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Art and Literary Journal

Requiem for Joshua Strief- A Former Tenant

Joshua,

Yesterday, after three months of residence, I received your Fort Dickinson Choral Society Newsletter titled Choral Passages, Vol 25, No 1, August 2014. In case they didn't forward one to you at your new address, I'll give you a quick rundown of the exciting season ahead.

Brahms' "Requiem" in October with two pianists and a choir. "Christmas Lights" will offer familiar Christmas music with brass. "Neon Lights: A Concert of Broadway Favorites" in late February will give the choir and soloists a chance to shine. And a celebration of John Rutter's 70 years on this planet will occur on April 26th.

While I have you here, I have a few lingering questions about the place.

How did you combat the bat population breeding in the basement?

What is the smell that grows out of the dishwasher and engulfs the kitchen?

Did you ever speak to the wheelchair bound man who sits at the edge of our yard on the sidewalk and looks into the front window for several minutes before rolling on?

Were there ever any issues with baby carriages being left in the backyard for you?

What are the stains along the baseboards in the upstairs bathroom from?

Were the mice partial more to cheese or peanut butter? (We've had more luck with the latter.)

And finally, did you live in the back room upstairs, across from the attic entrance?

If so, can you explain the black fly population as of late July?

The day I received your Choral Passages, I had to kill four flies before I went to sleep, three buzzing out in the hallway around the light and one dug deep into my desk lamp. And then tonight, I killed the same four flies in the same spots with the same newspaper, burying all eight in the bathroom toilet a day apart.

Is there some connection between your misguided pamphlet and these matured maggots?

I dug this pamphlet out of the trash after I killed the flies tonight as some sort of peace offering to the plague, and now that you know the happenings of your beloved Fort Dickinson Choral Society, won't you please call off your dogs?

My newspaper is starting to stain and there's still plenty of time to prepare for Brahms. I'll chalk the ant situation at the start to sour milk and springtime but if they're yours too, put out honey at your own doorstep and leave mine alone.

This threshold is already teeming with the things you and all the others have left behind.

From your former home,

Simon L.

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