Nature's Perversions

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Synopsis
A health-nut ice-cream lover finds out there’s corn syrup in all their favorite ice creams. Payback comes viz. the rules of cosmic justice.

Characters
Speaker Really, really cares about authenticity and agency.
Employee Works at a grocery store. It probably defines their life too.
I like living next to the grocery store, because at 10:37 on a Monday night I can cross the street and gaze at the Breyer’s ice cream sleeping behind the foggy, cryogenic chamber doors, a frosty glow from the wintery LEDs glimmering in the shiny cardboard of the containers.

I am young, independent, and I have a Visa debit card, so I can have any ice cream I want. Breyer’s has always been the standard of authenticity and flavor in our family. However, the last time I was here I noticed that Breyer’s Chocolate Truffle (Made with Rich Dark Chocolate Truffles) had corn syrup in the ingredients.

So that used to be my favorite ice cream.

It was all very shocking and disorienting, but I found that Breyer’s Mint Chocolate Chip had no corn syrup (as to be naturally expected). You can tell it’s the real deal, because the ice cream is white not green. Anybody who knows anything about ice cream knows that green mint is a fake. Mint leaves are green, but the mint leaves’ essential oil has no color. Nice try.

A week passes before 1.5 quarts of ice cream pass through me, and I’m staring at Breyer’s again, my face so close that my lustful breathing fogs the freezer door. You can try to hide my affection, blurry freezer door, but our love remains true.

Oh no.

But does it? In my most assured moment of loyalty and love, why should I now fear infidelity?

I pick up Breyer’s Mint Chocolate Chip, its frosty layer burning to touch, and I turn the Nutritional Facts to look at me face to face.

CORN SYRUP?! It was there all along!

I throw the cursed tub back with the other snakes, and I rummage through every Breyer’s ice cream, clutching, clawing, checking, cursing, the reveal of sin itself in the garden was not so harrowingly terrifying as my wrath in the discovery that the entire race of Breyer’s ice cream—Natural Vanilla, French Vanilla, Homemade Vanilla, Extra
Creamy Vanilla, Cherry Vanilla, Vanilla Fudge Twirl, Vanilla/Chocolate, Vanilla/Chocolate/Strawberry, Natural Strawberry, Strawberry Cheesecake, Chocolate, Chocolate Chip, Mint Chocolate Chip, Chocolate Truffle, Chocolate Peanut Butter, Cookies and Cream, Butter Pecan, Coconut Fudge, Coffee, Rocky Road, and Salted Caramel all had original sin: corn syrup. But, oh, your flood is coming, I assure you. A cosmic judgement so vindicating, so righteous that Jesus on the cross will seem like two boys hugging each other after a name-calling fight.

Oh yes, the plan, I have it, I know what I must do. I’ll eat ice cream before dinner!

O debauchery! O twisted Nature! Ice cream before dinner?! Corn syrup, you ubiquitous malediction! You confectionous malefaction! You chemical witchcraft! You corporate trickery! You conspiring fakery! You sweet facsimile! We’ll see who’s Nature’s perversion! We’ll see who’s the twisted one when I’m lying sick belly up from eating ice cream at 5 and dinner at 10! Ice cream before dinner!

EMPLOYEE: “Hey.”

*Light the beacons! Sound the trumpets!*

EMPLOYEE: “Hey kid.”

*Ready the horses! Raise the banners!*

EMPLOYEE: Yoo hoo.

*What who?*

EMPLOYEE: You going to take one, or just stand there with the door open?

(To EMPLOYEE) What? Oh. Sorry. (Back to audience) I take the Mint Chocolate Chip. At the checkout, I scan the barcode, and a coupon spits out of the ticker.

$1 off my next Breyer’s ice cream.