

## 附蛆

### Tarsal Maggot

I hear a tapping. Bugs. Crustaceans. 附蛆. Their hard feet tap on the floor.

The sound taps on my eardrum.

Click, click.

There are more. They are here, tiny sounds scattering around the room. Their feet, covered with tiny hooks, plunge into the plaster. Scratching the hard surface. Flecks fall from the air.

Click, click, click.

They crawl. Their soft bellies, encased in their carapaces, drag along the floor, rubbing against the board with every step they take. Their organs are covered in hard black hair. With each step, I hear their fuzz shivering in the air.

The rotting wood creaks as they walk. More 附蛆 squeezing from the cracks.

Click.

Click, click. Two steps closer.

Click, click, click, click...

No, stop!

For a moment, silence conquers the room. But I know they are still there. Cover my ears, close my eyes. What else can I do?

A piercing shrill squeezes through my eardrums. The arthropods scream, fingernails scratching. 附蛆; cannibalistic mice.

They don't stop.

Too loud. Too loud.

They move again. They jostle, their carapaces rubbing against each other. The cacophony huddles, mixes, compresses. They jam into my eardrums. They crawl on my brain.

Too much, too much.

I don't know when or why they come. I just want them to stop. I just want them to go away, these things, these 附蛆 pockmarked into the bone.

I'll make it stop.

The sharpness pierces my temple, and I cry out. The creatures erupt into sharper screams—they cheer at their conquest.

Soon I shall have my peace.

The white light swallows me...

No, no! The voices appear again. They are inside me. I hear my body consumed. Pain burns through me. I can't move. I must endure, watching the tarsal maggots seize my flesh and feed.