

TETRACYCLINE

BY BRIAN HENSHAW

WINNER OF THE
JOHN GARDNER
MEMORIAL PRIZE IN
FICTION

Brian had a sister named Helen. When she was one or two, Brian hit her in the head with a rock. This caused a scar on her forehead, just above the hairline, a slice slightly longer than the width of a fingernail. The scar wouldn't have mattered to Helen, she probably wouldn't have noticed it, except it ruined her widow's peak and made her ugly.

Brian didn't remember doing it. For as long as he could remember, he couldn't remember. The family's story was that he was a liar, so of course he would deny everything. This did become his policy, but he had not yet adopted it at four or five, which was his age when he hit his sister in the head with a rock.

When Brian was eight, his family moved to Michigan. His Ohio friends said Michigan was without a doubt the worst place a person could be from. And now it seemed he was from there. He tried to be from Ohio for about a week, but no. It was football season. He decided it would be easier to lie low while the bruises healed, and just be from Michigan from now on.

For a few days after the move, Brian's mother walked him to school. She spoke of Helena and pecans, these being her mother and the state nut of Texas. The topic of Helena required Brian's mother to shake her head in admiration.

"What?" Brian would say, knowing what.

And Brian's mother would say, "Helena is something else."

Brian knew that something else was the third and highest order of something you could be. Some people were something. Others were really something. But only Helena was something else.

Brian's mother said Helena used to walk her to school. She said Helena used a rubber ball to knock pecans out of trees. She said Helena stuffed pecans into the pockets of Miserable Cousin Margaret. She said Miserable Cousin Margaret always walked with them and was the only one with pockets. She said Helena didn't think girls should have pockets. She said Miserable Cousin Margaret didn't like pecans and wanted her own mother to walk her. She said Miserable Cousin Margaret was always wanting things she couldn't have.

Henshaw: Tetracycline

Brian didn't know Miserable Cousin Margaret. He wouldn't meet her until Helena's funeral, which would not be for some time. They would have a talk then, and he'd wish they'd done it sooner.

When Brian was nine, he lost two teeth at the dentist's. Brian was drugged—he was one of those kids you had to drug—so he didn't resist. He was not ready for these teeth to come out. Not recently, a friend of his parents had complimented his smile. Some nights he thought himself to sleep by recalling nice things people had said, and this was always the first thing he thought of.

From one excavation, a new tooth poked through. The dentist tapped it with his weapon, narrating to his hygienist that this was a textbook example of a tetracycline stain, the result of exposure to the antibiotic tetracycline. He phoned his partner to come look. None of them had seen a tetracycline stain on a live tooth and there was talk of getting into a magazine.

The hygienist went to the lobby to ask Brian's mother if it would be okay to take a photograph.

Dimly, Brian became aware of the sound of reprimand. At first he did not recognize the voice as his mother's. She—who didn't shout threats at youth hockey games like Mrs. Kirkhart; who didn't sunbathe "in the French style" like the Cochrane divorcee; who didn't go to movies by herself; who performed no useful seasonal functions, like candying watermelon rinds or orange peels for the neighborhood kids; she, with this new voice that was hers and not hers—was giving the dentist a piece of her mind.

She said it couldn't be a tetracycline stain, because Brian had never been exposed to tetracycline, because she when pregnant had not taken tetracycline, and he had not been given tetracycline, not in infancy, not ever.

He wondered if maybe this was her work persona.

He knew she was a doctor but hadn't thought anything of it. She was boring and embarrassing in person and he assumed she was boring and embarrassing at work, too. It had not occurred to him that she could outrank anybody. She had shrunk the dentist to cigarette butt size and

snuffed him under her heel without so much as raising her voice.

He felt like the owner of an unruly and dangerous dog, and that people should watch their step around him from now on.

His mother's name was Henrietta, but nobody knew it. Almost nobody. By the time she was old enough to say her name, it wasn't her name anymore. Her friends and parents called her Judy. Her sister called her many things. For everyone else, she preferred Doctor Henshaw or Mom. Those were the choices.

Nobody had ever heard Brian's father (the other Doctor Henshaw) call her anything. He referred to her—"your mother" this, "your mother and I" that—but no one had ever heard him say her name.

