touchstone

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+HUH ,¶P $OLYH

Dillon Rockrohr

Suburban Lamplighter

Cormac Badger

Sometimes I think
It's a good idea to go on a walk,
Fresh air, for Chrissakes, fresh air, for
Too long till I remember:

The Collection

Cormac Badger

Do You Deserve the Eggs?

Grant Samms

Act IV

Erica Ruscio

I opened your curtains to witness the blizzard, I couldnôt drive home that night, so you let me keep you warm ñ

òDan?ó Hannah and Kara were shutting the patio door. Conner dropped his cigarette and stepped on it.

òWe went out for a smoke,ó I said.

òI came to keep him some company,ó Conner said.

òKara invited us to her place tonight,ó Hannah said to me.

Kara smiled. òMy parents are out of town for a few days.ó

òIõll be blacking out,ó Conner said.

òI canõt tonight,ó I said.

òThatõs fine,ó Kara said. òYou were mostly a courtesy invite anyway.ó She and Conner laughed.

òI think Iõm going to go with them,ó Hannah said to me. òYou donõt need to drive me home.ó

òOkay.ó

Hannah turned towards Kara. òWe should take our mugs in before we go.ó

òWeõll just take them,ó Conner said. òYou guys havenõt even finished, anyway.ó

òHe has a point,ó Kara said. òWait, isnõt you guysõ anniversary coming up?ó

òTwo years tomorrow.ó I looked at Hannah.

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they feel the outcome was close. I like this table for one simple reason. I get to break the rule, and the casino has only one rule: Lose. Thatûs it. Thatûs everything. At this very table, I am ordered to lose 51% of the time.

As much as I dislike casinos, they are at least grotesquely interesting in the same way as a serial abductor. It takes victims; snatches them out of their lives. Itop]/.024 ad5ives their

On my twenty-first birthday, my dad sat me down next to him and kept

Exceptionally good, I thought, as if that outcome was anything but

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Lighthouse Theater

Charles King-Hagen

òYou make me wonder what the water looks like where youõre from,ó Hazel said.

I looked at her and smiled quietly. òWhat are you reading?ó

òStanding room only?ó my Uncle Henry asked the ticket man, when we made it to the front of the line.

Sirens

J. Tanner Rush

I m sitting o

Lil and Evelyn finally come out onto the deck. We all say hello at the same time. I lock eyes with Evelyn and smile. She smiles back. A cool breeze moves insi

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Radioisotope

Cormac Badger

òIt was only one person. His time was up. I donôt see how itôs that big of a deal.ó

òSo youôre the angel of death, now?ó Karl said, reaching for the sugar and a stirring stick. The little sticky mixing station seemed like a good confessional booth. Why not. òIs that what youôre calling yourself?ó

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òWhy couldnôt you just tell me over the phone? Why couldnôt you just

òYouôre right. SheôII totally know if she talks to a single one of them, and then IôII really have hell to pay. Catelynõs got to go.ó

òNo, "

anyone has ever been this special to me. Maybe use a better word than special. And Iům really sorry that you got sick. Sorry? And I think we are really great for

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friend and teaching me

òYou love her too much,ó I say.

òBut I love you too, son.ó

His eyebrows knit together as if his statement was an inquiry and he squints his eyes slightly like he is trying to get a better look at me. He presses his lips into a thin line. Not for the first time in my life I notice all the wrinkles in his face and wonder if Eugene was right and if I should have said something long ago. Would forty-two still look so old if I had?

Bunker Birthday

Dana Stelting-Kempf

It was his birthday again. He awoke to total darkness. He fumbled for the

Finished, he rolled the giant metal doors shut once more and took a breath. It smelled hideous, but he was used to it. At least on this side of the door,

he knew how to fix. One thing that still brought him pleasure was spending time on it and taking care of it. He took in a deep breath as the fresh well water spilled out of the Designer faucet. While both hot and cold still drew water, the water heating system was inoperable as well.

Studying chemistry had served him well over the last few years as the

Jefferson had spent a few years working on his cake. Once he felt he had it 8(adthe)-2t,(once)-4(hehea)-6d tw.itton his6(d s)5(a)-3this6((f)3(a)-3catio,e)-2(hehea)-6d writtfn thkeip.