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Within Tin Walls

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WITHIN TIN WALLS

Taylor Roseberry

Within tin walls,

The skeletons of cabinets scatter the floor
the bleached bones of ancient giants,
arranged in arcane patterns that I don't understand, but
my father does—a magician with his diagrams.
I must weave through the flattened maze or treacherous wood will
steal my shoe-prints and need to be sanded away to pristine grain.

Within tin walls,

My brother and I wage legendary wars,
with only sticks of wood for swords,
Over who will win dominion of the tin
and wooden kingdom, where sawdust
glitters—a fairy's forgotten secret,
and I try to catch it and to keep it.

Within tin walls,

I fall asleep on towers of wood to the lullaby of
nail-gun gunshots and the table-saw's whine.
The smell of particle board, oak, and pine cling
to my skin and tinge my mind like varied photographs
all toned with sepia and passing time.

Within tin walls,

the cloying quiet of a library curls like a sleeping beast.
Pillars of wood line the walls, the shadow of a proud forest
and the great sentinels they come from,
Stories spiraling on their skin like open secrets in a foreign tongue
that my father can read better than any book he's never laid eyes on.

Within tin walls,

My childhood resides with the rhythmic purr
of round sanders, the smell of sawdust, and
cabinets stacked in rows and lines. My
father murmurs math somewhere within,
a pencil carded behind an ear like an afterthought.