

Rend...

It began as a tear: a small shift in the space-time continuum. They happen all the time; in the void, in stars, in planets. They come and go. Unnoticed. But not this one; this one evolved in the belly of a mouse. It began as life; so it had life. And hunger... ravenous hunger.

“Billy” his mother yelled at him from the kitchen, “did you check that trap you set last night?”

“Not yet, mama,” he yelled back at her, “but I will.”

“He’s a good boy,” she thought, “he’s always ready with a yes.” She was musing on how she might reward her son’s goodness when, suddenly, a shriek, a cry of intense horror and pain, tore through the kitchen. She had never in her life heard such a scream...

She raced onto the rear porch to find her son slumped on the floor, snapping to and fro in powerful convulsions, as if yanked by a giant string held by a giant claw.

“Billy, oh god, what’s wrong? Oh baby, what...” she moaned at the writhing shape as she reached down to touch it...him. She tried to stop his wild twisting. He shook and spun around in her grip until she looked directly into what had been his face and a wave of nauseous terror swept through her.

Where Billy’s face had been was now a huge bloody gash, through which blood, brain, mucus and saliva poured out. The gash widened and spread into his neck and then into his shirt collar. She heard a popping, tearing, rending sound as his body was ripped open.

She was so numbed with shock that she didn’t notice when her hand, where she was touching Billy, had a small gash open in it and then race up her forearm. Before she had time to scream, her body was torn to shreds.

What was left of her slumped onto Billy. What ever it was, it joined them. Together...forever...mother and son...and it. They congealed together, as fresh blood congeals from a slash. They and it, whatever it was, were one.

From nothing, came something, something joined with more. Sensation flooded this new creature, formed of nothing torn from nothing... and small...and bigger...and bigger yet. Dissolved and coagulated over and over. Ripped and joined, until all became one. The body grew, the mind grew, the hunger grew...it wanted more.

Billy’s dad pulled his ancient Chevy pick-up into the driveway. It had been a long day at the office and he was bushed. All he wanted to do was kiss mama and Billy, collapse into his favorite chair and fall asleep watching TV. He never got to do anything but kiss mama.

“Hi honey, I’m home,” he called out as he walked through the front door.