

SARAH BIANCO

Take Me Home, 2017
Acrylic, graphite, polyurethane,
and oil on wood panel, 72 x 48 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

EVA FREEMAN

In Flight

Our home was filled with wood and art. There was a tie-dyed banner hanging on the wall just above the turn in the staircase to the second floor. It was a blaze of black with explosions of orange like the irises of deranged tigers. Gold weight figurines from Ghana marched across the Moroccan brass table in the living room. A pair of Masai spears gritty with age leaned in one corner. Across from them hung a portrait of a beautiful black woman behind the perfume counter of a department store surrounded by brown and gold perfumes glowing amber in the soft light. Her hands were crossed, and the expression on her face was caught somewhere between serenity and resignation. There were Ethiopian Coptic crosses nailed to the white walls and on a small bookcase rested a leather-encased dagger, a horse whip with real horsehair as a tassel, and a lacquered box filled with a Russian general's medals. The record player was held in an antique sewing machine crate, the useless pedal flipping beneath the spinning albums. Carved ebony figures twisted in African poses. Our house was a monument to all things eternal.

By contrast everything in Klara and Ward's home was new. It was even situated in a newer development in the heart of our historic town. At its entrance hung a simple sign, Crawford Estates. The main road snaked through the complex, passing each home set back from the road at a respectable distance but close enough to showcase their grandness. There were Georgian mansions with Greco-Roman columns and buildings that seemed to multiply in on themselves, sprouting wings and towers. There was even a duck pond in one front lawn. Their house was tucked back from the road, up a steep incline. It was a modern wooden and glass structure that at every opportunity let in the black-barked woods that surrounded it. The kitchen, her domain, was on the second floor and sported, above the sink and adjacent counter, a wall of glass that stretched into the dining room and overlooked the long twisting driveway and a patch of green front lawn. Her living room was cream colored with a cream-colored leather couch, cream-colored wall-to-wall carpet, a coffee table made of a sheet of glass supported by a cream-colored marble base. A piano, never used, almost an afterthought really, was tucked into the far corner and above it hung Ward's portrait, painted by my father. He wore a brown suit, his hands