**The Ignatius period**

**Prompt: "Write an epic narration of a single combat between Ignatius J. Reilly and a pterodactyl, in the style of John Kennedy Toole.**

My god, what a terrifically terrifying creature it is. I wish I could tell you it grew bored of swooping down at my house. It’s large wingspan of roughly twenty-three feet casts wide shadows as it flies by and shakes the already-crooked picture frames off my wall. Although it lacks the tact brought about by intellect and a smidge of self-awareness, it is different still from the monsters of my time. Because I bore of intellectual balance with monsters of my bones and brain, I find this one refreshing. Although its advances are average and archaic, there is beauty in its brashness.

It could crush me between those powerful jaws in an instant, yet it keeps them closed for aerodynamic flight. It could latch onto any of my appendages with those ferocious phalanges and drop me at any point throughout the New Orleans skyline, yet it resorts to fly-bys in an attempt to find the perfect moment. I’d be left thinking through the fall how I was bested by a beast born millions of years before me. But not today. Use your physical pre-evolutionary advantage, pesky pterodactyl, for I have what you never will; the ability to think.

Two gallon-sized bottles and an assortment of chemicals is all I need to make my menacing monster migrate elsewhere. The first is for the fibre mixture, this will thicken the contents of its stomach and force its valve to stay closed so the second mixture can do its thing without being evacuated. And the second is a simple poison. It shouldn’t kill a creature of its size, but it’s enough to make it sick. Sick enough that it questions its food source, and too sick to pester me.

As I’m standing in the kitchen, mixing up the chemicals for bottle two, the beast makes another fly-by, screeching as the shadows glide across the window openings. The walls shake so violently that I can hear a few picture frames fall and break throughout the house. I gaze out the window thinking I still have a few hours before it starts to get antsy. But I see it flying wide and turning to face the house again. I screw the lid on bottle two and make my way to the garage. Tying the first bottle to the end of a long piece of tubing, I lift it out the garage and stick it high into the sky.

‘Dinner time, you prehistoric pest!’ I find myself yelling for catharsis.

I start to feel the ground rumble and the low swooping sound of its wings grows louder. It screeches once more and I wait for it to yank the bottle from the end of the tube feeding stick. It pulls with an expected, yet surprising force and I almost lose my grip of the tubing. It flies off, gnawing on the bottle with its toothless beak. I know it’ll be back, so I prepare the second bottle. Using the same piece of tubing I repeat the process, lifting the bottle above my head. Again, I hear the beating of its wings and feel the ground rumble. ‘Simple creature,’ I murmur to myself as it approaches. But this time it lands in my drive way. It ignores the poisoned bottle at the end of the tubing and stares at me, turning its head left, then right, to account for its blind spot. I retreat to the garage and it follows. I slam the button on the wall to lower the roller door. As the door creeps down, it thrashes its head around my garage. I should’ve prepared for this. Its beak is the method the monster uses to find food, of course it wouldn’t have eyes for the poison.

‘Ahh, just a moment.’ The garage door closes on its neck and I run back into the kitchen. I can hear tools and materials flying around the garage, and I know I don’t have much time before it frees itself. I have no choice. I was saving it for later, but the jelly doughnut sitting on the counter is perfect to entice it to eat. I return to the garage. The pterodactyl locks eyes with me as I enter and take a hefty bite of the doughnut. I approach it, and hold the doughnut out. It opens its beak and I throw the bottle as well as the doughnut in. backing up into the house, I smack the button to release the door. It rolls up, but the pterodactyl only needed a few inches to free itself. The monster mirrors me backing into the house as it backs into the driveway. It screeches one last time, then flies off.

‘I don’t suspect I’ll be seeing that beast again. Or my jelly doughnut. I’m sure to miss you both.’