

# The Past's Present

The July heat beats down on a cracked street, rundown houses line the sidewalks with dirt-tinted windows and chipped paint. A squinting Trevor Hill emerges from the door of the house of the corner with his uneven, did-it-himself haircut and untucked city uniform flailing around him in the wind. He makes his way through driveway, passing the rusted Ford Focus and turning towards the city's sanitation center. He will start his daily route, a path he's walked hundreds of times over his 2 year stint with the city.

As he mindlessly trudges on, his thoughts wander to the usual escape from reality – film, the one thing Trevor can rely on for comfort in his depressed routine. His passion for film was a relatively newfound pursuit as he only started creating in his teenage years, the one completed project remains the highlight of his youth since both of his parents struggled heavily with addiction. Memories of loneliness and hunger scar his childhood and continue to haunt him, even in his adult life.

The short journey concludes as Trevor walks under the large black letters into the grey building, his only greeting is an empty stare from the secretary as she feeds paper into the shredder. Heavy feet carry him towards his locker, the cold iron grate

chills his fingers on contact. Trevor grabs the keys off their hook and makes his way back out the door preparing for the draining hours ahead, he will spend the remainder of the day (and much of the night) collecting the trash from Powell's residence. Trevor allows his thoughts to wander once more as he begins his trek around the city, and he curses the town for the millionth time wondering how a place with only 7,000 people creates such a hopeless feeling of entrapment. Trevor turns the truck down Queens Boulevard, he passes his childhood home and gives it a long look, most nights it sits dark and empty but tonight there was a bin in the front and a light on the porch.

Perplexed Trevor stares, it had been years since his parents moved out and left the mobile home unoccupied. He exits the vehicle and lets his legs carry him cautiously towards the black can, he opens the lid to reveal a white trash bag. Beat by curiosity he gently unties the knot to reveal the contents, inside sits the traditional pile of discarded and used wrappers or peels, Trevor sifts through it for a minute before finding a strange object. He pulls the damaged photograph from a cluster of eggshells and stares at the family. Trevor sits between his father's half closed eyes seem to look right through the camera and his mother who scratches at covered wrists. He blinks himself out of a deep nostalgic trance and pockets the photo before reboarding the truck and continuing his route. Waking up the next morning Trevor feels the deep pang of disappointment similar

to that experience in his teenage years when looking at his father's drug riddled state. A sudden fear washes over Trevor as he swings himself out of bed and rushes towards to get dressed, the growing sense of urgency tugs at him and forces him out the door and into the summer air. He fumbles with the keys to the beaten blue vehicle before finally slotting them in the door, he slides into the drivers seats and takes a deep breath before reversing out of the driveway. He turns the wheel one way, then the other before hitting the gas and driving towards the town limits, in his mirror he sees the Powell houses fading into the blur of Wyoming's empty landscape.