In the car, Doctor Henshaw coaxed open Brian's jaw for a follow-up exam, shining the light from her compact into his mouth, still lecturing in absentia the tiny dentist carcass in a charged but cool monotone he missed most of, apart from the words *German Measles* and *idiopathy*, which, the way she said it, sounded to him like a pretty good insult.

Then she fixed her hair helmet in the rearview mirror, and said, back to her usual cheery birdbrain voice, "How about ice cream?"

He was still groggy from being the kind of kid you had to drug, and passed out drooling with his face pressed to the cool car window. He awakened to the giggling of Helen and her sometimes friend Katie Dutch, whose elbows and backpacks now crowded him in the back seat like they had been there all along. Jarring as it could be, it was not unusual for Helen to materialize for special events.

This was the day he learned he hit his sister in the head with a rock. He eavesdropped on Helen telling the story to Katie Dutch at Breslow's Ice Cream Parlor. It seemed like she was describing something that happened that afternoon. He had been selecting his scoops and missed the beginning of the story, so he waited to find out who threw the rock and why.

When he discovered that he was the villain, he laughed and said it was a lie. He didn't mean for it to be a villainous laugh, but that's

how it came out. Helen, never one to be contradicted, threw herself into a performance of a crying person wronged at an ice cream parlor. Doctor Henshaw urged him to apologize. He refused. His reward was canceled. Helen proudly showed Katie Dutch her deviated widow's peak. Katie Dutch pretended to be impressed despite not knowing what a widow's peak was and thinking it didn't sound good.

That night, he tried to tell Doctor Henshaw he was sorry. He found her standing in the bathtub cursing ferns. These were gifts of Grandma Helena—one for each of her visits—and they lived in pots on the window sill. Helena had advised that ferns love bathrooms “because the moisture reminds them of home.” Doctor Henshaw mistook this to mean that they needed lots of water, so she had given it to them, which is why they were dead. Now she would have to replace them before Helena's next visit, and Helena would not be fooled.

Brian rocked in the doorjamb like he could blow over. He couldn't bear for her to be angry with him, and she had been angry at the ice cream parlor. His idea was to say he was sorry and hope that she didn't ask why, because he was not sorry about the thing she wanted him to be sorry about. He didn't want to be the kid who threw the rock. He didn't want to be the kid who denied he threw the rock. He didn't want to be the kid who didn't remember he threw the rock. He hoped that he could just say he was sorry and she wouldn't ask too many questions.

But he knew she would, so he didn't say he was sorry. He just stood there and tried to look it.

The next day was a church day and they put on their woolen punishment clothes and crammed themselves into the pews at Saint Thomas. From the thick of the congregation, Brian's view was of fancy hats and bald spots; gloves and purses on pews; gray puddles where they had tracked in snow; and a distant white sky of ceiling. He would spend most of the hour studying the ceiling. He was a connoisseur of ceilings.

Pale wooden beams divided his sky into trapezoids that were fun to count or rearrange. If you squinted, you could make the beams disappear. They were nearly the same color as the plaster, and looked more

embossed than structural. Even the high-wire Jesus forty feet above the altar was uniformly white and featureless. It called to mind a crucifixion made of eggshells. Sometimes it seemed as though the building was made of paper and the wind would blow it away with all of them in it. Sometimes he gazed up and pushed his focus to nowhere, obliterating all intrusion but the microbial shapes floating on the surface of his eyes.

The one thing that was sure to break him out of his reverie was the sound of Doctor Henshaw singing. Later, he would come to understand that she did not possess a good singing voice. But at nine, looking up at her giant lozenge head and painted mouth, he had the thought that he had every Sunday: that she had the most beautiful voice in the world. He and his younger brothers, who hadn't been born yet on this particular Sunday, would compare notes and find that each, a decade apart, in the same church, had the same thought that she had the most beautiful voice in the world, and eventually the same epiphany that she couldn't sing at all.

So the day after the ice cream parlor, he looked up at her in church and at the most pleasurable sound of her voice he burst into tears and threw himself at her mercy. He said he was sorry. He was so, so sorry.

She put on her kindest face—she could feel people staring—and asked what was wrong. She found him to be unintelligible and loud. She had no idea what he was sorry about. Neither did he, but he wanted to be forgiven.

