree it once was, how it stood tall against strong and steady roots, amongst a forest of its magnificent ancestors. The chairs nod, imagining it. All they know is what it is to be a chair. They notice how the table never speaks about what it's like to be a table, inside of a suburban home, in a middle class neighborhood, far from any forest with other great oak trees. The table however remembers its manufacturing, the cutting, the sanding, the lacquering, but chooses to imbue the chairs instead with the legacy of greatness, the smells of maple and cool, clean air.

We meet the father sitting in a white button down and slacks, suit jacket thrown over the back of his chair. He ponders over the crossword while a mug of coffee steams on the table beside him (uncoastered).

taboo

He's looking for a 7 letter word for
"Whatever names me breaks me."

The thing is so constantly broken time and time again that it forgets what it means to be whole.
Constantly unliving to live again for the briefest of moments. A monotonous agony.
The thing that breaks it is everything.
Somewhere within the bowels of the home someone screams

FATHER

“no that isn’t it”

“There can’t be an “M””

Father stares out of the window at the orange tree, he’s taken to doing this quite often.
The orange tree notices, but coyly avoids his gaze. The fruit stays on their branches.

Father is willful. His strength lies in his wanting. The home, a lone planet slowly spinning,
creates gravity. The father actively contests this gravity. His job is to weaken restraints. He has
learned that the best way to gain control is to overpower.

He rules over his home with talk alone.

Saying things like: “*this is my house*” and “*when you’re under my roof you follow my rules*”
He doesn’t quite understand why the word “*my*” tastes so metallic, like he bit his tongue, or
perhaps irritated his gums.

He checks his teeth for blood.

they remain vaguely white.

He is the superstitious protector of the home, with only a superficial understanding of it. He is
the king. In the chess sense. He barely does much, but everyone wants him dead.

The ghost slams yet another door.

He yells after it, without moving from his seat.

There’s a painting behind the father’s chair. It rattles apprehensively against the wall. This
painting is one from his grandmother’s expansive collection.

THE PAINTING

A woman walks along a beach one late afternoon,

The waves are slow to approach the shore, they crawl timidly along the rocks as though
someone’s warned them about crossing the threshold of land. The vulnerability of perception,

She clings to the rocks, looming amongst their ever growing shadows

A dark speck against the world’s deep, intense gray. as

The clouds beyond the surf obscure the sunset,

We imagine the brilliant oranges and pinks that must lie beyond and are in some way content.
(*If you listen close enough You can hear the waves whispering tender warnings, they are fleeting
though, as they’re brushed away back into the ocean, where they are muffled by whatever sounds
fish make when they are away from humans*)

Creation precedes decay

And thus, a space that is constantly creating is constantly rotting

Cycles

INT kitchen

Any modern woman should take pride in her kitchen. The home, unmodern, protrudes its full stomach like a proud macaw. Dark wash cabinets and counters lined like wooden teeth before an ancient, lightly patterned backsplash. The stove is vaguely new, gas, the fridge covered in plastic fruit magnets and jotted reminders on memo pads. Filled with frozen veggies, nearly empty egg cartons, popsicles, blueberries, squeezable yogurt pouches, jug of kool-ade , frosty cola cans, frozen fish sticks, ground beef, leftover spaghetti, untrimmed carrots, various condiments, butter, cheese (sliced), cheese (stringed), a milk carton, creamer, and Chicken defrosting on a dish. There's a round table covered in a checkered cloth where the family sits for breakfast, or where mother places excess ingredients for cooking.

The pantry door is almost always open, filled with wheat bread, sugar cereal, gummy snacks, crackers, chips, grocery bags, flour, sugar, extra salt, canned fruit, canned beans, boxed rice, soup can, dried pasta, unopened tomato sauce, Pam cooking spray, potatoes, cooking oil, juice boxes, store bought pastries.

All the dishes are kept in cabinets, washed every night to avoid buildup in the sink.
Pieces of silverware keep going missing.

