

# Cost

*by* John Wentworth Chapin

I dropped my infant brother on his head, and although he screamed for two hours, I didn't tell anyone; the lump went away before anyone came home.

I rifled through the bedside table until I found dirty magazines; I masturbated furiously and put them back exactly as they were.

I watched from the darkness of the landing as he told my mother he didn't want to be a father or a husband or a goddamn cash cow anymore.

I read his email when he left his laptop on while he went to the store.

I saw the cat's collar glint in the headlights before it thudded under my tires; I left the body to be discovered by the owners rather than risk a DUI.

I sobbed alone in the elevator on the way back to my hotel room; we were both flying home the next day, me to my empty house and him to his husband.

I fished his cell phone out of the toilet and put it on the bedside table and didn't tell him.

I slipped the photographs under the front door of my ex's parents' house at two a.m. after their porch went dark.

The accumulated weight of what has gone unseen is more than I can bear.

