What You Have
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He comes home wearing your husband’s face, spreads his arms wide
and calls, “Honey, I’m home.” You ask him in, because it’s rude to
leave him in the doorway. “Alright,” he says, rubbing his hands
together, ready to carve a roast or dissect a child. “Is there a dog, kids?
Do we own or lease? Come on now, what do we have?” This question
fills the room and breaks out the windows. Shingles snow from the
roof. You can’t answer because he wants all of it, not just the house,
the kids, the dog, the lawn sprinklers. He craves the hot blue light
bulb from your grandmother’s slide projector. He wants bad dreams
and a tendency to wrinkle. He covets the puddle where you drowned
caterpillars when you were five. This man wants to swallow you
whole. Sensing your distress, he takes your hand and presses it firmly.
“Don’t worry, dear,” he says, smiling through his stolen face. “We can
always adopt.”