His new teeth arrived striped, gray and white like prisoners. Each night he checked them in the bathroom mirror. Each night was worse than the last. Doctor Henshaw told him not to worry, you couldn't see it, thinking makes it worse, it will fade over time, people don't notice, nobody cares—these were but a few of many comforting refrains. When he was ten, the family drove down to Columbus for Thanksgiving with the Doctor von Sproats, Helena and Sandy, Brian's grandparents. Aunt Fia would be there, too, Doctor Henshaw's legendarily if not actually all that pretty sister, with her horseshoe mustachioed soon to be ex-husband and her shitty kids.

Helena had a greenhouse that children were forbidden to enter. The greenhouse had a name: *Casa Lupe*. Lupe was Helena's long departed mother, though nobody called her that now. In the family, she was Mama. Fifty years earlier, Mama had crossed the border with a fern frond in her hair. From this frond grew every fern in Casa Lupe.

Brian liked to stand outside the greenhouse and practice his signature on the fogged glass while inside Doctor Henshaw and Aunt Fia hovered around Helena like twin Igors in a mad scientist's lab.

"What are they doing?" whispered the shitty cousins.

"Swinging from fern to fern," Brian said, which made the cousins laugh. They didn't seem so shitty, Brian thought. He wondered if, in his cousins' family, Brian might be the shitty cousin, or maybe they were shitty like Fia was hot and Brian was a liar and Helen was good.

"You don't like pecans?" Helena said to Brian as he dug them out of a brick of Doctor Henshaw's Famous Thanksgiving jello. Doctor Henshaw used pecans as a child repellent in her favorite dishes. Helena's position on pecans was unclear, so Brian said he was saving them for last. The cousins announced that pecans looked like bugs and tasted worse.

"And you would know," said Brian.

"It's an acquired taste," said Doctor Henshaw.

"Is it?" said Grandma Helena with what to Brian sounded like rebuke. "Mama loved pecans. When she was a child, they grew them in the back yard. Can you imagine?"

No one could, nor did they try. Brian had never met Mama, and he had never been to Texas. He had a notion that Texas was the Eden from which his mother's side of the family had sprung, and where most of them still lived, except Helena, who had escaped north. To the extent that Mexico figured into stories, the family spoke of it as one might a favorite dive, a tourist stop—interchangeable, to Brian's ear, with Cedar Point.

The featured entertainment in Columbus was the interminable slideshow. They gathered in the living room as Grandpa Sandy clicked through carousels of slides. One comprised Aunt Fia's baby pictures. Everyone agreed Fia was a cute baby, especially next to the grudging teenager seen

holding her in several poses. It was only when Fia exclaimed, "Judy, your head is enormous!" that Brian realized, even as it violated the established historical timeline (and was, as such, impossible) that the teenager in the photo was Doctor Henshaw.

Helen blurted, "But Mom you said Aunt Fia is your *olders* sister!"

"Judy!" Fia and the grandparents exploded, laughing with the thrill of catching a rival in a lie.

"Did I?" said Doctor Henshaw.

Next was Sandy and Helena's wedding, and there she was again, this time a bridesmaid. The heckler fought her soon to be ex-husband's attempts to mute her: "*Look* at it. It's *huge*. Don't *shush* me. She has a huge head. You have a *huge head*. Why did I never notice that before?!"

It was true. In pictures as in life, her head was not drawn to scale.

The children camped in sleeping bags on the living room floor. The cousins argued in their sleep. *Shut up you shut up no you shut up no you no you*. Brian and Helen stared at the ceiling.

"Did you get to go to mom and dad's wedding?" said Helen.

"No."

"Did I?"

"We weren't born yet."

"Why did mom get to?"

"You're so stupid, Helen."

"Shut up."

Shut up you shut up no you shut up no you no you, said the cousins.

"I hate to break it to you," said Brian.

Helen startled the sleeping Doctor Henshaws by materializing at the foot of their bed sobbing inconsolably, "Brian said bastard!"

Doctor Henshaw pretended to be asleep. The other Doctor Henshaw said this could wait till morning.

"And he said you *are* one!" Did she know what a bastard was?

"Yes! A bastard is when you're in your mom and dad's wedding pictures!"

Henshaw: Tetracy Cline

Morning arrived in a flurry of angry packing, and Brian learned he had a secret name: "Your asshole son," emphasis on your. He heard it from his parents through the door to the guest bedroom. It didn't hurt. Mostly, he was surprised he was old enough to be an asshole.

