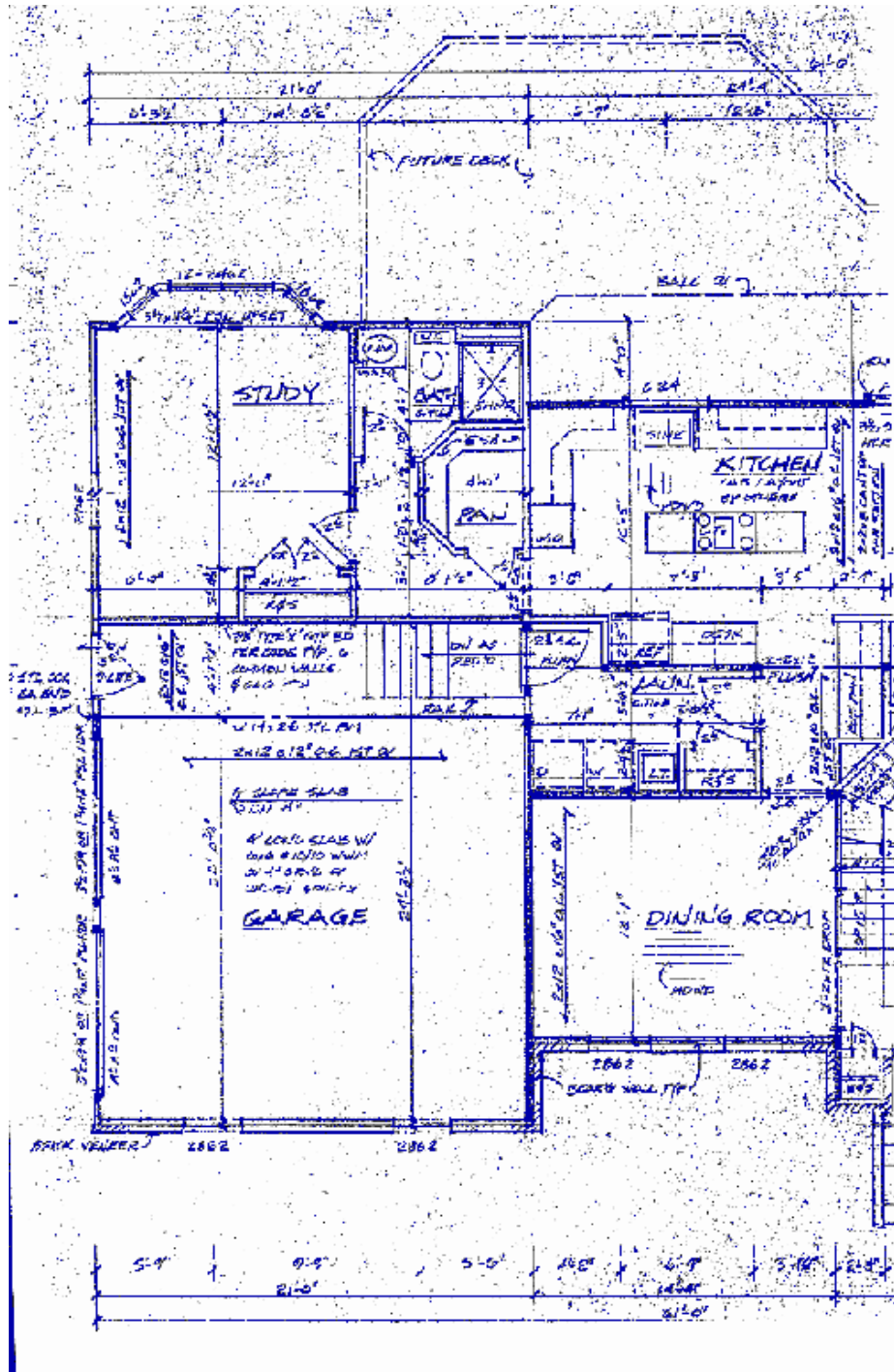


ghosts spiders & dogs

Logan Ryan Smith



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DETUMESCENCE #3

canceled
the steps left
the right house
back in

gone to the door
for

angel-hounds
that find me my teeth in an old yellow pail
give them me
give them here into the house

