

The Hum's Gentle Snore: Script Excerpt

The corner of my room emits a sort of low hum – which, to be truthful, I am not sure is a hum at all. Perhaps it is merely a sensation. Or, if audible, it could be described as a buzz. It is not unlike a snore at times, when it grows louder and you can just about discern the breaks in its droning.

I am telling you this because I am sick of its bland, persistent tone, and I need you to trust me when I say it keeps me up at night, though nobody else seems to hear it.

I once cleared the corner it occupies, exposing a hole in the woodchip wallpaper, exposing nothing. And from that spot, it seemed to be elsewhere, its location suddenly set into motion, impossible to pin down.

It is four in the morning, and I can hear birds outside my window again. I've run out of ear plugs. I am trying to liken the hum to when I spent summers in rural Poland with my grandmother, and all night I could hear her breathing beyond the threshold of our mosquito curtains, which made us invisible to each other. I never felt alone there.

And the sound keeps me up like a baby, wailing, like when I was fifteen and my brother was born. It was the first time I saw my mother like that, fragile and fallible.

Once I was a woman with grey eyes, working in the cloakroom of a nightclub. I would sit on my stool reading, and I learned to drown out the blare of the speakers, but my left ear never recovered. I didn't anticipate that when my hearing weakened, it would feel so subjective, that I would struggle in conversation but the sound of electricity through walls would feel amplified somehow.

Or perhaps, it is not electricity, but all of the things which live in my room speaking their secret language. Layers and piles of objects I've collected during my life and been afraid to let go of, sometimes boxed, all whispering to each other.

Outside my window I see a dunnoek. Its song follows. I know that it is one because a book told me so

My final point, if I might call it that, is that though I was too young to remember this, my mother sometimes tells me I once caught the end of Toy Story on TV. I didn't leave her side for the rest of the day. Before I went to bed that night, I made her put all my toys in a box somewhere they would be out of sight, terrified by the idea that they might come to life.

So the sound is most audible at night, when the thick blanket of sleep surrounds my room, and in the blackness all that endures is me, and the hum's gentle snore, and the Sandman wordlessly approaching.