We meet the Mother stood before the stove. A pan of bacon sizzling on high heat beneath her careful gaze. She is wearing a pink robe over a set of plaid pajamas, her slippered foot tapping against the linoleum, rhythmically, a working clock.

The mother feels her role is to sustain. Not only giving but nurturing life. An ever present god, who answers prayers promptly, and if a prayer is not made she seeks it out. Going one by one to each of her followers and asking "what's wrong?"

She has learned to fear the very things she desires.

She, too, is looking for a seven letter word for whatever names me, breaks me. However, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to find since the move. Perhaps lost amongst the boxes. Or swallowed up by the home, gone entirely.

She wants to nest.

The home, however, actively contests change. It feeds on best laid plans.

She meant to paint over the beige color on the walls in the upstairs hallway with a nice bright eggshell tone.

That was two months ago.

The cans with their bubbling white contents now rest still, like milk, spoiling in the attic.

Mother is now rushing around, setting out the perfectly crisp bacon beside a dish of pancakes and a bottle of (unbranded) syrup. There's a full spread laid out on the table. fresh fruit, glasses of juice, triangles of toast, a butter dish, and pastries laid out in wicker baskets.

Mother takes pride in her spread, the idyllic nature of it all. The perfection. She wipes her brow with a smile.

However, all we ever see anyone eat is a singular slice of toast or a banana. Perhaps the family is aesthetically fed, sustained by their mother's love. Perhaps they live because we will them to.

Perhaps food really isn't that important after all.

We imagine what it must taste like, while it actively spoils on the table

Father walks into the kitchen and finds a letter sat on the table beside a glass of freshly squeezed orange juice.

FATHER

"Damn Homeowners Association"

(He says, under his breath because, like God, the people you owe money to can hear everything)

Mother shakes her head. Agreeing.

It is quite evident that the mother is shaken by the activity within the home, by the ghost. The father has said that he would entertain a conversation, the mother simply wants an action plan. Perhaps to call someone in. divine intervention.

FATHER

I think that we're all dealing with this change in our own ways. I don't think the evidence is enough to substantiate any intervention.

The mother does not respond, she simply gives him a look.

THE LOOK

Don't patronize me as if I didn't know any better. If this persists any longer, I am calling someone. With or without your consent.

FATHER

Everything is going to be fine.

Father grabs a slice of toast, kissing his wife on the cheek, before leaving out the back door.
The conversation unresolved

Milk

Sometimes she pours the milk
She does this when she gets impatient
Or if she's in an extra good mood.
Sometimes she pours the milk, and fills the bowl with cereal. Sometimes the boy will eat it and
leave the milk, then sometimes she pours the milk into the drain.
Sometimes she makes him drink the milk.
Sometimes she pours the milk, and the cereal, and he does not eat.
Sometimes she makes him eat.
Sometimes it is late and they have to get going, so the boy doesn't have breakfast.

This is one of those mornings.

The boy- Robert- six year old son-. New still to the world but learning quickly. The inner
workings of his mind are unknown, it is uncertain which way his pendulum will swing, his
conscience still raw. Everything is painfully black and white. Like and dislike. Every flavor
achingly acquired. Despite this he remains happy. Everything he asks for he receives with only
slight restraint.

His experience showcases how shockingly simple life truly is.

The scene ends with Mother struggling to strap Robert into his car seat while he kicks along to a
song he's had stuck in his head for the past week.

(Fade out with an extended laugh track.)

Note: (The subsequent commercial shows two cavemen, their cartoon mouths contort into wide
smiles. colorful flakes filling a bowl as large as your screen. The flakes are a part of a balanced
breakfast which includes half of a grapefruit and a glass of juice (undetermined). The cavemen
give glances to the audience as if to say, Perhaps if this cereal were given to the child, he might
have eaten it)

EXT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PLAYGROUND

The scene opens on

A blacktop with a candy-colored jungle gym surrounded by mulch and swings set at varying heights. A range of small children running around, creating invisible crop circles with their footsteps.

We see Robert. Crouched, digging in the dirt on the outermost edge of the blacktop with his fingers, bitten down nails caked in mud, grass stains smearing the knees of his jeans.

