

# Story 1

## Prospecting

From his cupboard vantage point, the boy sees the following:

There is an oak table. It is enormous. On its enormous, unstained surface there are two plates, covered in thick dust, like somebody was going to eat dust for dinner. Maybe it is a house that belonged to a family of vacuum-cleaners. The boy imagines a vacuum-cleaner family, a mother-vacuum and a father-vacuum and a little baby-vacuum. The baby-vacuum clings to its parents with its baby-vacuum-hose, making baby-vacuum-sucking-noises. It is a bad habit.

In the corner there is a spider. It is disgusting. It is the kind of spider that gets put into scary spider movies, like *Arachnophobia*, in order to scare an audience. It is the kind of thing the boy sees in his nightmares.

It is eating some kind of a large winged insect, twining around it, slowly slowly, until all that is left is a ball of spider silk hanging from a thread, like some kind of a piñata.

The boy has seen a piñata, just the other day. He has gone, uninvited, to Susan Campbell's birthday party and sat in a bush and watched while the children had tortured a colourful llama, beating it with sticks until it bled rainbow-coloured drops of blood, stuffing those drops into their eager mouths.

Nobody had seen him.

Nobody sees him.

There is a stick here too. It is propped by the door at a suggestive an-

*Prospecting*

gle. It suggests that the boy go hiking, dragging a heavy bag up a mountain while his mother begins to fall behind him, slowly slowly, until finally he is walking on his own. He will set out into the wilderness in search of a Fine Plot of Land. He will stake his claim and build a cabin. He will grow cherry trees and creeping vines on trellises. He will have a big, furry dog and a cellar full of wine.

He will exit the cupboard and walk behind the house to pee.

Behind the house, the boy sees a hole in the ground. It is a badger hole. While he pees, the boy wonders if there is a badger inside. The boy is a badger. He eats insects and grubs and earthworms. He Protects his Territory. The boy finishes peeing and goes back inside.

By the door, there is a coat-hanger. It is covered in old people's clothing. The people are probably dead. The boy hangs his coat with the other coats, so that they can get to know each other. He says "I'm home!" to the empty room and waits for a reply.

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