

# Flash

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Edited by  
Peter Blair and Ashley Chantler

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## BUT I DO NOT KNOW WHAT

Ben Roth

I am walking home when a boy stops me: 'Can you help me, mister?' I ask him what's wrong, and he says his father has stopped moving. He takes my hand, tugging me down the sidewalk. I follow him to a rundown motel nearby, not sure what else to do. He leads me up a staircase and down the open walkway that stretches across the front of the building, overlooking the parking lot, to an ajar door. He waits, looking up at me. I knock. 'Hello? Anyone there?' I call. I push the door open and take a step into the room. A man dressed in boxers and a sleeveless undershirt sits, his elbows on the table, holding a sandwich in front of his mouth, which is twisted into a rictus of a smile. 'Uh, I'm sorry, but is everything okay?' He doesn't move, but he is clearly breathing, and his eyes follow me as I take another step into the room. There is a nest of blankets on the floor in the closet; the boy must be sleeping there. Something is happening here, but I do not know what.