He stands holding a worm, it writhes in his palm, adjusting to the cool air.

ROBERT

“Hey look what I found”

The others scoff, continuing with their own games. (Jumping rope, drawing with chalk, a never ending tag game)

Robert seems unbothered, the worm attempts to dig into the hardened flesh on his palm before it is set back onto the ground, where it blindly tries to make sense of its change of surroundings. We watch Robert continue to survey the black top for more treasures to stuff in his pant pockets. The teachers look on with the same expression one has when they see an injured animal, contemplating whether to help it or put it out of its misery.

Zoom to

The thing slithering up onto the concrete

It's lithe body remolding with each motion

it sounds like a human tongue lapping up the blacktop

If it had lungs, it would be panting

The thing lays still

Sensing rain

The ground vibrates

Heavy lumbering creatures scream above, shading the thing from the clouded sky

This was how the first men must've felt, in their primitive world

If the thing had ears, they would be bleeding

Robert is wrestling a stick from a patch of dirt (perhaps a sapling tree) when he hears a shrill scream reverberate off of the concrete, bouncing sharply off of the walls of the school building. Usually screams don't cause any alarm during recess (in all of its uncivilized wonder) but this one stops him in his tracks.

(A cosmic event)

The thing looks like spit out candy and barely moves. The girls hate it. The teacher's eyes say she couldn't care less. To be fair, it has entered the children's habitat, their territory, and they decide its fate.

Robert picks the thing up

Mucus membrane sliding between his chubby fingers

LITTLE GIRL

Screams

OTHER LITTLE GIRL

Ewww

ROBERT

What? He's not gonna hurt you

(Holds it in his palms)

(presents it to the world)

His name is Clyde

Clyde - slug, phylum mollescus - age unknown- messenger and servant - macabre and cynical-
knowing many things- fearing salt and sun.

The last thing he remembered before the darkness was the density of bodies shading him, as he leaked mucus over the blacktop. Now he was in a box, metal, cold, with latches to keep him sealed in. He wants to explore but fears this new enclosure so instead he stays put, cowering in the corner, awaiting his fate at the hands of this unknown god.

He feeds on dead things

After the noon rain showers

The birds came

To pick worms out of the mud

And drop luck all over the black top

OMENS

#1 : The broken clock reads 3:00

#2: This house has always had a bug problem. A pestilence that enters through insignificant cracks in the home's foundation. And torments.

In the summer, the family expected flies.

The fat bellied kind.

The kind that wafts sluggishly through the air

With thick buzzes and the sounds of their round bodies smacking against the window panes.

They live long enough to lay their eggs in something

Such is life

Evolution has bred them not to fear the bright yellow of the bug zapper

They've mutated to withstand the force of each shock

The electricity absorbed into their heavy bodies.

Instead the family, for a while, decided to burn them

The smoke that rose from them, meaty and hungry, dead and actively rotting

Generations destroyed by fire.

Now that it is fall the moths replace the flies, chewing on towels in the linen closet. While ants march below the counters in the kitchen. The family, terribly overrun, has resolved to kill anything they see crawling by hand.

With the primitive indifference of assassins.

#3

The Crows

When the father returns home each day he sees them. Silhouetted forms lining the rooftops.

The crows vacation here in the summer, drawn to that wet humidity that comes on the heels of a dense storm, the kind that rattles the earth.

Like a funeral congregation, the black mass gathers in solemn silence to watch the street.

Waiting.

Anticipating.

When the ghost begins its rampage again in the evening. The crows listen. You swear you could almost hear one laughing.

INT LIVING ROOM
(Touch tank)

What is the purpose of a name?

Its purpose is achingly simple
It is defined by however you use it
Or however it is used against you

The living room was once a fallacy. When the father was younger, children weren't allowed to so much as heave a sigh over its dust-busted threshold. And for as long as he inhabited his parent's home, the room remained tragically silent. An unknown and dangerous territory.

Now, in his own home, he is allowing life to occur in its designated room.

