English

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Descriptive Essay

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Living Room

by

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**Living Room**

A flickering blue light and the muted tones of conversation draw you away from the lighted corridor. The television is, as usual, on and, as usual, merely amusing itself. The blue light emanating from your right is reflected in the feldspar flecked ceiling, making the room appear as though it is open to the evening sky. A shadow detaches itself from one of the chairs and arches its back. Two bright eyes stare at you briefly, the consciousness behind them decides you are not a threat and the cat settles back down again to continue its slumber. The images partially illuminate the room, throwing flickering shadows of the dark, heavy furniture onto the walls. Two small windows, high up on the far wall admit little light.

Turning on the nearest table light, some of the shadows are dispersed by the low wattage bulb. You think you may have stumbled into a poorly organized junk shop. Several piles of books cover the low, heavy coffee table in the center of the room. Several of them are open, whilst others have scraps of paper protruding from them. On the sofa, opposite the television, an assortment of paper, folders and more open books testify that at least two people have been working here. Looking at the titles of the books you realize not one of them is fiction, all are textbooks of one sort or another.

Knocking the table slightly as you move between it and the sofa causes a square of luminescence springs into life, denoting the presence of a laptop computer. The disturbance stirs a gray cat that has been lying unnoticed on a cushion. It stares balefully at you for a second then settles back down. The ginger cat is still asleep in the rocking chair at the far end of the room. Reaching the far end of the sofa you turn on another table lamp. This one is as dim as the first but illuminates the bookshelves at the far end of the room. More textbooks, all neatly arranged according to size. You read the title of the thickest of them – “Merchants and Merchandise in Seventeenth-Century Bristol.” These are British local history books, hundreds of them. Some are obviously very old and well thumbed whilst others are practically pristine.

Dark shadows to your right tell you that this room is “L” shaped, but turning around there is now enough light to show you the area you have just passed through. It’s far more cluttered than you first thought. Pictures of old stone English buildings cover most of the walls. Above the television are college diplomas and awards. Practically all of the pictures and certificates are hung crookedly, they look as if they’ve been that way for a long time. Whoever put them on the walls are proud of their achievements and heritage but they are obviously not particularly house-proud. The arrangement of the books on the shelf was evidently on some whim or other. Toys lie scattered on the floor, but these were meant for playful animals, not human toddlers.

Next to the television, which you can now see is an old model, is a cabinet. The light reflecting from and diffracting through the glassware in the cabinet makes part of them appear almost black, other pieces are of the brightest cobalt blue. The manufacturers compliment slips describe these pieces as examples of hand blown Bristol Blue lead crystal.

Cats fill practically every other horizontal surface. Glass, metal, wood and fabric cats stare at you with the same indifference as the live ones you’ve already seen.

Peering into the still dark part of “L” shaped room; you notice one wall appears to be covered with small bright lights of varying colors. Rainbow colored pinpoints of light stare unblinkingly back at you. Turning on the standard lamp that stands in the corner of the “L”, and which seems insanely bright after the dimness of the table lamps you see one entire wall is taken up by several computer systems and their associated paraphernalia. More books, stacks of CD’s and disks, close to toppling, clutter the desks the equipment stands on.

This part of the room is as cluttered as the other. More toys, this time for testing adult skill and dexterity lay scattered on a corner cabinet. The dining table that dominates the middle of the room is as untidy as the coffee table. It’s been a long time since anyone has eaten from this table.

A calico cat, disturbed by the sudden light stretches lazily amongst the clutter bringing the monitors to sudden life. One displays more unfinished work and the other shows a recently visited website. A sudden noise makes you look down, a streak of white rushes past your feet. On the floor, a cage stands with the door open. From the cage comes the unmistakable musky smell of ferret. Turning, two brightly burning pink points of light stare unblinkingly at you from the darkness beneath the coffee table, they retreat as you continue to look at them.

Multicolored light and conversation drift in from the open window at the far end of this room. A cry of “We’re out in the garden” summons you outside to meet the owners of this very individual living room.