

Wesson

by Matt Kang

Sometimes, at night, when I can't sleep, and my homework isn't done, and when Jimmy doesn't text back, I sneak downstairs to my Dad's closet. I look at Dad, watching him sleeping next to Mom, as I slide the folding door, peering through the slats at the box at the top of the shelf. In the box is a gun. I take the gun. My hands are open and wiggly, like Indiana Jones in that movie where he swapped the statue with the sack of sand. I touch it, I slide my fingers across it. Across the room, Dad rolls over on his side.

I sit on the ground. I open the safety lock. 345. I know it because Dad gave me his old Samsonite on the trip to Hershey and it's the same numbers. I stroke the lettering, *Smith & Wesson*. Wesson. My legs shake.

They don't know, I always think, as I stand over them in their own bed. I have the gun. It's heavy. I hold it with both hands. Dad always says I have a gentle grip.

I'm so tired. Not really tired like sleepy tired. I'm tired of him. Like he said to me when I got too big. Too big to play the nighttime game.

I'm not. I am.

I stare down the barrel and point it at him. I pull the firing pin back.

I watch him. His face has no expression on it. It's peaceful. It isn't fair.

I take a step at him. Then another. Again, until I'm right at him. The end of the barrel is nearly touching his lips. Oh god, oh god.

I hold the gun there until my arms get tired.

I walk back to the box and put it back the way I found it.

I spend the rest of the night sobbing into my pillow. I know I'd miss him if he were gone.

I know I'd never be who I was either way.

