

Killing Its Parents

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What a thing to do to a child: put
it in a sandbox, and watch
as everything slips through its fingers.

When it is old enough to take revenge,
it will plant a hex in the cellar,
water the markings with dust,
and watch the tombstones grow.
From then on its hands will be the wrong shade
no matter how much it washes them in light.

Years before the bodies are packed away,
the ghosts will be about,
lurking in bathroom mirrors, its mate's face,
the gestures of its offspring;
and staring surly,
should it try to look at itself
or at something it loves.

Years before the bloodless deed is finally done,
it will hire exorcists:
paying dearly for the couch rites
of the strange doctors
who dabble in the dark arts of therapy.
Each evening
when it could be in bed with a friend,
it will polish the totems in the cellar
until it is time to mark the pale stone
with names and dates
and move them out to the graveyard.

And on that day,
it will find offspring playing there,
soil running through their fingers
like sand which the sun has baked
to the color of shadow.