However, plastic still clings to the beige fabric lined couches both of which are punctuated by scratchy pillows that smell like wet acrylic yarn. The wooden coffee table, spotless, is wiped down daily, and every surface is garnished by fragile porcelain tchotchkes, too delicate for a child's hands, untouchable. Life is allowed to occur, but on his terms. Not quite a breaking of generational traumas, but a loosening.

For the most part, the framed pictures were Siena toned and crackled at their edges, containing ancestors, whose dark eyes, like pools, wandered the room, exacting passing judgments. There were a few frames of Christmas shoots, their bright white backgrounds blinding amongst a sea of red and green decor. Against the wall, a curio cabinet filled with heirlooms, a blending of both parent's pasts, each item caked heavily in dust.

The apparition feels this room's weight, the heaviness of it all. An oppression. She actively contests its profound unfairness, with everything inside of her.

What is the purpose of this room?

Suffocation

Paradox

Discomfort

However she understands the importance of her existence here. The disruptiveness of it all. She is tainting its waters. Mutating it. Changing its state completely.

An approximation of jewel toned hard candies line the bowl on an end table. She knocks them to the floor. They spread out, sinking into the lush carpet. A circle of salt.

In the evening, the family leaves the home empty.

The ghost invites more of its kind to disturb the land, leaving their fingerprints on the freshly polished coffee table. Tearing through the pantry. Leaving pillows laying on their sides, or strewn across the room.

They play games that involve lighting candles, the burning exciting their senses. the home watches. The smoke rests low, a warning. The candle melts quickly and the wax stains the ceramic dish it sits in an intense red. A reminder that Day by day the sun will lick that corroding skyline. Caving it in. and Soon everything will lose its form.

They feed on:

Everything

Claws scratching at the ridges on tables, tearing at the carpeting, pulling up its tufted threads, flaking off dry paint from the walls.

They smudge the windows with their fingerprints, blinding the home.

Once they have grown tired of the food in the pantry, they bring in more from outside.

Savagery:

They drink water from the tap. Quickly downing their glasses before going back for more. Consuming the body.

Evidence:

The tv screen, still warm, radiating static.

Stain on the living room rug (undetermined)

Chip bag (half empty) (opened)

Chip bag (empty)

A wallet missing a \$20 bill

The smell that lingers is warm, and greasy.

The smoke stays.

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

You are being digested. This is the house's bowel. Warm, humid almost. The radiator wheezing, varying pipes echo with the sounds of banging and water rushing from flushed toilets. This is the final step. In the evolutionary process. How does it feel to be buried? To be unseen. The light here is all false and piss yellow. The walls are aching white and everything smells of mold. How does it feel to rot? The tv down here is old and small, the picture often appears grainy, the audio disturbingly quiet. How does it feel to lose relevance? There's a cross nailed to the wall. Wishful thinking. The cross dragging the body, heavy on its meek wooden shoulders. There is a couch

Imagine it, smelling like ash and mildew, like it had been lit on fire and let out in the rain. A living heat contained within every inch of tearing upholstery

It sits in the center of the room (across from the tv) flanked by the washer and dryer.

The only solace, pushed against the wall beside the stairs...

The Apple

Screen glowing blue, another of the world's vast oceans, this one warm and teeming with organisms. All man made, pre discovered. Everything is less because it is more. Time is less so you spend more. An active economy powered by a seemingly never ending currency.

It screams whenever it turns on. The agony of existence, the howling pain of rebirth.

Overall, a massive inconvenience.

Late at night the ghost communicates

Gliding over the keyboard on the Apple, a planchette slowly crossing a board, typing something lightning quick. The white/blue light glowing the way an opened chest glitters when it contains treasure.

A picture is worth a thousand words

She paints a portrait with her posts

writing all of her musings all over her personal web page

Like a digital diary

In return she's allowed to live beautifully, unencumbered by her thoughts

While her posts age poorly

(Episode 2)

The home wept for you in your absence. The residue of its inconsolable sadness apparent in the water stains on the basement floor.

Her other ideas shirked, the mother decides to negotiate with the ghost.

