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Hidden Treasure

Tom Stockley
St. John Fisher College

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Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"They've started again. Their yelling gets louder and her mother throws a vase at the wall. It explodes with a shattering crash. Her father has come home from O'Leary's, reeking of whiskey and stale cigarette smoke, and her mother has spent her time awaiting his return with more than a few gin and tonics. As they begin to scream accusations and threats back and forth, she retreats into the linen closet once again. It's quiet in the linen closet. It's double the size of any other closet in their flat, with many blankets and towels to muffle their drunken screams."

Cover Page Footnote

This prose is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1992/iss1/20
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“How could you” and “Don’t you dare call him” and worse grow quieter and quieter as she retreats farther and farther back. It’s safe in the back of the closet. Soon, she enters into her own world. The piles of blankets become the columns outside her Southern plantation, while Teddy doubles as Rhett Butler. “Why, I do declare!” she drawls in her best imitation of Scarlett O’Hara, a towel wrapped around her head to emulate Scarlett’s auburn tresses, “As God is my witness, I shall never go hungry again!” This poignant moment is broken only when she hears the telephone being ripped out of the wall.

She then transforms her safe haven into the Old West, with herself as Annie Oakley. Now, Teddy is her faithful sidekick as she rides a makeshift horse made from two musty suitcases. As she rides into town, the people scatter for fear of falling victim to her wrath. She dismounts and says, “High noon. Be there,” to her arch-enemy, Black Jack from Dodge City. As Black Jack is raising his rifle, the Christmas tree in the parlor is being ripped down, and a cacophony of broken glass and broken dreams reverberates through the apartment.

She changes her locale to the South Seas, and becomes stranded on a deserted isle. She makes a shelter from the tropical storms out of garment bags and a vacuum cleaner, which truly could pass for a palm tree in the dim light. As a gale howls outside, she hides in her hut and makes coconut soup for her supper. Their screams are her storm, and the bolt of lightening occurs when her mother crashes to the floor, the recipient of another of her father’s staggering blows.

With that, the flat grows suddenly quiet. As if awakening her from a dream, she can hear the church bells down the street faintly tolling the hour. She knows that, very soon, she will go into the parlor and find her mother passed out on the overstuffed sofa and her father sprawled across the mottled green carpet. She knows that she will then find the faded afghan to cover her mother with, and the crocheted pillow to place under her father’s head. Then, she will pick up the Christmas tree and salvage what she can, and try to put a little order back into the disarray that once was their living room. And tomorrow morning, she will awaken early and brew fresh coffee for her father’s hangover and prepare an ice-pack for her mother’s black eye. She knows she will do all of this tonight, and on the many nights like it that will follow. But for now, she stays in the closet, and soon she becomes Bluebeard, Terror of the Seven Seas, sailing off to find fame and fortune...