

A lot of stuff happened that one day. The day from the nightmare hole, then the sink. The part where Dum-Dum found our mother's hair in the sink's drain. The part where Gus touched his finger to my face. The part in our father's workshop.

All that stuff happened on this one day. We haven't talked about many of the other days. The day when Gus dies, or the day we knew he died. The day when Viktor leaves. The day when our mother loses the last hair from her head and then she leaves too. We didn't talk about how our father never made it to the moon. I said that part, how our father stayed in the rocket and didn't walk on the moon, and I said you have to understand our father never made it to the moon. But we didn't talk about it yet. About why that happened like it happened.

Please. Let me talk about one more thing from that day. One more little thing from that same day when Gus is still alive and Viktor still lives with us. When Corrigan is just a little kid and we don't know everything about our mother and father yet.

If I can do one more thing from that day, if you'll let me, I'll do Pebble Beach. I want to tell you about Pebble Beach.

My brother Viktor made up a whole game for me. For us. A game for Fridays when I couldn't sleep from thinking about the nightmare hole. When Viktor and Gus couldn't sleep, maybe from the nightmare hole too. A game for when we waited for the phone's beep, the beep that meant our father couldn't sleep too. The beep that meant he was in there with us, in our bedroom with us. The beep that turned the phone's light from green to red and meant we weren't safe anymore.

The phone hadn't beeped that night. He wasn't there with us. Not that night. Our father wasn't in the room with us, and we could play Pebble Beach.

The little red book about how to tell stories, it says that it's okay to say things wrong. People say things wrong in real life all the time, and it's okay to do that in stories too.

You have to understand. In the game, we're golfers. You have to understand that in the game, we're golfers, but in real life we don't have golf clubs and golf shoes. We never had any of those things. We never touched any of those things. We're kids. Who are scared of the dark and scared of our father. I was just a crybaby in my bed, in my sweat pants that were thin because I wore them to bed every night. Gus still has his alive, baby blonde hair, Gus in his long black t-shirt that he wears to bed with no pants underneath. Even Viktor, big Viktor, even Viktor who sleeps in just the grownup underwear he stole from the country club, even though he works at the country club, even he doesn't know how to golf or even how to talk about golf right.

You have to understand, the only thing we knew about golf was what Viktor heard in the country club, what he told us when we played Pebble Beach.

You have to understand, that means he says a lot of Pebble Beach stuff wrong.

In Pebble Beach, Viktor's a golfer and I'm a golfer and Gus is a golfer. Viktor is a golfer up on his top bunk where his big body turns and the haunted house

door sound happens right on top of me. I'm a golfer too in Pebble Beach. Me in my bed, behind the ABC curtain. Gus is a golfer too. Gus in his bed with his technical manuals. The 30 Day Patio. Do-It-Yourself Home Rehab.

In Pebble Beach, we're all three golfers, and Viktor's an announcer too. An announcer who says a lot of stuff wrong.

When Viktor asked, Do you want to Pebble Beach, what he should have said was, Do you want to play Pebble Beach. That's the right way to say it. But he says a lot of stuff wrong in Pebble Beach.

You have to understand. I didn't even know Pebble Beach was a real place. Not when we played. Dum-Dum was in his bed and the lights were off, and he could smell himself and his brothers because our mother never washed the sheets, ever. Dum-Dum didn't know that was a bad smell though, the ham and lemon smell of his body and his brothers' bodies. He just knew it as the smell of brothers.

Dum-Dum didn't know sheets aren't supposed to smell like ham and lemon, and he thought Pebble Beach was a whole made-up place. I thought that for a long time, until way after Gus and Viktor and our mother, after no one lived in the house with our father and his notebooks anymore. After all that, after I got big, I saw this man at the bus stop with a sweatshirt, and on the sweatshirt it said Pebble Beach.

You have to understand how impossible that was. It would be like if you saw someone with a sweatshirt on, and the words on the sweatshirt said the names of all your best friends from your whole life, all in order.

Someone pulled something straight out of the time I was a kid and printed it on a sweatshirt.

On this guy's sweatshirt, just some guy from the bus stop, it said Pebble Beach. And it said America's #1 Golf Links. And it said Est. 1919 and there was a picture of a little tree on it.

Dum-Dum didn't know. I didn't know. I didn't know Pebble Beach was a real golf course from before, from before me and my brothers were even born. Not until this man with the sweatshirt. Then I knew.