On the long drive home, Brian and Helen were lectured by the backs of their parents' heads. "As you know," was how it began. It had fallen to their father to explain what a bastard was and why their mother was not one. His speech was halting and full of pauses into which their mother cast her silent approval. Brian watched the back of his mother's hair helmet nodding along to its own story told by someone else.

Helena had been married to another man before she married Sandy. His name was Henry. Henry was their mother's biological father. Henry drowned when their mother was five.

As you know.

Brian had questions. Why couldn't he ask them? *As you know.* He was supposed to know. It was his fault that he didn't. This had to be why his father was angry, why his mother was hurt.

Brian did not feel reflective or mournful. He did not feel empathy for his mother, for the loss of her father. His eye for melodrama did not catch the mention of drowning, which otherwise would have titillated him. It was as though they had pumped in gas in preparation for a painful procedure. He felt a delirium that bordered on nausea.

Helen looked concussed. In her confusion, he suddenly saw himself. They were like movie enemies witnessing the supernatural; they had both seen it; there was no going back.

He said to the car, "First I've heard of it."

"Forgot," Helen said, vacantly. "You just forgot."

"I didn't forget and neither did you."

"Yes-yes-yes!" she said. "I know all about Grandpa Henry!"

And his anger brought forth her smile.

It would be the next century before the internet delivered to Brian the front page of the *Dallas Intelligencer* of March 1, 1940, which, above the fold, bigger than Nazi troop movements in the adjacent story, reported the capsized "pleasure boat," the survivors' "thrilling midnight rescue," the medical school portraits of Henry and Helena, bigger than Churchill, seen at left. "The victim's young wife is being treated for shock," it said, and Brian would hear in this the echo of Doctor Henshaw's perennial admonition: never talk to Helena about Henry. After the Thanksgiving of *as you know*, their contact with Helena would be tightly controlled, every visit prefaced with this injunction. Helena did not talk about Henry. It was as though there was no Henry.

When Brian was eleven, thirteen, and fifteen, he arrived home to find his parents smirking in the kitchen. This meant there would soon be a baby. The first smirk was a shock. The second, Helen sent herself to her room and didn't come out for a week. By the third, Helen recognized the smirking configuration and before anyone spoke she exploded in a squall of tears and ran out screaming "NO!"

It was not an act. Brian felt bad for enjoying it.

The three smirks became Alan, Hugh, and Etta—the second wave.

When Brian was sixteen, Sandy died. The family drove down for the funeral and stuck around until Helena sent them away, all but Brian, whom Helena offered a hundred dollars a week to help her throw things out. He stayed for six weeks, sifting through boxes and driving to Goodwill.

They fell into a routine. Helena would pop in and out of rooms like the Roadrunner and Brian would give chase, cornering her long enough to present her with whatnot, for Helena to designate *keep or toss*.

"This book's in Spanish," said Brian.

"Toss," she said.

Henshaw: Tetracy Cline

"Do you speak Spanish?" said Brian.

"No, señor," she said. "Those were Mama's."

He found a bronzed baby shoe with "HENRIETTA" etched into it.

"Who is Henrietta?" he asked her.

"Henry drowned," she said.

Later, the Henrietta shoe found its way to the table in the kitchen, where Helena was unloading the dishwasher, saying, "Henrietta, Henrietta! Henrietta?" with different inflections and accents.

"Who is Henrietta?" he asked again.

"Oh, how Mama hated that name. She couldn't pronounce it. Why did I give my baby such a hard name to say? I came home one Christmas and Mama said *Judy* is so excited to see you. And I said, '*Who is Judy!?*' I left my baby with Mama for a semester and when I got her back she had a new name!"

Helena shook her head in a way that Brian thought he recognized.

"What?" he said, hoping he knew what.

And she said, "Mama was something else."

Helena climbed a step ladder in a closet full of wigs. On the top shelf was a box and in the box a photo. A mother and daughter. The daughter looked to Brian like his baby sister Smirk Etta dressed in period costume.

"This is the one of all of us together."

There were only two people in the picture.

"Henry looks just like you," she said.

"Where?" Brian saw no one.

"Clear as day! That could be you! Look at that melon!"

The photographer's shadow was thrown on the ground between camera and subject. A slender figure with a big head and bigger ears, The photographer's shadow was thrown on the ground between camera and subject. A slender figure with a big head and bigger ears, hair cropped short on the sides but wild on top.

