

The Inspector Pays a Visit

by John Olson

The building inspector puts his hand on the wall and takes it away and puts his thermal leak detector there and shows me the image. It is an infrared image of the inspector's hand. It's quite beautiful. Ghostly, but beautiful. Are these the images we leave when we move through this world? I've seen sunlight pierce the water with similar effect, blades of light dancing on rills of sand. Or the halo of scintillation surrounding a waterfall. I've seen a mountain dance in its hem of rock and clay. I've seen a present tense hang like a scrotum in the appliance of expectation, and a bearded man float above the city creating philosophies of cloud. Is there a phantom dimension surrounding us? I'm not generally a believer. But I do sense things. I see things. Walls sweat with moisture, an ocean thrust itself at a coast. We begin a walk and shiver. It's as if the world we can't see appeared in our breath, and hung there a moment, mocking our pretensions, chuckling like a ghost.