Viktor turns in his bed. His body turns, and there's the same haunted house door sound from his bunk, from over my head. He turns so he can whisper into the middle of the room. He leans way out, into the space between his bed and Gus' bed. He leans way out, and I pull back the ABC curtain. Just a little. So I can see him leaned out. So I can see Gus in his bed, Gus with his lamp on and a book about Kitchens On a Budget or Breathtaking Bungalows You Can Build Yourself.

Viktor reaches his arm back behind him, back to his bed. The bed shakes around me when he moves, until he pulls his arm back out in front of him and settles onto his side. Now he's got a pencil in his big fist. One of our father's Palomino Blackwing pencils. It's easy to tell. The pencil's black body and squashed eraser. Viktor stole one of our father's pencils, and he puts it up to his lips. He talks into the squashed eraser like it's a microphone, and he whispers into the eraser, "Welcome, golf watchers, to Pebble Beach. I'll be your host, Super Stan the Golf Man."

Super Stan the Golf Man was always the host. Always.

Viktor whispers. The game always starts in a whisper. "First up to bat, Gus The Pus."

Viktor's Pebble Beach nicknames for us. They're sometimes gross and they sometimes rhyme, but they're always funny. He used Gus the Pus before, but it's too good to pass up.

Down on the bottom bunk, in my bed, down most of the way behind the ABC curtain, I still have the unwrapped glow stick in my hands. It's unwrapped, and it's under the covers with me, but it doesn't glow yet. I'm still waiting to bend it, to do that snap that does something inside and brings the glow stick to life.

Viktor says, "The Pus has been golfing good lately. He's got his clubs all in order, and he looks ready to hit some serious holes-in-ones today."

Viktor waves his arm out across the space between the beds. Then up towards the wall. What would be a wall, except right now, right now there's no wall. Right now, it's all Pebble Beach.

Gus starts to laugh in his bed. There, on his stomach, in the long black t-shirt he wore to bed with no pants. I can see through the space where I pulled back the ABC curtain. He laughs into his Bungalows book when Viktor calls him Pus. He covers up his whole face with his hands.

His little kid laugh. From The Pus and from holes-in-ones. Viktor says it wrong. We know it's wrong. We don't always know what's right, but what's wrong, what's wrong sounds wrong in your ear. When Viktor says something wrong, I mouth the words to myself. Feel how they're wrong in my mouth. How their shapes are wrong in my mouth and how my tongue is in the wrong spot.

Gus laughs, and I look down past my feet, down to the end of the bed where the phone sits on the dresser. The phone our father uses to listen, to come in the room with us. The light is still green. The light is still green, and that means our father isn't in the room with us. Green means we're okay.

Viktor puts our father's Palomino Blackwing close to his lips. He says, "Ladies and gentlemen. Allow me to introduce our second golfmaster today. Put some hands to noise for Valentin the Spleen."

Dum-Dum didn't know what a spleen was. He kind of knew where it was. Or thought he did.

Still, I laugh. Quiet. Quiet in case our father is asleep. Quiet in case he isn't. Quiet in case he hears and then the phone in our room beeps, and then he's there in the room with us.

I laugh, and I move my mouth to say Spleen in my bed. To feel how Viktor does it. Why it's funny in his mouth.

When I try to say the spleen word, my breath hisses with my tongue pulled back, then my lips push together and pop out, and then I laugh again. I can't even do it with my mouth, even if I don't have to make the noise. I make a fist, and then I put the side part of my fist up to my lips. There's a little space from where my doorbell finger curls into itself. I put my lips in there, inside my fist, and I clamp my doorbell finger around my lips. To keep quiet. To keep the little light on the phone green.

Viktor leans way out over the empty space between his bunk and Gus' bunk. I can see his whole head, his whole naked chest. Viktor, big Viktor. He holds the edge of the bed with one big hand, and in the other he's got our father's

Palomino Blackwing. He puts the Palomino Blackwing, his microphone, he puts it to his lips, and he says, "Finally, last in the lineup, we've got Viktor. The Dick Hair."

That's it. All at once. All at once we laugh. It doesn't really rhyme the way the other ones do. But it's Dick Hair, so that's more than enough. It's hard to be quiet after Dick Hair.

