

HOMEMAKING

GEORGE SUCH

A dung beetle stands on his hind legs and rolls a monkey turd forward against a vertical rise of the stone steps I'm climbing, near the top of the Daulatabad Fort. He pushes the olive-colored sphere up the step as high as he can reach. Then, unbalanced, it falls and knocks him on his back.

He wants to make it his home, an Indian boy says, who's come to see what I've been spying. They eat the dung and lay their eggs inside it. We watch the beetle push his boulder up the step, wincing as it bowls him over, rolling him down to a lower step, holding it tight against his body. And he won't let go. He keeps trying to hoist it up.