

Breeze

There is a breeze.

Coming from the slim gap in my bedroom doorway.

I don't sleep much. Never had the talent for it. Sometimes, I stare at my window and the blinds are shut but I can imagine the vast darkness, my street covered by a thin sheet of gloom, making the familiar sights look distorted and altered. Sometimes, I look up at my ceiling for so long and forget to anchor myself to my mattress, and I float in the dissonance between awake and asleep. Sometimes, I'll close my eyes and watch the black behind my eyelids turn to swirling colors and shapes, breathe and look at the forms warping and changing before me. But, above all that, I don't sleep.

This time, before I turned off the light, I forgot to close my bedroom door.

I got under the covers, and the cover of darkness spread over me. I lay flat on my back and closed my eyes. I watched the strange kaleidoscopic pictures appear to soothe me while I drift in semi-consciousness, but this time there is a breeze.

There is a breeze coming from my bedroom doorway.

I rub my cold feet together under the duvet and ponder if I should get up to close the door. It's not far, just a few steps away. I close my eyes again.

There is a breeze coming from the doorway.

The shapes disappear and all I see is the abyss of night. My eyes are still closed. I can't see, but I can hear. I can hear my steady breaths, calm and rhythmic. I can hear the faint sound of a car pass by. I can hear my breathing, slow and steady. I can hear the covers shift as my chest rises and falls, rises and falls. I can hear my breathing. I hear breathing.

There is a breeze coming from the doorway.

I hear it breathing.

I hear the breeze breathe. It breathes, not rhythmically, but fast and trembling, like a startled rabbit, like it ran miles just to chill my skin. It gasps, stutters and the door's maw groans further agape.

I stop breathing. There is a breeze coming from the door's jaws.

And it's talking to me.

At first, a whisper, a pitiful cry. I can barely hear it. It gasps yet again. Finally, it gets out a word.

It greets me. A hushed bellow, soft and shy. It embraces my cheek and it's sharp claws of winter drag against my skin. It calls again, as if asking for an invitation. I keep my eyes closed and listen further. It steps inside, through the threshold, with a wide stride and the room chills.

The breathing has calmed to a clumsy beat one would hear a heart pump to. Finally, I feel it. A dip in my mattress beside me.

Another caress and the air whispers, sings and calls.

It wants me to see it. To feel it and breathe it.

“Look at me,” it voices desperately.

I keep my eyes closed and my body is calm and still. The breeze cries of loneliness, the breeze constricts and squeezes me. I feel it’s melancholy and sorrow.

“Tell me what you see,” it begs, “Tell me what I look like.

Look at me.”

I keep my eyes closed, watching the void grasp my sight and hold it tight. I feel the grief turn to anger, rage. I feel my body shiver and sweat like a feverish nightmare.

“Please, look at me,” it beseeches like a sad wretch. It demands, furiously, like a devil in disguise.

The needle-like claws sting on my face. I feel cold looming over my body. I try to open my eyes, but nothing happens. I struggle, choke but nothing happens. I hear the breathing speed up, like a mad dog, a rabid one.

It shrieks a piercing, horrible scream.

“Look at me!”

My eyes fly open.

There is nothing.

A thud, and the door is closed shut.

I hear birds chirping. I feel the warmth of day seep through the blinds. I open my eyes,

And yet there is nothing.

Only the wide, endless chasm of night.