Owl Question
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My mother’s kitchen was asleep. Our family didn’t gather there: we lived and ate in our bedrooms hypnotized by the blue lights of tv. But, in her kitchen, pots and pans floated, belly up, in the week-old water, and our garbage, smiling, outgrew its bag. All of this very slowly, as if in a dream. My mother despises what can never truly be done so she does not care for cooking or cleaning. If one cooks a fine dinner one must wash the dishes to cook a fine breakfast to wash the dishes to cook a fine lunch and so on. My mother explained this one afternoon in the basement where the laundry grew around us like trees.

Our jungle-home was a metaphor for my mother giving in to entropy. When wine spilled on the couch and we laughed as the stain unfurled, we were embracing chaos. When we fell asleep with the lights on and the tv talking, we were the weeds in our own garden.

My mother’s kitchen was haunted. Her refrigerator leaned to one side and made only brown ice. Her biscuits were as flat as plates. But none of this mattered because we were forgetting ourselves even as we were becoming ourselves. We pursued truth, beauty, the meaning of life while
my mother’s kitchen discovered
decay. All this unraveling—
moldy food, newspapers
piling up to the ceiling.
We loved each other like that:
bananas going black on the counter,
lines coming in around our eyes.