Penning a contract she leaves on the kitchen table beside a dish of perfectly baked cinnamon rolls.

It remains untouched until evening.

INT ENTRYWAY EVENING

Imagine a passageway. An airway. Littered by a mess of shoes, meant to be a lineup, a lane. They pile, resting lazily wherever they landed. Taking breaks from their pairs. The very reason why all of the nice shoes are in closets somewhere. Here lie galoshes (grass stained and muddy), sneakers (worn down at the soles), snow boots (dusted in salt (desaturated)).

The coat rack bends, its spindly arms straining to bear the weight of oversized winter coats, fleeces, windbreakers, scarves, and the odd hat. A block tower, precariously stacked with balance in mind, though make no mistakes, the destiny of this structure is the fall. The great break. The toppling chaos. Though we fear the destruction, it signals a time of renewal, perhaps we may build our tower stronger and taller than it once was.

4:00

The hour was marked by a clap of thunder that shook the entire house, its musculature seizing.

The sun still shone through the clouds, which shattered like glass, particles sprinkling onto the asphalt, glittering as they made their descent.

They'd stuck a fork in the door (an old belief)

In it the spirit's reflection is distant, eyes glaring down the street.

The house welcomes the family back in with an apprehensive hug, a pat on the back that sends a shiver up their spines. It waves goodbye to a red SUV as it pulls away from its station and bounds out of the neighborhood, the orange tree sways dropping more ripe fruit to wet the grass.

Mother struggles with her son pulling him over the threshold while he babbles on (incoherently) about his day.

It is frequently asserted, in varying forms of media, that young minds, untainted, are able to commune with spirits.

Thus explains the existence of imaginary friends.

Less of a friend, the spirit and Robert often engage with one another. The spirit, hostile, Robert, intrigued and unbothered. Truth be told, he was the first to announce the haunting, but was met with disbelief.

Now the mother, acutely aware, takes note of each of his outbursts. Cataloging them.

When you write a contract you must pay attention to the fine print, the extended clauses.

The spirit is aware of this, and while she has agreed to the rules set in place by the mother. She has no intention of sticking to them.

For example: she has agreed to not be disruptive after 8 pm, however, there was never any indication as to what the mother meant by the word “disruptive”.

The mother hasn't realized this loophole yet. She remains ignorantly bliss.

Slicing strawberries

Her fingers redden

The spinning dish in the microwave slowly turning

The milk curdling

The home, basting in the post storm humidity

It's juices flowing

Down the walls

THE BOY'S ROOM

A mess of projects, started and never finished. This is where items go to disappear. A collection of natural materials and brightly colored plastic commingle. Everywhere is a tripping hazard. Expertly boobytrapped, one wrong move and you're met with the sharp edge of an overturned Lego.

A giant rug marks the center of the room. A city, with winding roads, a grocery store, a school building, and many small homes. Congested. All roads and not enough sidewalks. Art imitating life.

Robert keeps a watchful eye over his city, from the comfort of his Spiderman bedspread.

Clyde has grown to like his new habitat. He has found he doesn't have to seek out his nourishment, it finds him.

At night, while his god sleeps, he whispers in his ear, messages the boy will never understand.

The language, too ancient for human ears.

INT BATHROOM

Make no mistakes. This is an ecosystem. Organic. Bacterial and elemental. The landscape: blooming and alive.

Its existence, however, is that of constant death and rebirth.

Purified weekly by bleach, and blue toilet cleaner that foams in the drain.

And yet, life still blooms.

A resilient and hopeful world.

Like the ocean it is marked by sea shells. They fill bowls on the back of the toilet, and accent the artwork that speckles the walls.

The spirit spends most of its time before the mirror, especially in the morning. It gags at the grotesqueries: The father's beard clippings dusting the counter top, the sound of the toilet, gulping and wheezing every ten minutes.

She was told once that mirrors are portals. If she reached towards one, and her finger were to meet her reflection's, then she'd know she'd found one.

Her eyes glaze, staring at her peach painted nail, offset from its pair.