Gus lets out chirps of laughter from his bed. I can see him through the open part of the ABC curtain. He has his hands over his face, and he laughs, and he smooths his blonde, alive hair down over his nose and his lips, pets it down on his face like hair will do something, like his hair will stop the noise so it won't get out of his mouth.

Viktor rolls back onto his bed, onto his back. He shakes his bunk and my bunk while he tries to hold it in, that wheeze laugh like from the fat chef on TV. When Viktor tries to not laugh in the day, when he says something funny and doesn't want our father to hear him laugh, his stomach muscles pop way out. If he's the same way in his top bunk, if he's like the way he is in the day time, he has his hand slapped over his mouth.

I can see the spot on the phone, the light that turns from green to red when our father is there, when our father listens. It's still green, and we're still safe.

I laugh too. My laughs sound dumb. Full of my breath. I don't like to laugh when everyone can hear. Everyone, my brothers and even Corrigan through the wall, everyone can hear my dumb laugh. But Dick Hair is too funny.

We laugh together in the dark. And in the dark, behind the ABC curtain where I'm alone in my bed, while my brothers laugh and while I laugh, I put my hands under the blankets and the sheets, and I bend the glow stick in my hands until it cracks. The snap sound covered a little by me and my brothers.

I could hear my brothers laugh. I know I told you that already, but let me tell you again. I could hear when Gus chirped out the laughs he tried to hold in. Viktor's laughs, the way he held them in and how that must make his stomach muscles pop out. I could hear my brothers, and my brothers, they could hear me. They heard the glow stick crack. I didn't know it then. I never asked. But thinking about it now, now I know.

I put the glow stick under my back, under me in the bed to hide the light while I lift the blanket and the sheet over my head and scoot underneath. The dirty sheets our mother never washed. After I lift all the blankets and the sheets over my head and close them back down all around me, when I'm all the way under, while my brothers still laugh up above me, I grab the light from under my back and hold it in front of me. The way it lights up my hand and I can see again. I can see everything. It's almost too bright. Too bright to look right at it here under the blankets.

Viktor stops laughing. Almost. He turns again in the bed. The haunted house door sound again. He's on his side, his body out in the space between beds again. I can tell where he is from his voice, from the way his voice is out in the middle of the room. He laughs a little, but he can talk. He says, "The Pus is up first. He sets his ball down. Then he licks his finger to test the wind. Then his other finger. Then his other finger."

Gus chirps some more in his bed. From under the blankets, from where I am

with the glow stick light, I can hear the pages in Gus' Bungalow book.

You have to understand. When we're at Pebble Beach, we're not kids. We're golfers. We're golfers and we're grownups and we're experts, and also, we're idiots.

I roll onto my side and put the glow stick under my back. So I can put my head back out, so I can see my brothers through the opening in the ABC curtain.

My head out, my first breath in is cool. Viktor hangs off his bed, and he looks right at Gus while he talks. Gus is on his side, and he has his head in his book, his nose right in the middle where the pages are glued to the spine. Breathtaking Bungalows You Can Build Yourself. His shoulders shake up and down. He sniffs hard, and he lets out his breath and makes a sound. "Whooooooo. Whooooooo." It's quiet. Just a whisper. But it's there,

Viktor talks into our father's Palomino Blackwing. He says, "The Pus puts his whole hand in his mouth, then holds it up in the air. He squints, and now he's looking around."

Viktor laughs too. Laughs at what he's about to say. It's hard to see everything. The light was bright under the blanket, and our room is lights out. Only a little light from the window by the phone, from the orange streetlight on the sidewalk outside our house. I can't see all of Viktor, but I see his outline. His teeth straight and white behind the tiny Palomino Blackwing microphone.

Viktor talks into the eraser. "Could it...yes. Golf watchers, it seems The Pus has never actually seen wind before! Folks, this is a big first. Can The Pus overcome this handicap?"

Handicap. A word Viktor picked up from his job at the country club. Just the way Gus picks up words from his technical manuals. Just the way I pick up words from Gus and from Viktor. Just the way Corrigan picks up words from all of us. Viktor says a lot of things wrong, but every here and there he's right. In my bed, the glow stick under my back, I make the handicap word with my mouth. To make the handicap word, my mouth opens wide, then tongue against the top, then my tongue drops. Then a pop of air from the back of my mouth and another one from my lips.

If I can make the words like Viktor, maybe I can say something funny like him. Maybe I can make my brothers laugh.

