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Chasing Cars - 1st place 2017

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Chasing Cars

I know you know him. Maybe you didn't see a him. It doesn't matter, him, her, it, the thing that followed you as a child. On long car rides, rain streaking the window, you'd look out and see it running beside your car. To me, it was a man. Tall and thin, shriveled like a decaying corpse with wide unblinking eyes, no mouth, no clothes, running on all fours like a dog. It never looked where it was going, only at me, and I couldn't look away.

I never saw it anywhere else. I had no fear of it being in my closet or under my bed, only outside my car's window. I'd try to avoid looking at it, but I could feel its eyes boring into me just a few feet away. For something that looked so dead, its eyes were alive. I don't know what it wanted from me, what it wanted from us. Yes, us. I know there are others. I know you've seen it too. We all have.

For some it was a woman, others a shapeless cloud of black smoke. The forms are limitless, but its behavior is always the same. Running beside the car, staring. We never talked about it as children. A majority of the people I interviewed had forgotten about it. I had too until I noticed my daughter staring out the car window one day, transfixed by something I couldn't see. Now, I can see it again, like talking about it brought it back to life. I'm writing this down for anyone who wants to remember, but be careful. It can hear you, and it knows where you are.