

WHORL

A horror short from Troy Bush

"Based on a dream I had."

We're suddenly hit with a familiar sound from the **BLACK--**

Water POURING out a faucet.

Into a tub.

STRIKING a pool.

Then -

- FOOTFALLS. Almost inaudible.

MAN (O.S.)
Here you go.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

CU

We see the boy's reflection.

And an appendage appears. Holding a white object. Can also see the shadows against the veiny marble.

It drops--SPLASH, ripple--a Lego boat into the water.

Another hovers another toy over the water. Harder to determine than the last because of the rippling.

The Man gently presses the toy against the child's face, and goes;

MAN (O.S.)
Nom-nom-nom-nom!
(evil voice)
Mmm. Children.

Drops--SPLASH, ripple--a rubber Great White Shark.
Playtime before the part this little progeny finds tedious.

MAN (O.S.)
What're you supposed to say?

LITTLE BOY (O.S.)
... Thank you.

MAN (O.S.)
Yer welcome.

Small hands lay the shark over the stern of the boat.

Like an aspiring film director, ED wants to get this all in one motion. But knows he must let the shark float to pop

"Lego Quint" off his respective--"Thanks, *Urban Dictionary*."--
agony nipples.

Typical of a kid his age, he brews over things he can never even hope to control.

Lays the shark back on the bow!

Drags "Lego Quint" down the boat with his finger!

He does his best to mimic the screams of the legendary Robert Shaw as he slides him toward the shark's maw! Louder than the water striking the pool.

MAN (O.S.)
Neighbors are gonna come aknockin',
Ed.

Focus breaking...

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Please, lower the volume.

Focus broken.

ED (O.S.)
You ruined it.

MAN (O.S.)
Watch it.

ED (O.S.)
Now I have to start over.

MAN (O.S.)
I'll get over-I'm over it. Lower.
The. Volume. And apologize. And
mean it. Or no more playin'.

CU BREAKS.

A cute little boy with tightly-cut blonde hair and big brown eyes.

He's 4.

Swallows his annoyance to say;

ED
Sorry.

A hairy arm comes into the FRAME and turns off the water.

ED
Wait. MAN (O.S.)
I just thought of somethin'.

It belongs to

OTTO has gotten a belly since having children, but that doesn't distract from his handsome face. He looks like Robert Redford in *Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid*.

ED
Can we fill it up more?

OTTO
No, that's enough.

ED
Please?

OTTO
Might as well've had your head
under the water. I said--

He pouts.

OTTO
("Or else...")
Don't do that.

Ed forces the indignation behind fake contentment; something Otto has gotten used to making peace with.

The father grabs the bottle of shampoo.

No tears. A fucking lie. Always a fucking lie.

As Otto squeezes the strawberry-scented, glistening ooze out of the bottle and into his palm, he continues with what he was trying to say;

OTTO
I thought of somethin': Make sure
you don't play JAWS in the tub when
yer mom's here.

OTTO
Or hum the theme song. ED
Okay.

ED
Okay.

OTTO
Or say anythin' from the movie.

ED
Okay.

OTTO
Or talk about it while she's close
by.

ED
Okay.

OTTO

Ya know what, don't talk about it
with anybody but me. And if ya do,
she can't be close by, OK?

He's getting sick of saying the same thing again and again;

ED

Okay.

Sets the bottle back in its original spot.

Rubs the shampoo between his hands.

OTTO

Was kind of entertaining watching
ya pee yerself.

ED

What's that mean?

*Is he talking about the metaphor or how it was for him to
watch him run out of the scared more than once?*

OTTO

Means it was fun.

Ed doesn't know what to say.

He lets it go to address something he's deemed more
important;

ED

I want--

OTTO

Did ya want to know what "pee
yerself" means? What I meant by it.

ED

That I was scared.

OTTO

Yeah.

(beat)

What were ya gonna say? Sorry.

ED

Uh... I want a bigger boat.

Otto doesn't know if he's quoting--or rather attempting to
quote--the movie or ...

ED (CONT'D)
And a bigger shark.

The "or."

ED (CONT'D)
I want... i-it to be bigger.
(shakes the toys;
referring to the scene he
reenacted)
This to be bigger.

OTTO
Do ya?

ED
Yeah. Real bigger.

OTTO
Real bigger?

ED
And better.

OTTO
I want a sixpack. Even though yer
mom likes a keg better.

ED
What?

He's correct in thinking that's a 'no.'

OTTO
No.

ED
But--

OTTO
No. None of those.
(points)
And don't do it.

ED
(pouting)
Don't do what?

OTTO
That. Save up yer allowance.

ED
That'll take a long time.

OTTO
Good things do.

ED
... But what if you bought it now--

OTTO
Ya know what I'm gonna say. And ya
know what ya shouldn't do now.

The suppression is harder this time.

Out of nowhere -

- Ed's nether regions tighten, much like his face. He has total control over what his dad does to him. The little light bulb.

OTTO
(to himself more than Ed)
Maybe you'll be a lawyer someday.

ED'S POV
The toilet.