Brian wanted more. "Mama had all the photos and they went to Flora when Mama died. Flora is the keeper of the family chronicle. You'd

have to ask her." Flora, the mother of Miserable Cousin Margaret. "Have you met the Texans? No, well, I doubt she kept any pictures of Henry in any case."

"Why not?" said Brian.

Helena was lost in the picture, or she was stalling. "This is the one I like. It's the best likeness."

"But he's not in it."

She considered this, and her eyes became the eyes of a witness. "I would recognize him anywhere."

Helena accompanied Brian on the last Goodwill run. He caught her in the aisles perusing her own cast-off possessions, polishing her ex-dishes on her sleeve. She bought a book but wouldn't show it to him.

She took him out for dinner. He summoned the nerve to ask about Henry.

"I am sorry," he said.

She didn't know why he would be.

"I know you don't like to talk about it."

"Don't I?" she said. "I'm happy to. No one ever asks."

When Brian was thirty, he went bald and discovered he had hit himself in the head with a rock. There it was: the same scar, in the same spot. He called Helen and told her. It was not a scar. It was a mark. A birth mark. It was hereditary. There was no rock.

She hung up.

They would not speak again. Her last word to him was asshole. At family events, she would not look at him. The family examined his alleged birthmark. They said he was wrong. They said it was a wrinkle.

As a teenager, Smirk Alan discovered hip-hop and shaved his head. Smirk Etta shaved her own head for spite. Smirk Hugh shaved his head in solidarity. They had it, too.

Henshaw: Tetracy Cline

When Brian was forty, Helena died. At the funeral, Brian mistook a stranger with a hair helmet for his mother. This turned out to be Miserable Cousin Margaret. She didn't seem especially miserable. She could have been Doctor Henshaw's fixy Texan twin. She told him Doctor Henshaw was like a sister to her. He responded with the walking to school story.

"Yes," she said, brightly. "She lived with me."

Brian asked why she would do that. Miserable Cousin Margaret said this was when Helena was away at medical school. As the story (now) went, Henry died, Helena moved away, and Doctor Henshaw moved in with Miserable Cousin Margaret.

"I didn't know she lived in your house," he said.

"In my house? In my *room*! In my school! In my summer camp! Every day, mom walked me to school, and Cousin Judy, too. We filled her pockets with pecans! You know the story."

Most of the eulogies had a wig motif. Helena's wigs were legendary, like Thor's hammer, with the origin story that she hated her hairline and wanted to look like the actress Lupe Velez. *What is it with these people and hairlines?* thought Brian, on his way to a bad idea.

Brian had never looked into an open casket before. As he inched forward in line, he could see Helena in her box, the tip of her nose, the prow of her wig. He felt he was looking at a stranger. He wondered if that would make it easier for him to do what he had decided to do.

At the wake, Helen confided discreetly to all bar none that she was concerned about Doctor Henshaw, who had been heartbreakingly estranged from Helena before she passed. Meanwhile, no one who knew Helena could help but comment on how much Helen was her spitting image. This touched Helen, but it was hard on her, too! Helen was proud of the strong women in her family. She spoke of sisterhood, a bond of blood and gender that defied something or other, spacetime maybe. Eventually, she had to take a breath. And when she did, Brian looked into the pause and said,

"I peeked under her wig."

This was a lie. He didn't have the nerve.

Two tiny far removed cousins giggled. No one else spoke. "And—guess what?" he said.

"What?" said the little cousins, thrilled.

Helena's birthmark became the talk of the wake. Helen asked the Smirks if it wouldn't be just like Brian to make it up. Brian didn't bother to defend his unverifiable (and, after all, fictitious) wig peeking. The gossip even roused the attention of the elders. Helena's brother, Doctor McManus, ninety-three, who had been immobile and mute ever since Brian could remember, started to cry. Then he said the only words Brian had ever heard him say.

"I hit her in the head with a rock."

Brian vowed then to be Doctor McManus's favorite grand-nephew. For several months thereafter, he visited him at the home, played Backgammon, told him about his birthmark, his sister, his rock. If Doctor McManus heard him, he gave no sign.

One visit, they wheeled Doctor McManus in with a fitfully half shaved head. The orderly said either he did it himself or he had fallen victim to a cruel prank. Then Doctor McManus slumped forward and his chin dropped nearly to his navel.

Brian thought he was dead until Doctor McManus raised his arm in what looked like a salute. He retracted his fingers into a shaky fist, all but one thin pointer, the tip of which with effort found the top of his own head. Brian leaned in.

