

“Bored to Death”

By Haley Parker

Three letters for “**Nile viper.**” *Asp.* It was always *Asp.* Jaime’s attention drifted from the crossword puzzle in his lap.

Jaime was bored. With his wife. His job. His family. And now...this vacation. Jaime had booked himself a weekend getaway to a “haunted” bed and breakfast with the hope of finding some adventure. But after his first night was filled with not so much as a single ghost, Jaime decided to wallow even more deeply in his boredom.

And so he sat, filling out a boring crossword puzzle in a boring copy of *The Newfoundland Record*. Jaime’s attention was brought back only by a scratching sound coming from his lap. The answer to six down was being scrawled across the puzzle in dark red ink. Five-letter word for “**family lineage.**”

Blood.

Jaime felt something he hadn’t felt in a long time: Fear. A light tickle on the back of Jaime’s neck made him shudder. The tickle transformed into a squeeze as a pair of scabby hands wrapped themselves around his neck. Adrenaline pulsed through Jaime’s veins. The hands squeezed tighter. The long, cracked fingernails carved half-moon incisions into Jaime’s neck. Jaime was choking, terrified, and absolutely enthused. The talons plunged deep into his neck and plucked his vocal chords loose one by one. Jaime fell to the floor, writhing in pain, but he couldn’t look away as the creature devoured him one organ at a time. Jaime lay on the floor, the world darkening around him, and had one last thought, “I can’t die yet. Things are finally getting interesting.”