Viktor says, "The Pus gets ready. He hits."

Then Viktor makes a golf hit sound with his mouth. A sound where he makes his mouth into a circle, a kiss face and then opens up his lips a little. A sound from the very back part of his mouth where the little pink thing hangs down. I know that's how the sound works because just like I make his words in my mouth, I make the sound too.

Viktor puts his hand over his eyes, makes his hand into a visor. He looks at our bedroom wall, what would be a wall if we were in our bedroom instead of at Pebble Beach. He makes a face, a face for when something hurts. His lips pull back. He breathes through his teeth, one big breath in. His big, handsome face hangs out over me. Lit up by the orange streetlight from outside. His face is a big, orange pumpkin head. A moon. The moon if the moon was cut square, if it was close and you could see its dark eyes and its thin lips. Its giant teeth behind its thin lips. If the moon had smooth skin instead of craters and rocks all over.

Viktor's skin is smooth in the orange light from out in the street. His face the moon if the moon could smile at you in bed and if the moon could talk about golf and Pus.

"Oh, golf fans. Tough break for the Pus. The ball, by golly, the ball is caught in the wind. In fact, it's soaring. It's higher and higher. And now it's in Mexico. Looks like the Pus is going to have to drive that cart a long ways to make a double caterpillar!"

Viktor works at a country club, but he doesn't know how golf works. Not really. In Pebble Beach we try for birdies and eagles, and we try for caterpillars and cyclopeses. We try for these animals that feel all wrong in the mouth. Ants, a word that starts with a big mouth, then the tongue moves up fast, then the last part, that little breath out. We try and hit whatever number is a salmon. Salmon, a word with a big mouth at the beginning and a really funny end sound if you push your chin forward when you say it.

Viktor talks into the Palomino Blackwing. He says, "Well, tough luck today, Pus. Do you have anything you want to say to the fans?"

Viktor reaches across the space, reaches the Blackwing's eraser to Gus. As close as he can. Gus has his face behind the Bungalows book, and he shakes his head. He chirps out his laughs, all close together now. He's got his whole face in the book. His body is curled out from under the covers. He's got his bare knees tucked up to his chest, up inside the long black t-shirt he wears to bed. Like maybe he can disappear more of him in the Bungalows book. Like maybe he can stay quiet that way. Keep our father away that way. Gus's shoulders shake in his shirt, and his knees shake, and all of him shakes in his bed.

While Viktor's hung way out, while he reaches out to Gus, he looks at the phone. He looks for the green light. The light that means our father is still somewhere else, somewhere far away from Pebble Beach.

Viktor swings the Blackwing back in front of his face. He says, "Well, folks. Let's see if The Spleen has any better luck."

Most of the stories, most of the ones I have, there's a part where I cry. This part, this is the part from this story where I start to. Where my face feels too small. My lips too small to cover my mouth, and my nose holes too small to breathe out of. Everything on my face gets small, and then I breathe hard and my mouth is open, and then I take one big breath in, and I know when that breath is out, that's when crying starts. There's that little moment. As long as I can hold that breath in, I won't cry.

I hold it. I can't hold it long. Not long at all, even. It's as long as it takes for a Pebble Beach golf ball to get blown off the wrong way. As long as it takes the light on the phone to turn from green to red.

I hold it that long. Then I can't. Then I breathe. Then I cry.

I pull the blankets and sheets over my head. Under there, with the ham and lemon smell. Under there with the glow stick's light, I cry, and I breathe through my mouth and I look at the light and it's so bright and safe and it's something I took from my brothers. My brothers who play Pebble Beach with me.

The Spleen cries under the blankets. With the glow stick. He cries and the water falls down the sides of his face. He doesn't wipe it away. He holds the glow stick with both hands. He doesn't have a free hand to wipe away all the water on his

face.

I didn't know it then. But if I could hear my brothers when they breathed and when they tried not to laugh loud, if I could hear Viktor turn in his bed and it was loud as a haunted house door opening right on top of me, if I could hear all that, if our voices made me scared the phone light would turn from green to red and our father could come in, if all that was true, then it was for sure true my brothers heard me crack the glow stick, and it was for sure true they heard me cry. That night and most of the other nights. I didn't know it then, but my brothers heard me cry most of the nights we slept together. Most of the nights from our whole kid lives.