DINNER

As dusk sets in, the light turns from orange, to pink pooling across the living room floor before fading entirely.

The home stills, anticipating, salivating. Focused on the kitchen. It's stomach filled with excitement and energy.

The mother is roasting chicken and vegetables on a sheet pan, while she boils potatoes on the stovetop. Robert periodically waddles in on careful, sock-covered feet, trying not to slip on the linoleum. He sits cross legged on the floor, out of the way, but close enough to hear the faint sizzles and pops.

The mother fans herself with an oven mitt before opening a window, expelling all of the internal humidity out into the night.

Imagine it

smelling like colors. Like the dark blue of an early nightfall, the bright orange of roasted carrots, warm red Smokey heat, the deep brown of oil and leather armchairs, the beige of clean rags and old fabric couches, fresh green vegetables, and rich, earthy wines.

They eat in the dining room beneath the hazy yellow light of an old chandelier, the table dressed with hand knit place mats and aged dish-ware. The words everyone speaks float around the air like music through the wide mouth of a gramophone. They mean nothing to Robert, he lets them hit the skin surrounding his ears, never once entering or forming any coherency. Each forkful he shovels in overpowering his senses.

Beneath the table, Clyde rests, casually feeding on weak conversations, and jokes that die in the air.

The apparition doesn't eat. It sits. Stirring. Creating a storm that flurries around it.

The salt shaker rises from the table, floating in the air. The family watches. Particles of salt dust the table, the mother quickly sweeps them up, tossing them over her shoulder.

The father speaks about work, a dead-end topic, before pivoting to ask Robert if he's thinking about trying out for little league. Robert is uncoordinated. The father wants a child with athletic

accomplishments he can celebrate. Upstairs, a cheerleading competition trophy falls to the floor. The family ignores this.

The clouds the ghost created open, and her thunder resonates throughout the home.

The father responds with an empty threat.

The ghost should watch its outbursts.

Like a beast focused on its prey she watches him. The food turning cold. He glances up confidently.

A challenge.

An unspoken word lingers in the space she inhabits, 6 empty boxes. *Burden*. She challenges: Admit it. Mother contests. They both wave her away. The ghost unwavering. Admit it. He swallows it instead. Choking. Washing the last bit down with a glass of water, before starting a new topic: Politics.

A chair is thrown back from the table. The energy there recedes elsewhere. The food on its place setting, ice cold and untouched. Robert can't help but stare at the spot

It disturbs him to find no words in his immediate vocabulary to describe how the ghost is feeling.

If only he knew

She feels exactly the same.

A scream is emitted from the bowels of the home.

Plague

When Robert is sick. Everything shifts. The home, in all of its resilience, quakes. Robert, like most small children, is not just a child who happens to be sick, he is an incubator. Once his fever has broken, the plague is unleashed, to ravish the home. All the while, his small, unassuming form, sits on his bed, feet tucked beneath him, sipping on a glass of Ginger Ale (the miracle medicine)

MILK 2

Today

The milk doesn't make it

Into the bowl

The milk stays

NOURISHER

Mother ends up alone, at the grocery store. At some odd hour of night. They don't necessarily need any more food. But her mind was racing. She had to go somewhere. She rattles by a lineup of gumball machines, staring mindlessly at their pastel colored treats, and the Redbox Movie rental kiosk before entering the fluorescent paradise. There are few shoppers left, spread out from each other, like someone's warned them about getting too close. The intense white of the store sets off the deep black night lurking beyond the windows. The music is low, like white noise guiding her through the space. Most aisles are empty. And she floats through, dazed. There's a darkness to the freezer section. A liminality. She shivers. Internalizing each unit's deep iciness.

She reminds herself

With each carton of orange juice and container of organic strawberries she's feeding

A family of four

And the economy

A pint of chocolate ice cream is leaking into the cart where it contaminates the spring onions

The frozen snap peas slowly melt

She is feeding

A family of four

and the economy

A voice over the intercom says

Canned Corn is 20% off

She turns her cart around and heads to the canned food aisle

She is saving

20%

A family of four

And the economy

At checkout she puts a penny in the donation slot

She is saving

20%

A family of four

The economy

And a sick child

She doesn't remember driving home. She wakes up the next morning to make breakfast.