my face is like a gasmask backwards on
into and around a moat-like circling

I've got crocodiles in my pajamas

my head is clouded

the secret here is that these dogs are barking
and what they mean

is that
bark

gone with the turn of the style into the architecture that feeds me

we'll build the tallest buildings
so high up where they'll never find us like a beanstalk

I smell like an American

I'll move around in

American motion left me my house

the backyard

the swings that swing in the motionless air are giving me my ghosts
the ghosts sift my hair because they say they're in love with me
and I'm needy

the grass has grown out so much it has spiders
and the spiders have spiders
and the webs weaved are growing green in all the blood

simple and momentous the hounds hound me

they have black eyes and black teeth
they're hairless and they eat my teeth
they hold my teeth
at the side of their stomachs
and one by one they cough them up
into the backyard dirt
and grow an army of themselves

from the soil they sprout

where the grass hides the spiders only too well and
the webs are sticky on my face and in my mouth
my mouth is so full of tiny spiders that my eyes
are in my mouth

little eggs
that taste like salt and feel like burlap
that covers my face some nights the hounds
are barking outside my house because it is night and it is day
and they are always barking
even when they've gotten inside my
house when I've left the front door open or these ghosts
forget to lock the door
after combing my hair
and stroking my neck
they move lightly over the carpet
and get nothing dirty but the blood they leave
all over my clothes and at the corners of my eyes and mouth

I am nothing like them
but they are exactly like me

*oh the grass has green blood
oh the grass has blue blood
oh the grass has grey blood
and I've never*

*met
anyone*

quite like this before

*they hold the spiders in their chests and tell
the dogs to be quiet and build my house up
from the dirt they sprout the grass and refuse
to cut the grass the grass they can hear
speaking to the spiders and the spiders they
say the spiders are there to talk to the dogs
they have their reason and their webs are
something my teeth are made from I'm always
sticking in my own words and when I kiss my
tongue attaches to her and she can never leave
until she cuts my tongue from her mouth and
I'm left to bleed and can't talk anymore for
the stump that moves around is small in my
mouth and can make no sound the ghosts
massage my broken tongue and promise me
my teeth will be with me forever this
architecture this endless hounding of barking
and snarl the shadows over my house are only
seven seconds long and I didn't make any of
them*

the roundness of the moon
tonight
has three full circles of light
around it and it tells me to sing
it says:

Logan I have brought you here
to hear you sing
and make you bleed

I bleed before I sing
and hum to the moon's delight I hum
with the faucets that hum back

and we talk
about
the time
I broke
a pipe
over my face
and became
quite ugly
uglier than
they could have
guessed

and people have a hard time entering my house
they exist and push my doorbell button and ask me questions

but never come in

they say they have something for me
but the hounds scare them away and I
have three of their legs and I am
collecting their teeth in case
I lose my own I have a Hefty bag
of hair in case I lose my own I have
an IV of their breath and remember
everything they say

I am ready to ask the spiders for their help

there are 3,000,00 of them with little red backs they walk on
me while I sleep and live in my calve muscles and biceps and work
on my tongue like little musicians
they have the crickets serenade them
and the crickets do as the spiders say and the spiders say to me:

I have come here in
this number
because you could
never count me
I have a second life and a third
but not a fourth
and I will never be a ghost
and love you

I'll bleed you your mouth

I have no way out of my house
that has only one story
and two exits

the front and the back

the wood's began to talk to me lately about the way the ghosts
have taken advantage of me
so I start fires not to listen
I hold my ears
against my head
and hit the walls with my teeth
I have three teeth left and can barely eat
this is my house
I feed the hounds and they bleed
I count the spiders and I bleed
my stomach is full of her tongue
I scratch my eyes to the bark
a rhythm that goes:

I've got you
I've got you
I've got
to get you out of my neck

I collect all extra pieces of skin
under my fingernails
hold myself
and wash with blood

I have red hair from all the washing
and nobody loves me but them

collecting all the sound I shell my ear
I shuck my ear
I carve an extra hole in my head so that I can hear

I want to hear what the crickets say when I am not asleep

I understand them in my sleep

they have long legs and I think they remind me of women

at bars

who are drunk all the time and playing and spiteful

that the ghosts have my hands

they've taken them because I said they can

they have crossed my fingers for me behind my back

the ghosts ride around the city on the metro system and tell me everything
that's happening out there and it always makes me vomit blood

they clean it up and bring me washcloths
for my beaten face

I'm always black and blue
when I forget my ghosts

and leave my house

I talk to everybody for two seconds and try to make love to them all

and they hate me under the lamplight

they hate me in the street where they eat their own shit and cum and fight
for the right to walk a crooked line

the spiders are crawling
again

listen

the sound is barely
there

there

it's all coming in closer and there is no way of knowing

how many this time

they have begun to grow in the wall amongst the ears

and sometimes when they don't hurt

I'm glad for them

I have to talk sometimes although it hurts and my hair needs brushing
and my tongue needs a little tickle
to remind
me
what I'm like

this blood on my tongue
this little nub
that's growing black as the spiders
begin to lay their eggs again
behind my eyes

and I don't mind

when my eyes are pounding
the pounding
can be louder
than the hounds that I've heard
all my life

the backyard swing
it disappears
the slide
is no longer
taller
than me
my mouth
is so gloriously
full of teeth
I have
everything I
need
this house
I can never
leave
my castle
in a cloudy
city
sky
I see
the spiders
weave
a web below
they've learned
their English
well
they quote
only
television
and say
hello
more often
than not
the hounds
stand on
the backs
of each other
I'm higher
in the sky
American
and spiderless
the skin
I have is clean
I taste no blood
it's sweet
how I can breath
up here
the clouds
look up
to me
the sounds
are all fading

my face is not bleeding
I can be beautiful
I can sing
I sing again
and again
and again

before the barking begins
and my face falls to the floor and I step
on it watch my nose go flat
and I can't breathe
the spiders crawl into my ears
and the dogs eat my teeth

I am simply
awake
all the time

while the ghosts touch
each other
I see pale light move and bend
and they make love
tell me
to avert my eyes
they call me forth
and pull me in and I can kiss
them all over
my mouth goes white with them
goes so white that my tongue begins to move in them
and grow
up
inside along and wind through each and all
and they move all over me until I cry
I watch them leave
and talk for me
to all the city streets of homeless people
smoking against the end of the night
where my fists have found
the sound
of the spiders into the carpet I burn my hands rubbing them

I catch three and four spiders and they bite

I have little red holes all over my hands
and around my chest

these holes will never go away
nor make me hear any better

in my eyes

this is the life there where the hound lives
in my backyard

I've made him a little house
of his own

the architecturally correct and perfectly weatherproof
wooden

hound-house

where the angel-hound resides

his claws have my teeth

he never barks and brushes away the rest of the dogs
some nights

sometimes

but not their bark

*I just can't
get you
out of my
head*

I just can't get you

my tongue it has a mind of its own
and moves inside the ghosts
around the town
and tells these girls I've never known that I love them
and tells these girls I've been inside before that I love them
and tells the bartender that I've never spoken to before
that I love
and I love the bloody way my teeth float in her jar behind the bar
next to the head of the man who talks too much
and questions me
from inside the fish tank
the bubbles moving
over
his
head

he says:

I'll drown if you don't speak

I can't talk
it's not
me

it's the ghosts and these hounds I have at my feet

they say they've read Dante and forget where they meet

they have three legs and two tails and are pissing most of the time

they spit and they talk and they sit upright in chairs

I thought I had wings but it was the ghost in the city

sifting my hair combing my hair collecting my hair in its soft hands

I ask them for my teeth

and I'm scared

when they bark
and laugh
at me

they bark and pretend and hold my hand

they bark and forget that that's what keeps me inside

I have built everyone a house

but not all will live in them

I'm not good at holding up all the walls

I am bleeding from the spider bites
breaking out in hives

and cannot sleep

 the crickets keep using the telephone
 to call me
they ask me to pay for their medication
 and that I should pick them up
at three in the morning
from so-and-so's house

 I have no patience for this kind of calling
I am a religious man
and moral

I break my hand every time I pray

I count all the stars in day and watch how the moon comes up

 I have watched the moon beat

I have heard the moon sweetly say I have been here watching
and I can swallow all this with the tide

 the crocodiles in my pajamas
are beginning to prowl

I want to make love and talk about love and stop the bleeding
and make the spiders love me
and have the ghosts call me and hold me more often than they will

I feel the pulse in the root of one of my three teeth

it throbs all through my head
and makes my neck go thirsty

the barking is outside now and telling me it's 12:30

I have to watch something or read but cannot sing

my tongue is no lizard tongue and cannot lick the stones

take
this
for
all
the
blood
be-
hind
the
eyes
that
watch
this
take
it
from
them
and
call
me

give me the time
I've got to go in
give me the time it's only ten
give me the time where have you been
I did not expect to be waiting so long
I thought I heard the dogs stop
and I was stepping onto the front porch
and my tongue
I thought
was growing back
and I could see a doctor
about all of this
could ask him to put his stethoscope
around my neck
and remember where my hands are
that my teeth
have nothing
to do with
him
and he could remind me
that I'm filthy and covered in
blood
and tell me whose this is
who this belongs to
I couldn't remember
the ghosts never tell me
but they tell me they love me
they make love
like I remember
and it is
the only time
in the night
that I can remember
and the ears
are falling
off the wall
by
the
dozen
covering me
they're sticky
they hinder me and tie me down
I think they're here to hear and bind me down
for the second coming
of America
and outside I hear
the barking
outside
I see twelve homeless people building a statue
of hounds and they are
making them
beautiful

I have never swallowed my eyes
nor more than this

I have bitten back only when I could

some hounds have three holes in their hind quarters

spots about their neck where I took a stethoscope

and told them
to please
leave me alone

but when the spiders came and distracted me

I took out a mortgage and began to save up against all this

I had a plan to stop my teeth from floating in someone else's jar

thought I could buy them back
before
they could eat them again
cough into the ground
and make more of what it is that frightens me
and keeps me awake

this night I have the moon in my arms

this night the moon sings me songs
and romances me
endlessly

and dances all over the place
like we were crazy and in love and nineteen again

the moon does not remember

the moon has a hard time remembering anything

but how to pull in
push out

the moon makes me sing more often than not

and watches

counts the droplets
of spit
against the droplets
of blood and pieces of muscle
that leave
me
each time

before they can be collected by the ghosts
in buckets
I used to keep the mop
in

before they can collect them
and push them together
and swallow them

and kiss me
kiss me

hold me and kiss me
and hold my ears against the barking

it's getting louder
though
and so their kisses
get harder
and rougher
and my lips are tearing
they are ripping
they are separating from my face
and I must pray
again
I must ask god to beg the hounds to stop
I must ask god to make the kisses soft
I must ask god
to break my neck

over the coals
and not let
anyone
forget the sound
it
made

but I will not
I'll continue for the counting of the stars
and I'll make the spiders
weave me sweaters
for the winter that comes

