

Ashley Rebhun

The Skids

Roosted on my window seat, I reach the point in Roald Dahl's *Matilda* where Ms. Trunchbull threatens the new student with locking her in the "chokie." Stacy purrs on my lap. Rain drops quietly ricochet off the antique tin roof. Halloween's coming; I see the orange characterized reminders lining the leeway to the wrap around porch across the street. I need to put the final touches on my Anne of Green Gables costume. "Who you tryin' to get crazy with ese? Don't you know I'm loco?" obtrusively enters my room. She has played this every Saturday, cleaning day, since the album's release in June.

My bedroom door flings open, "don't make me wreck shit, hectic next, get the chair, got me goin' like General Electric," her back is turned to me and she circulates her derriere in my door way. After eternal gyration finally she turns to face me, out of breath and silently hands me the vacuum. My mother has become a voodoo priestess chanting away with the war cry against Chubb Rock. I wonder if she even realizes this is a diss. I wonder if she even knows what a diss is. Please just bake cookies.

The vacuum dulls the insaneness seeping from the faux-wood encased JVC speakers we picked up from the thrift shop a few weeks ago. The speakers endure the \$2 handwritten on the orange tag from the discount catacomb of the Catholic Church down the block. We walk there every other Saturday, on the way to ballet, just to browse. I love their selection of books, it's where I picked up *Matilda* for 10 cents, but the shop always smells like rat turds and moth balls. Or maybe that's the nuns. "Fat boy on a diet, don't try it. I'll jack yo' ass like a looter in a riot,"

waffles through the mechanicalized hum of the vacuum. I glance over, as she sprays Pledge, the gyrations stumble over her frustration in the inability to rap. Her moves are like a broken-down Whirlpool washing machine stuck on spin cycle. Where are the yellow pages? I need a number for the Maytag repair man. Or maybe an exorcist. I shall ask the nuns, this afternoon, if they have an opening in their schedule next Saturday.