

Ghost Story

by Epiphany Ferrell

Of course I should lock my door, though I don't know that locks would keep any of them away. They'd find some hole in my feeble and half-hearted defenses. They find their way to me down the paths of the winds. They come to wipe themselves from my memory, but that, of course, is impossible. In this place, we are bound together, the long line of men who have killed me, and I.

This one was sitting on the couch when I came walking out into the living room. I didn't see him until I'd turned on the lamp. He was slow to respond when I pulled up a chair to join him. The faint sound of a faraway train's whistle and beneath it, even more faintly, the clicking of wheels on tracks, drifted in through the open window.

They come to me in the mists, insubstantial and fleeting, wanting forgiveness, wanting me to forget so they could forget too, so they could pass on with nothing holding them here. So often, there is nothing to forgive. But forgetting — ah, how can I do that? It's memory alone keeps me.

This one, I remembered he'd punched the steering wheel moments before the crash. Before that, had it been an ordinary morning followed by an ordinary day? Was there such a thing? If birds are singing, if grass is growing, does that make it ordinary?

He'd been angry because I'd forgotten my purse and we'd had to turn around and go back for it and that meant we would miss the first race, maybe the second as well. He would only bet on the races if he could watch the horses in the paddock first. He'd always been brisk at the track, his manner crisp and brooking no nonsense. And leaving my purse at home, that was nonsense.

Hence the punching of the steering wheel, the failure to notice the railway flashers, the awful tearing of metal on metal, the stoppage of time, my single shriek and then my silence as I spun away from him there to here

But here he was at last. Unlike the others, he didn't seem the least bit sorry. "I never said," he said.

"I'm sorry." I finished the sentence for him.

"Goodbye," he corrected.

He left through the door.

