

Crowd
by Eric Cecil

Many have gathered at the far side of a house. There they clamor and fuss, elbows and shoulders angling into hips and necks.

Trying, explains a woman from a nearby window, to see my sister.

She smirks, but the look and its meaning are lost. I don't recognize her. Nor do I know her sister.

Still I find myself at the edge of the crowd, which now kneels at the foundation of the house. Here they peer into a deep well that has swallowed the patio, a hole that darkens the corner of a withering lawn. When I kneel with them, they stir, jostling me back to my feet. The hole is elusive through their ranks. And so, I think, is the sister.

Cistern, intones a man of the crowd. She meant to say cistern.

His voice is deep, impassive.