

I Live on the End of My Street

At the end of my street—Main Street—there is a yield sign, faded and wilted, that hovers precariously by the edge of the hill that plunges into the darkness below. No one remembers who put the sign up. Who, or what, exactly, are we meant to yield to? The road is a dead end.

Every other Saturday the Whites, who live in the house across the street, have a block party that no one comes to, except for the rattling dog that lives two doors down from my house. Nobody appreciates the White's—they talk too loudly and fan the smell of grilling meat down the sidewalk and laugh dully at the dismal state of the reality that we are all confined to. We close our windows and convince ourselves we are better off inside.

On the second Wednesday of every other month, between the hours of noon and three-thirty, a bellowing, ceaseless shriek comes from the house at the beginning of the street. Sometimes, the younger children sit on the curb in front of that house and press their ears against the concrete to try and decipher the words hidden in the endless noise. Once, my younger brother came home and swore he had heard an old woman screaming the word 'persimmon' over and over again.

None of us believe in Public Education or in The Government, so instead, once a week we all huddle in the middle of the White's lawn and stare up at the sky for twelve consecutive hours. We shout questions like: Is anything real? Who ascribes morality to the world? What is twelve times seven? We wait for the gods to respond. They are still processing our requests.

A few days—or decades?—ago, a young woman with a large microphone stumbled through our street. She would push the microphone into the space at the top of our bodies and ask strange things, like, "Why is your skin translucent?" and "How long has that child been violently pulsing?" My parents told me to ignore her. "Why don't you just keep on scratching the lyrics of *Adeste Fideles* into every available surface of our house?" They said. So I picked up my knife and returned to work.

Every time the ambiguously inanimate construction workers manage to climb out from the pothole we have tried to trap them in, they build a new house at the beginning of our street. The people living at the end of the street pack all their belongings into their car, drive to the yield sign, pause for the appropriate amount of time, then drive over the edge. Afterwards, we all move one house down, a new family appears from the clouds above our picket fences and moves into the empty house, and the construction workers tear down the house they just built.