

The Kill One

by Kim Chinquee

But they still listened to devotions, and now they prayed the way they were supposed to. The eldest girl kept her eyes open, looking at her sister, studying her jaw line, wondering why she hadn't noticed earlier how it was so much different than anyone else's in their family. It was sharp, with an under-bite that the orthodontists were trying to fix.

Now the girls and their mom all said the words, "Our Father," and then they recited the Commandments, and the kill one was the one that always got her, this girl who was the eldest, like anyone would have to have a rule, or that anyone would have to remind themselves daily not to kill, and it sounded silly for her now to have to recite it, and just the fact that she'd recited it every day of her life seemed like such a waste of time, and how much time had she actually totally wasted, and oh man, what a chore, and she did this every day for the rest of her life, the kind where you wonder if it will be OK now.

The Weight of the Boot

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The ferry had been reckless. I had a stateroom, and lying flat was the only way I didn't feel like helium, booms escaping from my eardrums. My twin had

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known the ferry, calling it relaxing, the boat soothing in its rock. She'd met a man, played bingo, won a sailor's hat, a pretzel and a corn dog. She brought me a brochure. She'd pick me up on her end and we'd have some time. We'd drink our many cocktails, and then we'd sing.

My sister had to take her cast off to come and get me, then she handed over the keys and said she had to stop for meat on the way. She put her boot back on, and she walked slow, her bad foot thumping with the weight of the boot.

We drank the six-pack and I drove us to the place she was house-sitting. It was a big house, with duck paintings, a cat named Angel, and posterboards left over from a wedding. I fed the plants and flowers, which made my eyes water. The bride looked more like my sister than I did. The girl looked familiar. I thought maybe I knew her.

My sister said she had to vacuum. She went along the carpets. I emptied the litter, but couldn't find the cat. The answering machine kept beeping, and my sister's boot was thumping. I studied the posters. After searching the cupboards, I made my sister soup with alphabet pasta. We slurped, spilling our names.

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