And there it was.

Everyone got old. The Doctor Henshaws died. Helen swooped in and drove off with a truck full of her mother's ferns. Brian shrunk an inch and his teeth came loose. By then he had an asshole son of his own to trick him into going to the dentist. It was time to see someone about dentures. He expected an ordeal, but when the dentist examined his teeth he pushed on them a little and they came right out. The dentist held forth on the topic of the tetracycline stain.

It had been awhile since Brian had given a dentist a piece of his mother's mind. Over the years, he had come to enjoy explaining their

Henshaw: Tetracycline

jobs to them, and had, as a result, cycled through quite a few dentists. He rarely saw any dentist more than once. It was hard to go back, to follow a scene like that. But it was always worth it. He never felt closer to Doctor Henshaw than he did when speaking these words.

He explained that it wasn't a tetracycline stain. Because he had never been exposed to tetracycline. Because Doctor Henshaw never took tetracycline. And he never took tetracycline. Not *in utero*, not in infancy, not ever.

The dentist left the room and returned with a flashlight with which he passed an ultraviolet beam over the graveyard of teeth on the side tray. They lit up like irradiated candy corn.

"Confirmed by fluorescence," the dentist said, "characteristic of tetracycline molecules bound to calcium. The teratogenic properties of tetracycline are well-understood. That's why we don't give it to pregnant women or children under eight. And by the way, German Measles? I don't know where you read that, but that's not actually a thing."

"Of course German Measles is a thing," said the angry old man to his asshole son on the drive home. Junior had no patience for the old man's topics. Junior had heard all the stories, and believed none of them. Junior explained what the dentist meant, that of course German Measles were "a thing," in that they existed, were real, etc., but that they did not do what angry old Brian believed they did, what he required them to do, in his untrue but close enough story of himself. These weren't his exact words, but it didn't matter. Brian was not really listening. He was too busy looking up *teratogenic* on his phone.

-GENIC **TO PRODUCE, CAUSE, MAKE, GIVE BIRTH TO, GIVE RISE TO.**

TERAT- **ABNORMALITIES, DEFECTS, MUTATION; ALSO, MONSTERS.**

When Brian died, Helen spoke at the funeral. She forgave him and brought jello with pecans. When Helen died, she bequeathed to her daughter her rare ancestral ferns, which turned out to be a common North American variety available in any local nursery. When two out of three smirks died, Smirk Etta was the last one standing. She announced

for her eightieth birthday she would visit the family hacienda.

Now Brian's and Helen's children take a trip to Mexico, as a gift to Smirk Etta, who is doing the roots thing. This is tricky because of the government, which has been selling off the family land and will disappear them if they find out who they are—the rightful landowners, a hundred years gone—and because of the squatters, who have taken possession of many of the abandoned ranches and who are all too happy to kill trespassers.

Smirk Etta has traced the Henshaw line from Michigan, to Ohio, to Texas, to Chihuahua, where her mother's family farmed pecans and cochineal, before fleeing the Revolution. To become Texans. To become Americans.

Armed with maps and old photos and family trees, the Henshaws tour their ancestral wilderness. The jungle has reclaimed the road. They abandon their vehicles and walk through a canopy of pecans that the wind brings down like hail. They find the ruins of a gate, and in a clearing, what's left of the hacienda.

When the trees splinter with gunfire, it seems to come from everywhere and nowhere. They fight among themselves. Should they hide their identification? Would it save them, or get them killed? They seek refuge in what turns out to be the servants' house on the old estate. Their old estate.

They have interrupted a woman in labor, attended by women, children, her nurses and midwives, within a circle of men and boys, men with machetes, boys with guns.

The boys take them outside. One counts his bullets. They seem to be debating who has the most to spare. Another wears a purple T-shirt with a Minnesota Vikings logo. The Henshaws plead with this Viking in Spanish. The Viking doesn't speak it, not Spanish, not English. He isn't Mexican. He is something else. The boys continue to argue in their inscrutable tongue. The Henshaws beg for their lives in wrong languages. Then Smirk Etta sees a mark on the head of the Viking.

She shows him: she has it too.

Henshaw: Tetracy Cline

Brian's smile spreads on Junior's face.

They are family.

They are home.

Then the baby is born.

And the mother makes the mark with a knife on the baby's forehead.