and talk to the doctor over the phone
get the medicine for the crickets' lovers

and call my **mom** and say hello **mom** hello I forgot you were ever there **mom** how are you **mom** I did not remember you **mom** I hear the hounds **mom** how bout you **mom** do the dogs collect outside your house **mom** do you build them houses and try to be their friends do you pet them and play tug of war with your tongue and think they stole your teeth **mom** how've you been **mom** I think I'm more scared than I've ever been but they are building the tallest buildings in the world **mom** and I will move there when they have them and live in the sky with god far up too high **mom** from where the hounds hide and the spiders can't crawl but also where the ghosts fly and circle round **mom** do you have ghosts have you seen my ghosts **mom** I don't think I told you about them and how they call up all the loves of my past and bark at them and yell at them telling them they stole my teeth bitch put them back you singer you cipher how they try to take them from me **mom** has this ever happened to you have you had to protect everything you had while holding your ears inside your head **mom**?

they are smoking crack
on the street
because they
understand me
and they
take my money
they take my money and put it in little bags
and scream at the sky
the sky
there where and when it goes red
and the thunder claps
and it rains and hurricanes in Florida

but where I'm at

there is a limbo to everyone's breath

we are all holding it so tightly in anticipation

this participation is voluntary

and sincere

we are all willing to die in the waiting out of it

crack

crackle

pop

bonfire night where the hounds are only shadow

and circle the

beach

and sing for the moon

and fill my mote

my house is not on a hill but in a neighborhood surrounded

by other houses

their houses are different than my house

but the same

they have

a front door

and a back

they have a garage that they can't use
and they have windows that they close

these people are not like me

they are beautiful
and their faces never shatter

are not black and blue

they are shining and it makes me vomit blood to be so happy

it makes me happy

and the ghosts don't talk to them

so I don't get jealous

but they can walk along the city street without falling down

and I want them to be clowns

I want them to fly right up into the sky and explode like firecrackers

I expect they won't but will sleep tonight in their own beds

and in their own houses

I have a house

and someone else built it

they left it so that ears would grow out of it
and the swings would move
in the backyard
for no reason
and spiders could breed
in my mid-section
and make it
impossible
for me to ever
have children
whose names I'd already
picked out
and lost

and I've forgotten
how to
make love

there is a celebrity in this somewhere
and that will make me famous

there is a kind of dog in here that is tame

I'm looking for it
and calling my mother to remind me
who my sister is
who has cats
and enjoys them
even their hair

my face
is
covering
itself
in
blood
because
I am crying
for
history
and I
don't
know
how
to
make
it
stop

hound-
found-
sanctuary

hound-
bound-
and-lovely

hound-
sound-
ed-holy

hound-
ground-
are-many

hound-
headstone-
graveyard-
heavy

hound-
black bone-
burnt-
and-wary

hound-
in-
sound-
bites-
has-
me-
by-
the-
teeth-

forever I am baptized in the drool of hungry dogs

I make it easy for them to feel righteous and sanctified

I dip my head before their red gums and pull their lips back over their faces

my face is covered by them

we share a brother
somewhere
back
when

this all began

we hate to admit it when we have more mothers

and we have a pulse

there in the dirt
watch it move up
watch it move down

there's always something there but
this horror is fulfilled and lovely by it

and in my house
the architect sits

he tells me I am American

he is simple and faceless

and I like him

he has a pencil and some paper

I ask him to write this down

it's time to cut the grass
the spiders have had their share and their say

now it's time to swallow

and when the dogs bark
I get hard and scared and turn on the faucets
to remember how I look
and forget how I looked
and to be a mirror to the sound
before the ghosts come
and take my tongue

and go to my relatives and tell them
I am not theirs
but theirs
and that the blood
that covers me
is not theirs
that the blood
that spills
from each eye
all night
while I sleep
is not theirs
because they do not
and will not
drink
from
my eyes

and when the ghosts don't clean me up
is when
the hounds come in
and lick my face

it tickles

and I laugh

and I forget