



11-15-1996

## Untitled

Cole Rachel

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

---

### Recommended Citation

Rachel, Cole (1996) "Untitled," *Westview*: Vol. 16 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.  
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol16/iss1/4>

This Fiction is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu](mailto:phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu).



## UNTITLED

by Cole Rachel

My mother was working at a convenience store at the time, a place at the edge of town called the A&B. One day, after picking me up from the baby sitter, she and I went home to discover that our house had been totally ransacked. Our front door stood wide open, revealing an interior littered with books, broken glass, and the remains of what were once potted plants. We walked through the house quietly, stepping lightly around our scattered and broken belongings. My mother cried and cursed to herself, under her breath. I explored, with a sense of wonder, the chaotic muddle that had previously made up the familiar landscape of our home. It was so much like television, so completely alien. The bedroom walls stood naked with ugly, fist-sized holes punched into them, devoid of the framed family pictures and torn posters that had previously adorned them. My mother's bed lay on its side, still perfectly made. The cracked, brown vinyl couch in the living room rested upside down, flipped at a crazy angle, the worn out cushions scattered randomly throughout the place. The phone had been pulled out of the wall. I picked up the receiver and carried it with me. For a

few minutes we said nothing, my mother and I just stumbled around the house, shocked and confused. Afraid. She grabbed my hand and pulled me quickly along behind her, closing the front door as we left.

After leaving, we walked down the sidewalk towards my grandmother's house, two blocks away. The sidewalk was cracked and uneven under our feet, and the big elm trees that lined the street loomed above us, stripped, their fallen leaves crunching under our feet. I wanted to ask questions, but I didn't. My mother, seeing how confused and nervous I was, said to me, "Don't worry, everything is going to be OK," and upon hearing this, suddenly everything was fine. I believed her, for I had no reason not to. I turned my attention to the phone receiver that I still held in my hand, the twisted cord trailing out behind me, connected to nothing. I spoke into the receiver as we walked. "Did you see that? Did you see what they did to our house?" The bare branches rustled above us. I remember that it was cold that day.

It wasn't until sometime later, when I overheard my mother and grandmother talking, that I realized that my father had been the one who tore up the house. It wasn't

until many years later that I could begin to understand why.

I think about this incident a lot. I think about it whenever I think about what it means to grow up. There comes a point in your life when your sense of security, if you ever have one, begins to feel threatened. This point came early for me. It's funny, when you are a child, your parents will say to you, "Don't worry, everything is going to be fine," and despite the absolute horribleness of everything around you, you believe them. Parents can be a lot like gods in that way, you put your faith in them and hope for the best. They provide the voice of stability and comfort in your life. Unfortunately, you grow up, and as you do you start to question whether or not things really turn out OK. You start to imagine the slightest tone of doubt in your parents' voices when they tell you this. You start to wonder if they truly believe it themselves. There comes a point when you yourself just don't believe it anymore. Eventually you realize that this voice is terribly unreliable. For a lot of us, this is when we grow up. This is when the incredible shortness and intense cruelty of life suddenly becomes real to us. This is when we start to become mysteries to each other and even greater mysteries to ourselves. This is when that voice, that childhood part of us that desperately wants to believe that things will ultimately work out, disappears completely. ✂

ILLUSTRATION BY HENRY MUENCH

