



It's been a restless winter. Our dogs move around from one of their beds to another, and rotate spots on the floor in an ambling, nomadic waltz. The ants have been especially antsy here this year, leaking out of the ancient, pseudo-farmhouse woodwork in streams, eddies, vortices, miniature maelstroms -- a bumper crop of biblical proportions.

The two humans residing here travel back and forth unpredictably, errant with errands, steeped in to-do lists, turned to and fro by daily tidal forces, triggered by a general twitchiness, tuned to some facial-tic-producing frequency just outside the range of hearing.

When not under the spell of whatever it is that might be working on us, we sometimes ask ourselves about the nature of the possible and probable propellants involved in our fidgeting. No answers so far.

We keep coming up with a general "hookanno" -- our shorthand for "who can know?" We say it like "Winnebago," which is HOO-kan-no. We sound like hoot owls, muttering in the loose, eternal wake of our room-to-room search, hunting for reasons why we might be here, on this planet, just as much as why we might be here, in this particular room. Both are tricks of memory, I am convinced, one easier to resolve than the other. I forget which is which.

Our house is old. It has sections tacked on here and there. It is growth by afterthought rather than by planning and forethought. It was built a little at a time, by a hobbyist with more good intentions than good skills. If Euclid lived here, he would have flat gone insane before his furniture was moved in and arranged.

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