

# Reverie

by Jack Swenson

His dog is walking the preacher down the street. I say good morning and reach down to retrieve the newspaper. The preacher's wife is searching through a neighbor's discards, a bag of old clothes left at the curb for pickup. My wife is standing in the middle of our yard in her nightgown. She is feeding peanuts to jays. They swoop and chase each other off. A red squirrel sits on her head, flipping its tail. The birds screech as they fly away.

A large black cat with yellow eyes balances on a fence that divides our yard from the neighbors'. Our back yard is full of gopher mounds. Some of the mounds are six feet high. We hope that the cat will get rid of the gopher, but he has other fish to fry. He is a lazy cat. When he is in the house, he jumps into my lap. I pet him. He doesn't like it when I try to comb out his mats. I use a brush with metal tines. I rake his glossy black coat into cornrows.

My wife enters and wanders into the kitchen. She polishes the logo on the new stove. It is a Bertazoni. A retired doctor friend just bought a Wolf. My wife smiles knowingly when the doctor tells her this.

I go outside and take the cover off the pond. The jays are at the bird feeder. There is a tall and leafy tree in our backyard. Also a bride, a groom, and a chicken. The preacher's wife is floating overhead now, headed west, her nightdress billowed out like a parachute. I shade my eyes and look up. She waves.

