

## Untitled

Lying in my bed at the end of the day, I listened to the clicking of my father's typewriter from the den downstairs. It was a sound I heard every night. *Tap, tap, tickticktick tap, tap.* This sound was one I have learned to love and desperately loathe. It was a sound that made me shake with fury and cry out in despair. But it was also a sound that hypnotized me. Why was I so vexed by this sound? Why was it so hard to block out? These were the questions that terrorized me every night as I listened to my father type his life away in the den.

You see, my father has been dead for three years. Yet every night I hear his typewriter clicking away as if he were still here. Of course, I know he is not, no. He can't be. How could I think something so silly? Dead is dead and gone is gone.

"Yes, yes, he is gone," I told myself one morning, looking into the mirror, trying to convince myself of the truth. I examined the dark bags under my eyes from night upon night of insomnia. I felt the wrinkles in the corners of my eyes and three days worth of stubble on my cheeks, along the line of my jaw, and down my neck. I leaned in and stared into my eyes. It was all I left of him. My eyes looked identical to his and it disgusted me. I turned away from the mirror, wishing his memory away.

So this is how my life has been for the past three years. I am a twenty-two year old, single, unemployed man living with my Mom. On top of that, I thrive on the memory of my father, typing on his typewriter every night in his den. The child in me looked forward to hearing it every night, but the sensible part of me dreaded it. As each year passed, it drove me to the breaking point. I'd gone mad with his tapping every

night. Now, every noise I hear sounds like the haunting *taptaptap* of his fingers on the smooth black keys of the typewriter.

Tonight, the sound was deafening to me. I could hear it echoing through the halls, calling me, taunting me. I pressed my hands over my ears and begged for it to stop. Each tap made my bones shudder. I was overcome with paranoia and terror.

“Why is this happening to me?” I cried out, tears streaming down my cheeks.  
“What did I do to deserve this?”

Quaking with fear and delirious with insanity, I got up and ran downstairs. I had to put a stop to the tapping of my father’s typewriter. When I got to the door of the den, I paused, took a deep breath, and flung open the door to the room that hadn’t been touched in three years.

It was like slow motion. Walking across the room, I dragged my finger across the smooth surface of the dusty desk, revealing a line of polished wood. His books were still opened on his desk. It seemed unreal.

The last time I was in this room, he was in it. My hands shook as I opened a drawer and fingered through papers, finding his old works. My eyes outlined the room, and I sat down in his chair, placed my fingers on the round, dusty black keys, and let go. I closed my eyes and let all the weight of his death off my chest. I let my heart flow from my fingertips. I wrote to him.

Before I knew it, my throat was burning and my lip was quivering, and tears were raging down my face. I put all the emotions I had trapped inside, down on paper. I sat in that room, in his chair, my fingers where his fingers lived, and wrote pages upon pages to

my father. I told him everything I wanted to say since his death. I wrote until the birds sang in the morning.

I was free from the emotion I had trapped inside for years. I felt so relieved. From that point on, I slept at night, visited his den often, and wrote on his typewriter daily. Sometimes, I would just sit in his chair reading his works, laughing about the past. I was never haunted again by the tapping of his typewriter.

- Heather Haynes