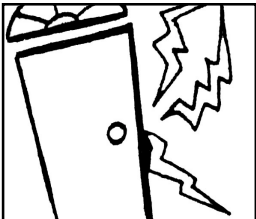




worms #1  
“escape”

story & words:  
Brian John Mitchell  
artwork:  
Kimberlee Traub



It's storming violently &  
I'm surprised when the  
doorbell rings.

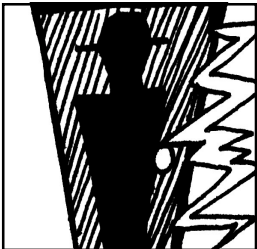


I go downstairs & open  
the door & it's some  
big guy in a black suit.

Is your father here?



Hold on a second. \



I close the door in his face, not letting him in.

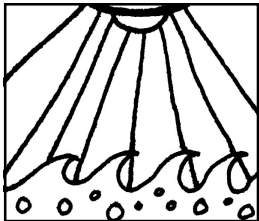


I go up to my father's  
study & knock & open  
the door.

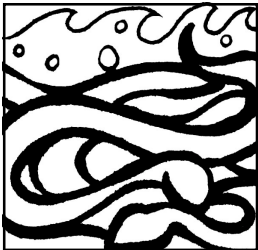


Nothing is what I'm  
used to it being in the  
room.





The only light is from a desk lamp & a light on an aquarium.



The aquarium has a  
bunch of pink eels in it.



They look like intestines  
with teeth.



My father is in some kind of military uniform (I thought he worked for a corporation?).



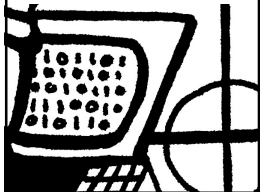
He's just staring at a  
computer screen.

There's a....



He's loosening his tie  
& unbuttoning the top  
button of his shirt.

Let's see what  
happens now.

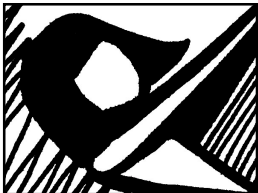


He's typing away & I  
hear gunshots.

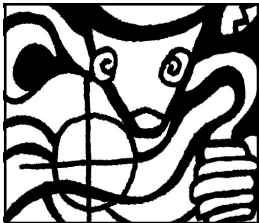


A metal tube shoots out  
of the floor & my dad's  
grabbing the eels &  
dropping them down it.

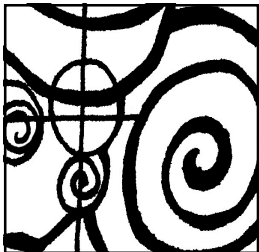




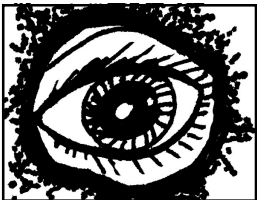
I back out of the room  
& a guy in a suit knocks  
me down back into the  
study.



He shoots my father  
as he's dropping the  
last eel in the pipe.



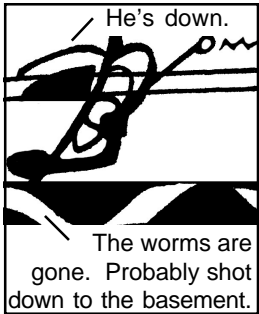
He shoots my father  
twice more in the head.



I can see quarter inch holes going all the way through him, but there isn't any blood.



My father falls onto the pipe & it slides up through him as he goes to the floor & there still isn't any blood.



He's down.

The worms are  
gone. Probably shot  
down to the basement.



He leaves & I'm scared.

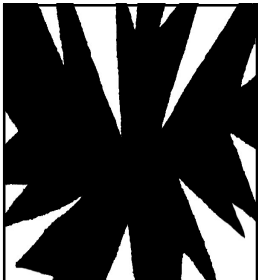


It takes me a moment,  
but I get up & go across  
the hall to my bedroom.





I look out the window &  
half the yard is filled by  
fast moving water &  
arcing blue electrical  
bolts.



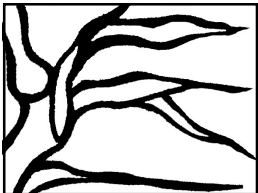
I knock out the window.



I jump out to a tree &  
jump & climb my way  
from tree to tree across  
to the neighbor's yard.



The blue bolts are  
splitting some of the  
trees.



Some of the trees fall to the ground, but most of them stay up leaning against each other.

How'd you get over there?!



I look to the house &  
my mom's on the  
deck.



I go back the way I came, only it's easier because the partially fallen trees lessens the number of jumps.



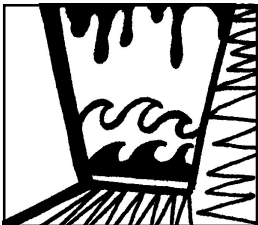
I climb into my room &  
I go downstairs.



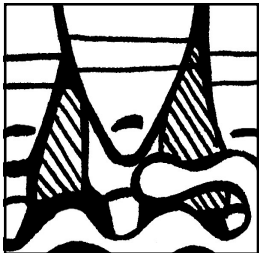
After we get the worms,  
total clean up. Burn the  
house down. /



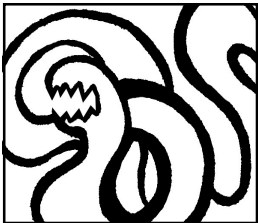
One of the men is in  
the dining room talking  
on his headset.



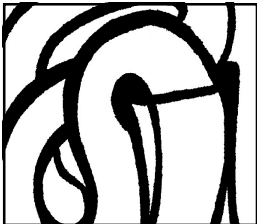
The basement door is open & the basement is full of water...



...& there are three men  
with one of the worms.



The worm's now eight inches in diameter & at least ten feet long...



...& they're putting it  
into some long glass  
container.



They're too busy to  
notice me.



& I go to the living  
room & to the deck &  
take my mother's left  
hand with my right.



On the way back to my room I grab a gun sitting on the floor next to one of the glass containers.



I can't... I can't do it....



We make it back to my room & she's scared to jump.

It's only a few feet & you  
don't have a choice. ✓



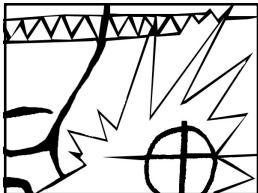
I'm literally pushing  
her out the window  
when she jumps.



Where do you /  
think you're going?



I don't bother to think. I just turn & start pulling the trigger & the gun blams four times.



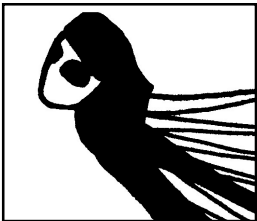
He takes a bullet in the left shoulder & he doesn't even lose his balance.



He's bleeding; I can't  
see it, but I can smell it.



I turn & jump out the  
window.



I spread my arms like I  
really think it will make  
me fly.





I end up landing on  
one of the fallen trees  
& I'm moving as fast  
as I can.



I see one of the worms  
in the river that was  
our yard. It's at least  
eighteen inches wide  
& it's writhing.



The broken trees are falling completely & going along in the rush of water, including the one I'm on.



There's one of the blue lightning bolts hitting the worm.



The bolt's coming from  
the eyes of the man I  
shot who's hanging  
out the window.



I keep floating on the  
tree & I can't see the  
house anymore & I  
can't let go of the gun.



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