Initial Assessment: 1847 Vista de la Cumbre

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Recommended Citation
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The termites have this house, and the maggots have the owners. Some old housewife, covering her arthritis with quilts, hired a part-time driver to take her to the salon and bridge club. Santa Barbara is for the newly wed or nearly dead, but insects don’t mind; they’ll chew anything. Mandibles can shred a home or consume a body in weeks, and the bugs are nastier by the ocean. The old lady’s kids aren’t too friendly. One of them came to visit, a bald man, California redneck. He’s paying our sales commission, but he shot the neighbor’s cat. Under the shed lives his pet turtle, Methuselah, I think. The kid built that shed thirty years ago; it pisses on the code. He said we could take some of the toys from it, if we wanted, but all I saw was a stash of fake rifles and a melted Pepsi-Cola bottle. He sold the matchbox cars on eBay to a collector. That turtle has been eating only beetles for the past year. I’ll take him to the zoo before we crush this house.