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Posthole Digger

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Posthole Digger

Jason Snart

I remove the faceplate to the light switch in the second bedroom.
This is easy. I am careful with the little screws,
set them gently in the upturned plate on the dresser.

I then unscrew, first, the bottom screw,
the one that holds the switch
tight inside the outlet box. This does not require
that I trip the breaker. Small flakes of paint
and drywall dust fall like snow globe snow.
I am pretty swift electrically, I get the idea,
and I'm ok with similes. This makes me
quite a catch for my lucky wife. A toolbelt
would suit me, I think, and casually begin
to unscrew the top screw.

Something snaps,
a flash, a blue popcorn pop, I tighten like a salted slug,
shoulders up eyes closed balls in – everything smaller –
the caveman reflex to protect what matters.

Then I peer to inspect a blackened copper wire,
the one I'd earlier screwed to the "Common" post
on the switch. I remember now,
this wire is "hot"; that's what we call them.
The live wires. That's what they're called. Hot.
And that top screw, as any electrician will tell you,
acts as the ground. This is important.

So today, a hot day, the ground heating up,
I've come to my office at the college.
I brush the dust off the raised lettering
that is glued to the window,
Associate Professor of English. Dust,
which I read somewhere is mostly human skin,
collects in the o bottoms and s tails.

Leafing through a manuscript on Thoreau,
I come across mention of a posthole digger.
A posthole is, as the *Oxford English Dictionary* will tell you,
"A hole made in the ground,
esp. to receive the foot of a post

in building a fence.” A posthole digger, noun,
is a tool for digging postholes. Seems simple enough,
safe enough. Big and substantial. Also,
this digger can be referred to as a posthole bore.

Roaches

Emily Ann Eubanks

deep black and light brown little Roaches crawl
out from under the trash on the floor
and leave footprints on my painted fingers
like Children running on a Church playground.