



## NICHOLAS WALTON

*Oh, it's my turn? Good. My name is Nicholas Walton, and I think it's pretty rad that I got in this publication. Maybe it'll take me to a further destination. See, when I got my application I had a sort of revelation. Maybe some day, I could write stories popular around the entire nation.*

## KNOCK KNOCK

We'd heard about him, our new, very rich neighbor. His house was black and grey and damp, and it stunk like a van on a roadtrip.

But back to the door.

My mom glanced through the peephole, unlocked the door, and went back to cooking. She was making baked chicken. Cheers to payday?

I hesitantly opened the door.

"Ah. Hello! It's me, your best and most important neighbor, Matthew!"

His foghorn voice was murder to my ears. I tried not to wince.

He invited himself inside. His feet tracked wet footprints as he threw his gaudy designer jacket onto our couch. He then continued his slippery march into the kitchen. The squelching noise from his boots dented my formerly hefty appetite.

He insisted on giving my mom one of those weird European cheek kisses from the movies. The ticking from the oven became steadily more persistent. Heavens, no! He scattered our antique silverware onto the kitchen floor.

At this point, I had no idea what he was going to do. Frankly, I was scared, and I started chewing my nails. My mom gave him the evil eye.

Somehow it got worse. We had some watercolors on the walls courtesy of the fantastic artist, Mel Walton. They fell off the wall, and it looked like the world somehow turned upside down, like a Salvador Dali painting of a house. His rapid movements dispersed the stench of his Macho Man Supreme cologne all over.

And, as a grand finale, he ripped our electricity box from the wall. We just stood there in shocked silence as he romped out the front door. The smell of burnt chicken overpowered the scent of his Macho Man Supreme cologne.