MILK 3

Today the milk doesn't make it into the bowl again

Instead it hits the floor

Soaking into the tile

Consumed

The home growing stronger

It's Teeth and bones harden

THE PARENTS ROOM

It smells deeply like the inside of a church. Like sharp scented oils, strong perfume, sandalwood cologne, polished wood and profound holiness. This room was simple. A place to sleep. Or to read before one falls asleep. A place to begin or end conversations that had either made their way from or will find their way to the dining room.

Mother put a sifter under the bed, to keep the ghost out.

It worked. Mostly because there was nothing across the room's hallowed border that she wanted.

When she takes, she does so deliberately. Everything in this room remarks back to a time before even her primal conception. It disgusts her.

Even within the comfort of their sanctuary, they can hear the home breaking beneath her.

HER VESSELS

Sometimes when the mother's alone she screams into empty jars of pasta sauce. The sound muffled as though submerged beneath the sea. The jar remarks on this. This deep message, and it carries it. She keeps all of the empty jars in the cupboard, because she might have a use for them someday. this is the use

She leaves messages at the bottom of Robert's lunch box. The soggy napkin is always reading "I love you so much, enjoy!" with a smiley face. Everyday the napkin is thrown out with the crusts on his sandwich and all of his veggies. She knows that someday he'll grow to miss these messages, growing nostalgic for a time when she took the extra effort to write them, that is why she continues.

ABNORMALITIES

The cat:

You see the cat, his languid belly grazing the hardwood floor, bathing in the early morning sun peering into the entryway. Particles of his orange fur waft through sunbeams alongside blood-swollen mosquitoes. Unalert, he watches you the same way humans watch the television screen, with tired, unblinking eyes.

He belongs broadly to everyone's children, who pet him heavily, dragging their warm, sticky fingers over his lustrous mane. He's learned to deal with it. Biting and scratching leads to punishment. He's used to being in the wrong. But here, in this silence, he's the ruler of his domain. A great beast laying in the warmed grasses of the Sahara, lean stomach protruding from a large, gamey meal.

Breaking from his daydream he wonders idly if Cerberus ever got the spray bottle.

FAST FOOD COMMERCIAL

From humble beginnings. Think of the gas station, where it all began.

The one with the glowing sign you could see from the highway.

Caught in that evening traffic, a blocked lung, cars wheezing forward.

Imagine Arcadia.

(a hollow cavity where the heart should be)

(An absurdity)(to be in paradise)

Up close the arches are less gold and more tooth yellowed.

They've manipulated your senses to make you feel hungry. Despite the fact that you've already eaten, and your car is low on fuel. But the creatures, the ones plastered on the windows, with their wide smiles, They beckon you. now you're walking through the doors of the fast food establishment, Or floating more so. Dreamlike. When you're dropped inside your shoes slip against the soaking wet linoleum floors. Senses assaulted by the warring scents of Pinesol and grease frying. The overpowering sounds of Kool aid stained children With Salt lick fingers Fussing around the playpen like animals at the zoo. The sign to their enclosure reading:

Bobby and Paulina

Homosapien

Caution : sticky

You order your meal and wait by a crumb coated counter.

When you leave, that warm bag pressed against your chest feels like comfort and smells like ketchup. You pull back onto the highway. The traffic hasn't eased. You lurch home.

CAKE

The woman is trying

To bake a cake.

Her hair is tied back, her sleeves rolled up over her elbows. The front of her apron is covered in flour, almost too much flour, like she fell in it. Showered in it. Imagine it, the way it coats like fresh snow. She holds the bowl in her arms, swaddled like a newborn baby, her face contorting as she struggles to mix its contents with a wooden spoon. With each labored stir she imparts a piece of herself. Until she is spent. A mess of skin hanging loosely against weak bones, in turn a sum of her own ingredients.

