

Invasion

When the big bees that eat wood come flying out of the dead tree in the canyon, looking like felons because they're orange instead of black, and the bug people at the local university tell you, "That's not possible—they're never orange. You must be imagining things"—

Or a tiny triangular clam the color of an African herbivore manages to conquer the Great Lakes and other large American bodies of water, and turns out not to be from Asia at all and driven by no goal other than tedious procreation—

Or that luscious vine (not the one you're thinking of) covers a block-long junkyard in Tennessee in only two months because it and its brothers are under the mistaken impression that old dead rusty cars somehow matter to us—

Or (and this one you know as well as I do) something comes to your house in the night. You can't see it. It takes one of your socks, but not both, takes another (but not both), then crawls under the beds of your children to terrify them and yet never ever comes out to "get" them—

When you see these things, you know that some alien civilizations just aren't as smart or fast or emotionally invested as others—that, in fact, what you've grown up with your whole life, what you love about this world, is actually just them trying their damndest to invade a planet even if they've forgotten why.

—Bruce McAllister

