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Nightmare of Forehead Stew

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Nightmare of Forehead Stew

Claw hands
grip my shoulders
and whip my
dreaming mind
from sleep.

"Hey little girl,"
gurgling words
pound their way
to my ears,
"Jesus is off
the boat!"

A breeze of
day-old
White Castle
wafts to my
unwilling nose.

His fingers
pry open
my eyes.
I grimace
at the wretched
dying mane
gathering into
cornhusk hair.

It's a man
(a.k.a. Forehead Stew)
arrayed in
clashing plaid.

He licks my
cheek, slurping
with mock joy,
then glumps
out of my room
leaving me with
nightmares and
a damp face.

by Marla McGuire