The product, in all of its decadence, a collection of iced white tiers, bejeweled with rock candy. She presents the consummation of her suffering to her family on a glass tray (cake as an offering to god).

They recommend that she use a stand mixer next time.

THE CAR

A car pulls into the gas station, it sits alone in the empty lot beside a machine that stopped working a little over a few months ago. Evening weighs down on the station, the sign over the bodega blinks apprehensively, a dim white glow in the summer jaundiced air.

Stillness for a moment and yet you imagine movement inside of the vehicle, you can do nothing but imagine, the windows tint only reflects the sun and landscape. The engine revs, imagine a majestic stallion, kicking up onto its back legs, before rushing off into the sunset. The car speeds off. We follow it through the desert as triumphant western music plays.

It remarks on ancestry

If your ancestors were alive when cars like this were invented, they would probably find them pretty cool.

Through the dust and sand, the car stays perfectly shiny and new.

Something has to precede a haunting

It is the effect

A displacement

An ambush

An attempted eviction

A Voiding of the contaminants

In this case a willful unexistence

A willful disturbance

It is the will of the ghost that causes the haunting

She molds in and out of existence fighting with it

With the space she inhabits

Imagine her

Non corporeal

Yet Sickeningly physical

One clear night the mother stands before the lair

Are you scared the door seemed to ask

No she says

Liar

Then in an instant the door opens for her, the door giving way.

The place hot and damp

She sidesteps the laundry bin (overflowing with clothes)

Finally, She opens the drapes, pulling up the window pane to let the silver coated moonlight in. It illuminates the dust particles in the air and fine strands of hair that float amongst them. Like the stars entering the room through the cracked window

The den cools

The spirit shifts in the darkness. And something stirs within her.

The next day the mother will do two loads of laundry

(Episode ???)

The spirit stomps awkwardly down the stairs. Footsteps shaking. A nervous energy abounds.

MOTHER

My goodness, that looks lovely on you

From the stairway The girl sighs, rolling her eyes before glancing down quickly at the dense ruffled fabric at her waist. Her homecoming dress. She feigns disinterest in it all. But secretly internalizes the compliment.

MOTHER

(Pulling something from her pocket)

Take them

(dangling the keys before her face.)

The girl feels her eyes glaze, traveling deeper into the light where it glinted off of the metal.

GIRL

Why

Mother doesn't like the question, but the girl doesn't know how to take it back. So instead she wraps her fingers around them feeling the teeth dig into her skin. Perhaps she is squeezing too tight. She'll have an imprint.

When the mother gives, she does so deliberately.

She returns home later in the night. Her eyes swollen. She doesn't want to talk about it.
Instead, she waits outside, the autumn air stippling her exposed skin. The tulle on her skirt,
matted.

The girl fades in and out of understanding with the world around her
The home shines the porch lights brighter
Like a lighthouse over the inkwell ocean
Letting her know, In a way
It understands her perfectly

Time is so terrifyingly perpetual
Though someday it's function will end
It's meaning
It'll still remain, the hands still turning.
Unlike time some things must come to an end

This

For example
Could go on forever
Even past its expiration date
But like most living organisms
This too will start to turn
To stink with decay
Like the rose bush, unwatered, flaking away
Or Boxes,
Their softened cardboard continuously rotting in the garage

Someday archeologists will study what we've left behind with gloved hands
Do you ever wonder what they'll say?
What they'll write in textbooks?

When she sits out on the front step, rainwater soaks through her skirt
Her legs growing numb in the cold air
The wind moves through her
whistling between the hollows in her bones
Behind her, the home shivers, warming itself
And when it whispers it says
This never belonged to you
But what ever did

What ever has

The things we grasp are merely borrowed
Allowing us to own them for a moment

A light clicks on in the kitchen
And she follows it
As night begins to swallow the neighborhood,
The cars on the street beyond sighing home, and The embankment overlooking the river rushing,
carrying with it downed branches, and styrofoam cups.

In a moment silence will overtake us all
Or at least the idea of silence
The refrigerator will still hum
The birds will still sing

The show ends.
The screen fades to black.