

Ganoderma tsugae

It was a late October morning. The trees had begun to turn copper and molten though some held out chartreuse leaves. Cars flew onto the highway one by one: they decelerated then wrapped off the entrance ramp, traveled up the incline and then merged onto the road parallel with the highway.

They coasted left onto the highway, which opened up the sky like a river. Bands of auburn and orange burned around the rising sun in the east; but the rest of the sky was deep blue and tinted here and there with deep pink. Clouds slowly drifted.

Cars changed lanes. Veering, Night's eyes flit from the road to the sky. He exhaled air the heater blew into the cabin; his foot lay on the gas pedal.

Morning!

—Night?

—Good morning Grandma.

—Is everything alright? Are you ok?

—I'm great.

—Where are you going? Are you leaving already?

—Yes.

—Ok. Be safe. Lock the door.

Night turned to go.

—Night? his grandmother called out in a daze.

—Yea?

—Are you leaving right now?

—Yes.

Night turned the key in the ignition and the car awoke. A dropleted film of water clung to the windshield and the cabin was as cold as a winter lake. He exhaled a cloud.

Ganoderma mushrooms grew out of the ground, purple-brown spatulas sticking out of a carpet of leaves. They rose. Their varnished surface, brown and purple, floating on a UFO lobe, flowed to the woody burnt-umber stem, its hilt begirt in red clumps like blood.

The blood clumps seemed frozen in motion. Blood or flows of cooling magma, rising out of pools deep in earth. A pattern of lightning bolts, thin white wires, veined the magma. The shroom gave off a pleasant, woody, musty fragrant odor, mixing leaves and whisky—an essence of the woods.

Yellow spots of rot gaped on the pore surface. Yellow studding white frost, the pore surface bruised brown when pressed. Night twisted a polypore mushroom out of the ground, his finger brushed the powder of spores lightly dusting its surface. It bounced in his leather coat pocket and he walked to the door.

The cat walked into the room and stopped in front of the small refrigerator. Her eyes peered up at Night, two shining light green pools, and then looked to the refrigerator glass. She saw her reflection in front of beer cans.

Night looked out of the window. The harvest moon stuck to the sky. It was full, white, shining, clear. A glass moon shone on the earth.

From above the moonlight fell on Long Island during Fall. The moonlight shone on the medians of the highway, on the hoods of cars and into the island's rivers and lakes. Teams of ducks waded across the Nissequogue, bobbing their heads and quacking in the cool, reedy water draining into the sound. Morning frost burnt in the woods and a deer shot across the lawn on its way to the road, its hoofs clattering against the cement. Pumpkins rest on the stoops and porches of the houses.