

# Things Boys Do

The chapter "Things Boys Do" explores the unsettling dynamics between fathers and their newborn sons through three distinct narratives. The first man witnesses his wife's traumatic childbirth, where the baby's arrival is marked by eerie silence and a doctor's evasive reassurance. The father is haunted by the infant's unnerving white eyeballs and his wife's subsequent health decline, leaving him fearful of his own child. This segment sets a tone of dread, questioning the natural bond between parent and offspring.

The second man grapples with his mother's insistence that his son is not biologically his, adding familial tension to his wife's post-birth struggles. The baby's unsettling eye movements and his mother's accusations create a atmosphere of distrust. When his wife dies shortly after, the man is left alone with Johnny, the child he struggles to accept. This narrative thread underscores themes of doubt and the fragility of paternal connections.

The third man, an adoptive father, experiences an inexplicable unease with his new son. Despite his wife's apparent bond with the baby, he feels judged by the infant's stern gaze and notices fleeting gray flecks in its eyes. His playful interaction turns to discomfort, leaving him to whisper, "You're not a good boy." This vignette amplifies the chapter's recurring motif of children as unsettling, almost otherworldly figures who disrupt paternal certainty.

The chapter culminates with the first man's growing fear of his son Jon, whose presence triggers visceral dread. The narratives collectively paint a portrait of masculinity in crisis, where fatherhood is fraught with unspoken fears and supernatural undertones. The boys, though infants, wield an unsettling power that destabilizes the men around them, challenging traditional notions of paternal instinct and familial harmony.