

Hovercraft

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Dad stole a hovercraft and parked it outside the motel. Then he left us.

There was a note on the door when we got back from the supermarket. It read: "G'bye!"

Mom dropped the groceries in her arms and clapped her hands together. She dashed over to the hovercraft and hopped into the cockpit. The aft fans roared to life.

Tossing the motel key at me, mom pulled out of the parking lot and veered onto the highway.

I picked up the groceries and went inside.

The TV didn't work. I ate a jar of mayonnaise with a plastic spork.

The next morning dad came back. "I was kidding!" he announced. He nodded at me and began to inspect the air conditioner.

I put on my clothes and went outside.

Another hovercraft was in the parking lot. I looked in the cockpit. Mom wasn't there.

The owner of the motel came out. He was a freckled, withered man wearing a sandpaper suit. He asked what was going on.

"Hovercraft," I said.

Suspicious, the owner approached the vehicle, leaned into its rubber underside and began to scrape up and down. His pace quickened. Soon he had sanded a hole in the hovercraft. It deflated.

I started to cry.

"I know," said the owner. He squeezed my shoulder and went into our room. There was a gunshot.

Dad walked out. He told me he had changed his mind again. He frowned at the hovercraft, hotwired a station wagon, and drove away ...

I went inside. The owner was sitting on the edge of the bed, clutching his stomach. Blood trickled onto his crinkled brown legs. He said he cut himself shaving. He stood up. He fainted. He stood up.

He staggered out of the room.

I crawled onto the bed and fell asleep. When I awoke the TV still didn't work. I followed the trail of blood outside.

The hovercraft was gone. In its place was an old Mazda RX-7. An anvil had fallen on its hood and smashed it into a crooked U-shape.

The blood led across the parking lot to a cliff that fell into the sea. In the distance, a hovercraft jumped waves and did spin-outs. The sun was hot.

David Wilson 12/1/08 9:07 AM

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