Commander in Tweets

My Chirping resonates

invigorates the base

ostracizes the fakes

contradicts the past

jeopardizes the future

rejects the facts

embraces the now

extrapolates the headlines

erases the deadlines

my words are a ruptured septic line
spewing sewage upon the streets
most turn their nose up
others shove it down their beaks

for they are the few who honor me
as the one
the only commander in chief
Green sat in the board meeting, one leg draped over the other slowly kicking back and forth, while the members nodded with the rhythm of the young analyst droning on about data points. Her mind numb with the figures and stats, she let out a sigh of despair. Not a single board member turned from the Power Point projected on the wall to acknowledge the sigh. It was time for her voice to be heard she decided. A scene must start with bold action, not mere words spouted into the air conditioned breeze, with that in mind she planted her white high heel against the solid wood table and kicked off.

A chain reaction of epic proportions then occurred, or at least when it came to board meetings. One member noticed their glass of water slosh around, then noticed Green staring at him with a look that sent a chill through his veins. For fear of what would happen he tugged onto the sleeve of his colleague next to him without looking away from Green. The colleague turned out of frustration, and met the gaze of Green. He turned away just long enough to get the attention of the third board member across from him. The fourth noticed the third turning and all the board members stared at Green. Sensing something was amiss the analyst turned from his presentation stunned, and dropped his laser pointer upon the floor.

Green let the silence in the room build till she saw one of the board members visibly sweat. Then she unhooked her left high-heel and let it clatter to the floor. Her foot had been marred from the white shoe binding. When she undid the other heel, a band-aid dropped onto the floor with it. One of the members shuddered at the sight of the ruptured blister that it had covered. Green ignored the shudder, and proceeded to remove her gloves, which she dropped on the floor near the shoes. She then began to remove the false eyelashes she wore, rubbed off the slightly darker lipstick, and brushed off her drawn on eyebrows. The board sat shocked and dumbfounded.

As she stood from her chair, the members rose to still maintain a view of her. She looked each one in the eyes, then turned and began to leave the room without a word. It wasn't until she placed her hand upon the chrome door handle that one of the members spoke.

“Where are you going?” he asked with a minor hint of command trying to leap through the fear. Without turning from the door she said, “I got tired of being sexy.”
WHERE WAS YOUR GOD
WHEN YOU FILLED IN THE BOX
BY THE PEDOPHILE
WAS IT OUT PLAYING GOLF
OR AWAY AT A SAUNA
WAS IT BUSY KISSING THE FOREHEADS
OF THE UNBORN
WAS IT PIECING TOGETHER
ABORTED
FETUSES

OR WAS IT LIKE YOU
NOT ALL THERE
FAR REMOVED FROM ITS ACTIONS
SPOUTING OFF FREE WILL
BUT MAKING SURE ONLY THOSE AT THE TOP
CONTINUE TO BENEFIT FROM THE WORKING
CLASS
ERADICATING EDUCATION
REPRESSING ANYTHING UNEFFECT
weeping for murdered babies
but not caring for those that are born
Calling others leeches
while sucking firmly on the system
Feeling great pride
And never seeing the fall

WHERE WAS YOUR GOD
WHEN YOU SIGNED AWAY YOUR SOUL
TO A PARTY OF MAN
WHERE WAS IT
WHEN YOU EMBRACED THE BIGOT
SUPPORTED THE NEO-NAZIS
RAISED UP THE FLAG OF THE DEFEATED
CHEERED ON THE HOMICIDAL MOTORIST
CRIED OUT FOR THE WHITE LIVES
AND THE BLUE
DO YOU REALLY THINK ALL IS FORGIVEN?
EVERY SLATE WIPED CLEAN
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BELIEVE
FAILING TO LOVE THY NEIGHBOR
WILL LET YOU SLIP
INTO THOSE PEARLY GATES
DO YOU REALLY THINK ALL IS FORGIVEN?
The Signs are gone

But the fixtures Remain
WHERE THE GIANTS FELL

SIT DOWN
DOWN AMONGST THE DIRT AND ASH
WHERE THE MONOLITHS SCRAPPED THE SKY

RUN YOUR FINGERS THROUGH THE DEBRIS
FIND THE SHATTERED GLASS
THAT SHIMMERS LIKE THE DREAMS
DREAMS OF THOSE THAT HAVE GONE
THOUGH YOU SEE BEAUTY IN THIS
KNOW THAT THOSE DREAMS SHINED NOT FOR BEAUTY
BUT GREED

THEY WORSHIPPED THE INDIVIDUAL
Pursued the intangible
Surrounded themselves in luxury
Plenty of things they could not really afford
Yet never had but a dime to spare for the poor

DO YOU KNOW WHY THESE TOWERS FELL?
THOSE AT THE VERY TOP GREW SMALLER
AND SMALLER
THOSE BELOW LEFT LONG AGO
AND THE WEIGHT OF THE EXCESS AT THE TOP
CAME CRASHING DOWN

