THEY WERE AWAKE
By Rebecca Evanhoe

The ladies gathered for one of their potlucks. They brought beautiful dishes. Red cabbage marinated in vinegars and slow-cooked with nutmeg and caraway seed. Salade nicoise with basil and thyme tossed in with the greens, the best Spanish sardines in olive oil, and farm eggs perfectly boiled, the orange yolks on the cusp between soft and hard.

The ladies were happy, and they were pleased to see one another. As they took their places at the table, they were quiet and polite, passing napkins and plates and cutlery, spooning the salad and cabbage with big wooden spoons onto plates. After a few glasses of wine, the ladies became chatty, laughing and drawing one another into conversation: “Emma, I thought of you when so-and-so was quoted in today’s paper,” and “Amy, it seems like you could say a thing or two about that.”


They began to tell one another about their recent dreams. They’d all been having anxious dreams, every one of them, even though life had been treating them well. Becca began the discussion as she poured dressing over her salad. She said, “Last week, I had this dream that I owed money to the gas company. There was this loud knock on the door, and when I went to the door, there was just this bright-orange notice saying that I owed hundreds of dollars. And then I went to the gas-company offices—it looked like the office I used to work in. And the man, who was my uncle Charley—looked like my uncle Charley—he was very passive-aggressive with me. I said I wanted to pay him, and I went to my wallet, and it was full of Monopoly money! All those pink and yellow bills... I said that someone must be playing a joke on me, all I had was Monopoly money, and he said in this menacing way, ‘Yes, a joke, of course. But where is your real money?’ I woke up in a panic. I checked my account balances online, everything had been paid for, but for a few hours I couldn’t shake the feeling that there must be some bill I hadn’t paid.”

The ladies laughed. “I had a wild dream, too, earlier this week,” said Emma. “I don’t often remember my dreams, but I woke up in a funk and couldn’t forget this one. I dreamed that an ex-lover of mine and I were in his apartment. Not the apartment he has now—the apartment he had ten years ago, when we first met. And it was full of incredible artwork. Actual, beautiful, rare artwork. And I remember him locking the door behind him, you know? I mean, I saw him do it,”

“Untitled #4,” a photograph by Laura Letinsky from her III Form & Void Full series. Letinsky’s work will be on view in September at Yancey Richardson Gallery, in New York City, and a monograph of the series will be published in October by Radius Books. Courtesy the artist and Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York City.

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