The Spleen doesn't know any of that. Dum-Dum doesn't know. About what his brothers know. How they hear him cry. The Spleen, he only knows is it's his turn to golf, and he can see with all the light under the sheets and the blankets, and the light is so warm and so bright and with the light everything is different from how it is in the nightmare hole. The smell is different. The ham and lemon smell. The smell of brothers.

Viktor talks into our father's Blackwing. He looks off through the wall, through where the wall is most times but instead it's Pebble Beach. He says, "The Spleen sets his ball down. He swings back. Folks, it looks like it's going to be a powerful one. He pulls back even farther. He's about to hit a homer...and oh boy, a naked man just ran onto the field!"

A golfer would know it's not called a field. A golfer would know there's no homers in golf. Both of the words would feel wrong in my mouth. If I could make them. If my mouth wasn't too busy. If I didn't have to hold my lips and my teeth together to stop any laughs and make them stay inside.

It's that fast. How crying switches to laughing. How the laughs come up from in my stomach and through my mouth. How my eyes don't know to stop yet. How the tears are still all down the sides of my face when I laugh my dumb laugh at the naked man on the golf field.

When I laugh, I pull the blankets off my head. I can look at my brothers because the laughing and the crying, they sound the same. Enough the same, anyway.

"A naked man is running towards the Spleen and...oh. He's squatting down and...yes! Yes, he's picking up The Spleen's golf ball...with his butt!"

Gus laughs huge. He laughs huge, and he tries to hold it in, and the sound grinds in his nose and the back of his throat. He's curled up on his bed, his body tight inside his long black t-shirt. His whole head in the Bungalows book. His body shakes and he laughs right through the pages, through the cover. It's loud now. He can't help it. Gus is done for, and his laughs aren't chirps. They're little shouts from his bed.

Viktor still whispers, but his voice is a little louder. He has to say all his stuff louder because Gus is laughing and that means I laugh too, and my dumb laugh comes out, out my mouth and through the crying and through the ABC curtain.

Viktor says, "The. Ball. Is. In. His butt." He hits his fist, the one holding the Blackwing, he hits that fist into his other hand every time he says a word.

Viktor shakes the bed when he hits his fist in his hand. Then he puts his hand visor on his forehead, above his eyes again because he has to watch and

because at Pebble Beach, the sun is so, so bright. He's leaned way out, that handsome, squared moon out between the beds, over my head.

"And now he's running. He's running away with the Spleen's golf ball stuck in his butt cheeks."

Now we're all laughing. My ball in some stranger's ass. Gus is curled so tight into the Bungalow book. He's so small, his soft little body. Viktor up above is leaned way out, talking straight at Gus. He can't always get Gus this good. But tonight, tonight he's got him. He's got Gus curled into the book, smashing his face in the pages to keep from laughing too loud, to keep the green light on the phone green.

I didn't know it then. I know it now, but I didn't know it then. That my brothers, they knew about the glow stick, and it was okay. They didn't say anything. They heard me crack the glow stick, and they let me pretend it was secret. They heard me cry, and they let me pretend it was secret. And they laughed, and they moved their bodies when they laughed, and they laughed hard because when they laughed hard, I laughed too. And maybe if I laughed enough they wouldn't have to listen to me cry down on the bottom bunk.

I didn't know that part yet, but they laughed harder because they wanted me to laugh too.

I stopped crying. That night, with the glow stick in my hands. I at least stopped the kind of crying that happens because of being sad.

Viktor leans way down with the Blackwing microphone. He leans his head so he can see me through the gap in the ABC curtain. He sees me in there. A big orange moon over me. A big, handsome moon with thin lips and a squared head. He sees me laugh. He can see me in the orange light from outside, and he can see I've been crying. Maybe from something bad. Or maybe from how funny he is, how funny my brother is at Pebble Beach.

He pushes the eraser end of our father's Palomino Blackwing into my face. He says, "Spleen, anything you want to say to the golf fans?"

Viktor, moon Viktor, he looks in through the ABC curtain. He hangs upside down into my bunk. His dark eyes, his thin lips. His thin lips that can't cover his big teeth much longer. His lips so thin they can't hold back his laughs even a little. His smile, his big smile, even upside-down it's still a smile.

I grab Viktor's hand in my hand and pull the Blackwing eraser close to my mouth. His huge, warm hand around this tiny pencil. I grab his hand with my other hand too. Both of my hands around his huge hand. I have things to say. My tongue up at the top of my mouth. Between my teeth. The way air whistles past my tongue when I'm ready to make the sound to say something funny for my brothers.

