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Light
Peter Markus

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LIGHT

When he wasn't working, on his days off, his father liked to spend his day outside, in the shingle-bricked, single-car garage, tinkering with his '52 Chevy Bel Air: a stoop-roofed, two-tone junker he bought off a drunk buddy of his, a fellow hot metal man by the name of Lester Litwaski, for a fifth of whiskey and a scrunched-up dollar bill. There were days when his father wouldn't take five minutes to come into the house to eat a hot lunch. Days like these his mother'd send him outside into the garage with a cold corned beef sandwich and an apple, and his father'd stop working only long enough to wolf down this food, his hands gloved with grease and dust, before ducking back under the Chevy's jacked-up back axle. Sometimes his father would fiddle around past midnight, his bent-over body half-swallowed by the open mouth of the hood, his stubby, blood-crusting fingers guided by the halogen glow of a single bare light-bulb hanging down like a cartoon thought above his hunch-backed silhouette. Sometimes he would stay up late and watch his father's shadow stretch like a yawn across the walls of the garage. And in the darkness of his room he would sit, silently, on the edge of the bed, by the window, and wait for that moment when his father raised up his hand, as if he were waving, as if he were saying good-bye, and turned off the light.