NOW IT IS UP TO YOU TO CHOOSE
THE WAY OF A TRIBE
OR THE PURSUIT OF THE INDIVIDUAL
EACH REQUIRE FAITH
FAITH THAT OTHERS WILL SUPPORT YOU
EITHER THROUGH ALLOWING YOU TO STAND UPON THEIR HEADS
OR TO HELP YOU WHEN YOU FALL DOWN
JUST ASK YOURSELF
WOULD YOU RATHER BE STEPPED ON
OR HELP OTHERS UP
refresh

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Oh Snap!
My Alien Children Are Trying To Kill Me
Lust for a car in the drive?
Apply some cream
Wanting that faithful hound?
Apply more cream
Can’t find that perfect spouse?
Apply even more cream
Can’t score the perfect job?
Apply just a little more cream
Perfect house not materializing?
Apply another layer of cream

Car got stolen?
The cream can’t fix that
Faithful hound got ran over?
The cream can’t resurrect the dead
Perfect spouse wants a divorce?
The cream doesn’t got your back
Accident on the job?
The cream doesn’t cover medical care
Perfect house foreclosed?
The cream won’t help you off the street

The Cream
you see
it’s just not very reliable
cars are not for everybody
pets will come and go
spouses a mere roll of the dice
jobs time sucking device
house a shell of retreat when time has been devoured
use this cream if you must
but just know
the dreams of others
are rarely worth dreaming
"The Best is always worth waiting for"

Are you looking for the most possible suction power?
A vacuum that can suck every last bit of joy from your life bright shining moments drained of their triumph things you once loved reduced to gray memories brief tatters of laughter removed quickly from the corners of your lips

all this can be yours for a price and that price is usually your life

Suck-A-Matic 2000
"All that the name implies"
At the Sole Sanctuary we focus on the individual you have principals and they do not you alone are perfect they do not understand our you alone are great or that trickle down economics the others that shackle themselves just takes a while to the groups or how deregulation will mock you for your views increase wages and safety but you know the truth our intelligence surpasses all no one is incapable those college students because the one is creativity and prosperity would reign we stand above them and know the true path if one is good all are good seeing only the individual is if one needs help well they should the key utopia is a step away there would be no bigots if a single step they just grabbed this key they may say it's irony when we say join us we cannot worry ourselves with but you know better than they like joining groups and posting memes
Want to rid the swamp of all the muck?
Dispel all the flesh peddlers and corrupters?
Fill in the gaps left behind with good
god-fearing men
men who know how to treat a woman right
men who know the truth beyond the facts
men who worship the glorious framers
men who know the true ache of the homeland

well I sure have the cure
the number one never failing

It wipes the slate clean completely
totally indefinitely
all will be one and all will be none

now you may be saying to yourself
boy golly that sounds like a miracle
and miracles don't come cheap
and you'd be right
it'll cost everything and more
those miracle men well they'll be so busy
fixing all the things that will go wrong
the nightmares of today will be dreams
on a summer day when the sun will burn
the skin

all because you wanted those evil men
those intellectuals
those scientists
those economists

kicked to the curb
removed from the swamp
What's left in a swamp if you remove the life?
Muck
and you without a rake

YOU ASKED FOR IT!
Ronald “Six Gun” Samuel was the lowest of lows, down and dirty, no good piece of work that ever emerged from the dry desert plains of Texas. Born to impoverished dirt farmers he earned the food upon his childhood plate by stealing from the collection plate. That all came to an end when the preacher found young Ronald with his fingers in the godly till. Ronald got the best of the preacher and stuck him with a pen knife. After that day Ronald ran from town to town staying only long enough to clean out the drunks. The well of luck eventually ran dry for young Six Gun. One star-filled night the town drunk happened to be the meanest and vilest sheriff in a not so small town. This particular sheriff also wasn't quite drunk when Ronald slipped his hand in the sheriff’s pocket. The sheriff slid his revolver out of the holster. In no time a posse was upon Ronald and they dunked him in the watering hole then dragged him up a small hill where a single tree stood. They tossed up a rope and pulled down a noose. Two men hefted Roland upon their shoulders.

“Any last words” the sheriff asked before he gave the signal.

“Thanks for the washing, these clothes are hang dry only” Ronald said with a laugh.

The two men let him drop like a burdensome rock.

And thus was the end of Six Gun Sam a man who gave a damn about his laundry.