But I laugh. I laugh instead and shake my head, and Viktor pulls the eraser away from my face. He pulls his warm, huge hand out of my hands. He smiles at me more. Upside-down. That big, toothy smile. He smiles, then he looks across the room to the phone, to check the light.

I can breathe and see my brothers, and I can see the phone and see it's still green and see our father isn't here. We're still in Pebble Beach where our father can't go. We laugh, and it's loud, but somehow our father isn't here. Somehow, this one night, we catch a break from our father.

Viktor was the last golfer. He always went last. And most of the time, the last hit, that one goes the worst.

"Dick Hair steps up to the plate."

We don't know that there's no such thing as step up to the plate in golf. We laugh, and I make my mouth move so I can say Dick Hair. My tongue hard against the top of my mouth for the start. That's as far as I get before I laugh again. I can't even make the word in my mouth. It's that funny. Gus has the Bungalows book around his head, and he squeezes the covers down tight on both sides of his face.

"And Ol' Dick Hair, he's got a look in his eye. He's swinging for the fences tonight."

We try to hold it back, me and Gus. We try not to laugh so loud. So the light on the phone won't change. So our father won't come in the room. So we can hear what Viktor says.

We don't know that there's no such thing as swinging for fences in golf, and we don't know that golf is always in the day and to say tonight makes no sense. But that's not why we hold it back. We hold it back to hear.

"Dick Hair grips his golf club, and he's got one of his special, tiny balls in front of him. Most golfers say it's harder to hit tiny balls, but Dick Hair, ol' Dick Hair says tiny balls are his specialty."

Now we're dying. I grab at my stomach. It hurts all around, all around my sides. Gus, he squeezes the book even tighter around his face. I didn't know it then. I still don't know. I just hope. I just hope that's what dying feels like. That it hurts that much and it feels that good. That dying feels like when your brother talks about Dick Hair and tiny balls and you try not to laugh, and you're warm and safe and you know there's so much light under the blankets and the sheets with you.

Viktor says, "Dick Hair looks at his tiny ball. And he swings."

Viktor makes the swing noise again. Louder this time. His lips in the circle that opens at the bottom. Mine do it too. Right at the same time as my brother.

"And it's off. It's flying through the air. It looks good."

Me and Gus, we're quiet. We don't know where the ball's going to land. We don't know how to golf. We don't know Pebble Beach is a place yet. What we do know is that Pebble Beach, the game, the way it works is something is funny, then the next thing is more funny, and it goes and goes like that. We know whatever happens next, it has to be funnier than Dick Hair and tiny balls.

Viktor says, "Uh-oh. It's starting to curve. Dick Hair might be in a little trouble here."

If we were golfers, we would know it was a slice. Or a hook. But Viktor calls it a curve. He doesn't know about calling it a slice or a hook.

"And...oh, boy. Oh, boy. Folks, I've never seen anything like it."

And now it's quiet. It's so quiet in the room, I'm afraid that maybe the glow stick makes a sound. It's never been quiet enough to hear, but maybe there's a hum somewhere inside when it makes the light. If the hum, if my brothers hear the hum.

You have to understand, it was that quiet. You have to understand, I wanted it to

be a secret so bad. When I cried and when I cracked the glow stick. Everything that happened behind the ABC curtain, under the blankets and the sheets, in my bed where it smelled bad because I smelled bad. I wanted that to be just for me.

"Folks. I don't know how to tell you this. But the ball is headed straight into the fart factory."

I knew then. Even Dum-Dum knew, even the Spleen knew there wasn't such a thing as fart factories. That there wasn't a factory where they put farts in jars.

What Dum-Dum didn't know is how to stop from laughing.

The little red book about how to tell stories says it's okay if you don't remember everything everyone said. The little red book says how it's hard to remember all of everything.

I remember the first parts from Pebble Beach, from that Pebble Beach. I remember so many of the words that I made in my own mouth under the blankets and the sheets, and then with my head out when I watched the green light on the phone. But the last parts, I don't remember all the way. I just laughed. The last parts I only kind of remember. And I kind of remember them like this.

