

Jimmy and the Ark

by J.A. Pak

"You promised, Jimmy. Mommy got you a surprise just like she said so you're going to stay in your room all night and be good. No coming downstairs. No running around screaming. No spoiling the party."

He doesn't like the surprise: Noah and the ark. With animals. He'd like a real boat, real animals, confusion, battles, hyenas chasing rabbits, dogs chasing cheetahs, lions chasing everyone—like on t.v. He flips his finger, the flat wooden pairs tumble like dominoes. He hears his mother scampering downstairs, her high-pitched "Well, hello there!" He runs to the stairwell, takes a peek. His mother points a finger at him. He runs along the landing, back and forth, back and forth, the noise inside his heart slowly filtering up, up, up—"ahahahahahahAhAhAHAHAH—"

"Jimmy! That's it! I'm taking your surprise away!" "NOOO!" "Yes!" "NOOOO!" "You going to behave?"

"Yes." He holds the ark, grabs fistfuls of animals. HIS.

"I'm warning you, Jimmy. I'm not going to tolerate any more of your shi—stuff!"

Yes, he'll be quiet. Very quiet. He rocks himself, the ark, suddenly imagining water underneath him, over head, all around. Water, water, water—God said let there be water. Water. Jimmy runs to the bathroom. He can hardly wait until the water comes to the top. In goes the ark—glub, glub, glub, glub—down it goes. In goes Noah, Mrs. Noah, in goes animals. They're alright—they float! They don't need the boat. Jimmy plunges his face in the water, blows violent bubbles, animals percolating, his hands now crashing waves and waves and waves, the ark suddenly rocketing out of the water like a missile.

"I knew I heard the tub running! Jimmy, what are you—Fucking shit, Jimmy—there's water everywhere! What the fuck have you been doing?"

God said let there be water.

He was dragged off to bed.

