

Diorama

by stephen hastings-king

In the center of the big diorama, the real world hangs in the air by a hook. Inside it is a smaller one: stuffed doll people in plaid winter clothes struggle against inertia which takes the form of an implied wind while all around smoke trails of yarn tip from chimneys, droop over the sides and roll to the ground where they collect in growing piles between the compositions made from the collections of tiny heated spaces in which the stuffed doll people arrange themselves at night; in the otherwise empty sky artificial birds describe arrangements of tiny white arcs over assemblages of ramshackle rectangles and trapezoids around which swooning fans made from grasses are interspersed with the stiff white pods of hibernating boats and areas of painted snow on which the stuffed doll people practice for later, arriving in toy cars that move atop sticks along the slots that run down the middle of the streets which from overhead look like trolley tracks. You can see it through the window.