He's got to use it.

Cycle through colors.

Aspect ratio fluctuates.

OTTO
(kind of disappointed)
Then, I'd have to stop makin' that,
"What do you call ten lawyers at
the bottom of the ocean?" joke, I
guess.

Otto lathers his head.

Mmm. Strawberries.

But that pleasantness dilutes when Otto sees that relieved face on his son.

Fluttering eyelids with a sigh of disgust.

He looks directly at Ed--aka us.

OTTO
Are you kidding me, Ed?!

Blink.

Now that he's done it, Ed is regretting his decision.

OTTO (CONT'D)
 What do you see right behind me?
 (quickly realizes;
 corrects)
Next to me?

Blink.

ED (V.O.)
 ... I'm sorr--

Blink. Blink.

OTTO
 Is this a barn or a house we're in?

He's scary when he's mad.

Blink. Blink. Blink.

OTTO
 You gonna talk, pigmo?

Ed's mouth has gone to chalk.

Blink.

ED (V.O.)
 I--

Speech stifles.

Dry.

Full... of powder? And some itty bitty solids?

Blinking--Reaches into his mouth, and pulls out CRUSHED
 CHALK.

Blink.

Otto stands and walks, not out of the bathroom, but into the
 linen closet. Nothing but blackness inside.

Blink. Blink.

Closes the door.

Silence.

Blink.

Tries to speak through the white, bitter dust;

ED

Daaahhh!

He gags on it! A white cloud shoots out!

He coughs!

Nothing. No answer in the form of words or oncoming footfalls.

Blink. Blink.

A beat of waiting.

ED

Dad?!

Still nothing.

Blink.

A beat of waiting.

Blinking--Dread sets in. Like the water has gone cold, and has traveled up into his bottom-half's orifices.

ED

Daddy?

No beat;

ED

DADDY!?

Blink. Blink.

An ominous, ear-raping musical note rings in sequence with the FLASHING LIGHTS!

Too scared to scream.

Freezes.

Eyes widen. The FRAME is BLURRY at the edges.

BLACKNESS

...

Gentle splashing.

Breathing.

...

The lights come back on.

Blink. Blink.

The tiles surrounding the tub decay.

Blink.

They're worse.

Chipped away.

Blink.

More rotten.

The water he's in has gone tepid and filthy. Molding debris floating on the surface.

Blink. Blink.

More rotten.

There's something below.

Resting at the bottom.

Ed flinches. Swish. Blinking.

The wall's more rotten.

Long. Motionless. Starts thick. At the edge of the drain. The lid of which has rusted off. Gets thinner along the length. Needle-thin at the end.

Blinks.

It twitches slightly at the tip.

Blinks.

A small, solid something strikes the water behind him.

A short-lived ripple rushes into the FRAME.

Ed looks behind him--swishing--to see a SCALY, SPIKED LIZARD TAIL disappear into the wall. Blink. As soon as his eyes catch it, we hear the little critter tunneling; TCH-TCH-TCH-TCH-TCH--The sound ceases once the tail is gone. Cuts right off, like someone hit the mute button. The wall's more rotten.

WHAT?!

Blink. Blink.

The wall's more rotten.

Turns toward the door, rising to leave! The wall's more rotten.

Blink.

More rotten.

The water around him freezes!

Blink. Blink. Blink.

More rotten.

Can't move!

One hand free!

Tries screaming for help; but his mouth only fills with more chalk!

Blink. Blink.

More rotten.

A piece of tile strikes the ice!

Reacts!

Blink. Blink. Blink.

More rotten.

Hears the scratches again upon laying eyes on the tail!

Comes and goes as quickly as the re-growable appendage!

...

Blink.

More rotten.

Something big and black squeezes out of the drain, melting a tunnel through the ice!

Blurry. At the end of the tongue, that only gets shorter and shorter. Gone. Inside.

...

Eyes wide. The FRAME is BLURRY at the edges.

Cooks its way out of the ice. The ice cracks--CRRK-CRRK.
Bubbles pop.

It breaks the surface! Steam tendrils rise! Ice cracks
elongate--CRRK-CRRK!

A glistening, obsidian iguana-like aberration. Strangely, no
teeth. Licks its chops. Its hungry.

Ed brings a fist down, skewering onto a nasty line of
poisoned-smearred spikes! It melts through his flesh so fast
that when he yanks his hand away, it rips right through it!
Steam rises off the wounds! It fucking stinks!

Screaming through the chalk!

His mouth gets full to the point where he can't make any
noise!

The creature clamps its claws into the ice, lunges onto Ed,
digging the claws into his stomach!

Ed screams, falling back as far as the ceased arm allows!

There's the ceiling!

Looks down at the creature!

Cooks his way into his organs' housing!

Rips into his intestines!

Blood fountains! Falls onto Ed's eyes--spraying the FRAME in
crimson!

Then--from the bottom of the FRAME--a blanket covers it!

BLACK

WHORL

*NOTE: Don't show the kid's dingus! No one wants to fucking
see that, shit! No one who's right in the head, anyway.