The ball, Dick Hair's tiny ball, crashed into the fart factory. It smashed all the bottled farts and it bounced around the room. It destroyed the fart reservoir. The ball bounced along a fart jar treadmill thing. Gus tried to stop laughing long enough to tell us that a treadmill for jars in a factory, that something like that is called a conveyance. It took him three times to say the whole word. He had to stop his laughs. He moved the book away from his face and said, "A con" and then he laughed and shoved his face back into the book. He tried again, and he got out "A con" and then he covered himself with the book again. The book shook in front of his face, and he started moaning like "Ohhhhhh". Then, one last try, "A conveyance" and then the book back in front of his face and his laughs loud through the pages, through the cover with a little house on the front.

Dick Hair's tiny ball, it bounced all down the conveyance and smashed all the bottled farts that were bottled special for fancy fart parties.

Dum-Dum laughed. He laughed hard. He closed his eyes, and he wasn't scared because he knew the glow stick was bright under the blankets and sheets, under their greasy feel and their ham and lemon smell baked hot and sour with his body underneath. He didn't know a lot, but Dum-Dum knew with the glow stick, it wasn't all the way dark.

Gus laughed. His full laughs. The destruction of a fart factory, even with the conveyance being called a treadmill, it was too much. He opened and closed the Bungalow book on his head. He couldn't take it. He rolled around, and it wasn't the big haunted house door sound that comes from Viktor, from right above my head. It was a small sound. A squeak in the wood. He rolled with the book and clapped the covers over his ears over and over.

Viktor laughed too. He couldn't finish. He couldn't finish the story about how the ball crashed into the fart factory boss' office. How it hit him right in the stomach and he blew a fart that smashed out all the windows on one side of the factory.

Viktor leaned over the bed. His hand slapped over his mouth. His eyes shut. His smooth, moon face.

I could see his moon face, upside-down again in the orange light from

outside. His handsome face and the water down the sides, down his cheeks. Like mine. The tears out the sides of his eyes. Like mine. From laughing too hard. From dying that way. Like me.

Viktor, the last thing he said, the last part we could understand with all the laughs was, "A fart for the ages."

We all laughed so hard it was a sure thing the green light would turn red. We laughed loud, the kind of laughs for the day instead of for the night. I heard Corrigan knock on the wall with one of her tiny knuckles. Viktor shook the bed with his big laughs. The haunted house door open and shut and open and shut. The Palomino Blackwing rattled down the wall, down from his bunk, through the crack where the bed met the wall, down through and onto my bed. Gus curled into his Bungalows book, almost all the way curled. They both laughed. Viktor's big person laugh. The only adult laugh I ever heard in our house. Gus' deep breaths between huge laughs.

There wasn't anything we could do. It was Pebble Beach.

I watched for the light on the phone. For it to turn red. For our father to come in the room. I wiped more tears, this kind the fart factory kind, the best kind, and I looked at the light on the phone.

That night, the night from after the nightmare hole and the sink, after our father's workshop, after I brushed sludge out from my fingernails, after the fart factory, that night after all that stuff, our father stayed away. The phone never beeped. The light stayed green, and we laughed in our beds.

The little red book about how to tell stories, it says it's okay if you don't remember everything everyone said. The little red book, it says how it's hard to remember all of everything.

Some things are easy to remember. I said I remember the words because I made them in my mouth, like my brother did, like Viktor. But that's not all of the truth. That's not why I remember.

The truth, when I tell it so it's all of the truth, I remember that story because it was so funny. And because I still think it's funny.

It makes me embarrassed. That fart factories, that a fart factory makes me laugh still.

There are things I don't remember. I don't remember the first time we played Pebble Beach. I don't remember when Gus and Corrigan were born. I remember things from when they were babies and when they were kids, and I remember some times when our mother, our big mother, when her belly stuck out before they were born. But I don't remember the days. The days they were born and the day I had another brother and the day I had a sister.

I already told you Gus is dead. He's dead, and that happened a long time ago. We'll get to that soon. We have to. My hands hurt from writing all this down. We'll get to that soon. But I want to tell you something. The longer it is, the more I don't remember my brother. His face. His face behind his alive, blonde hair.

When something happened, like what happened when he put the IcyHot mustache under my nose. That's a time I remember my brother's face. But most of the times, so many of the other times, I don't remember his face from those

times. Those faces, those times of my brother are gone.
I forgot my brother's face. Dick Hair and the fart factory. Those are the things I
remember.