It is in his honor that we at Low Tide Washing Fluid are proud to announce new

Hang Dry Only Washing Fluid
The egg
it was brave
it rolled and rolled and rolled over
Edgar Allan Poe's grave
the people exclaimed
"My what a brave
brave little egg"
some might say
you can never be too brave
but the egg sure was
for it rolled up here
it rolled up there
it rolled just about everywhere
through the streets and the gutter
splashing in milk
wading in butter
"What a sight"
the people raved
covered in milk
lathered with butter
then one day the egg went astray
when he rolled into a school yard
the children gathered around
the egg rolled this way and that way
but the children gathered in closer
then one named Jimmy meandered in
raising his foot on high
the egg tried to roll out of the shadow
but Jimmy's foot came down
like a bolt of lightning
with a crack and a splash
the brave little egg
was gone
A sparrow flew by
as a knight errant died
the weight of his heavy armor left him stuck in the mud
his squire had pulled him up against a tree
then the young lad took four arrows to the chest and collapsed near by
the battle had been over for awhile when the knight saw the sparrow
flying on by without a notice of the knight
the knight began to wonder why the Lord had spared him
but not the others whose cries of anguish
were extinguished by the sword of their enemy
others whose wounds might have been mended
yet here he lie out of sight to die
the sound of breaking branches distracted him from his crisis of faith
he looked around fearing and yet hoping someone had come
to end his suffering
slowly the knight gained sight of a man in a robe
a simple beggar thought the knight
how shall he end my suffering swiftly
though even a clumsy end would do
then be thought of his soul
God had spared him for a reason surely
he wasn’t meant to only suffer under the tree
the beggar seemed to be unaware of the dying knight and went walking past
“Sir would you be as kind to do a dying knight a favor?”
the robed man stopped and turned back to the knight
he slowly approached the knight without a word
reaching up the beggar pulled back his hood
the knight attempted to stifle his horror
lesions marked the beggar’s face
marks the knight had been warned to avoid
“Whatver would a knight request from a man so cursed?”
 “Only to carry a message.”
“A message not to be heard? One that if heard shall be ignored?
I ask again, what shall a cursed man do for a dying knight?”
Anger coursed through the broken knight
it quickly ebbed as he realized it wasn’t in jest
but in truth the beggar spoke
“End my suffering.”
The beggar looked at the knight with contempt
“Often those very words have left my lips. Just as often I received the same response.”
With that the beggar pulled up his hood and walked off
followed behind by the curses of the dying knight
The land of Eir Du Lyne was always awash in brine
it was made up of a single mass that stretched into the heavens
at the bottom was a swampy mire
composed of the dead and sometimes dying
few souls ever ventured there willingly
the ones that lived above the mire were the carrion class
making a living off the scraps of the dead
few above wanted these items so trade was among themselves
above these traders of the dead was a sort of wilderness
strange animals dwelt and weird plants grew
Above this the working class began
the creatures of this level would emerge from their dwellings
to scurry up one level to do tasks
this pattern repeated all the way up
until the land reached the clouds
Above the clouds it never rained and was sunny all day
this is where the ruling class lived
rarely they could see through the clouds
and even then they really didn't see what occurred below
occasionally those just below the clouds would venture up
at the request of those above
they would discuss things below
not too often did it go too far from the top
it was considered rude to bring up the carrion class
Though one day it was
it came in the form of a warning from far below
for even those at the bottom can see the cracks
and hear the groans of the foundation
when the burden it bears grows too large
this warning
as is often the case
arrived far too late
for as those up top plotted their survival
down below the fatal crack occurred
those at the bottom had come to accept their fate
and lied down while the levels above fell
those at the top had a long fall
as they passed through the clouds
they saw the pain and suffering
pain and suffering that had always existed
to keep them on top
thus was the end of
Eir
Du
Lyne
Down by the Water

Samuel Brown was the man of the town
from the bakery to the butcher
down main street and up 2nd Avenue
everyone knew his name and his claim to fame
old and young wished to bask in his presence
though for Brown all the ups the others did see
he could only see the down
a daughter that had a love of travel
lost in the deep dark sea
a courageous son who went to the battlefield
assumed dead and unaccounted for
a once loving wife full of life
reduced to a weeping wraith
three lives in tatters and not a thing he could do

then one day while he was getting a quarter pound of ham
he looked out the shop’s window to see a young officer of the law
he made not of the man’s presence then turned away
as he left the shop the young man placed his hand up Brown’s shoulder
Brown turned to the young man
and saw tears running down the young cop’s cheek
"Your daughter and son have been found"
the young officer said through tears
Brown desired the tears to be that of joy
however he settled in for grief
the young policeman seemed to dread each step he made
not even glancing at the solemn man that followed him
Brown tried his best not to imagine the horror that awaited
as they approached the docks hope rose into his chest
then dread returned when the young man told him to wait
alone Brown stood as the salt breeze stung his cheek
slowly the young cop reappeared from behind a large shipping crate
he seemed to be motioning others to follow
hope leapt up through Brown from his heart and through his crown
a frail framed woman stepped into view
and a rather shabby male followed behind
a sharp pain then struck Brown and sent him down to the ground
he saw the frail beings run towards him
and felt them cradling his head
"Finally you’ve returned" he spoke
then spoke no more
Broke
Spoken for
The total tailored suits
Fend for themselves
Their seams are unseemly
When the light hits just right
Dark nature speaks from their fabric
Emulsive layers drip off
Lining only remains
As the raw suits parade
Down memory lane
CRABS CRASHING ALONG
FLAILING LIKE KNIGHTS
OF YORE
THESE RED KNIGHTS WILL
NOT RETURN HOME
WOUNDED LIE SCATTERED
ALONG THE SHORE
WHILE THE SEAGULLS FLY
TO RIP THE MEAT
SOME STRUGGLE BACK TO THE WATER
ONLY TO RETURN
TUMBLING FEELERS OVER CLAW
TO WEAKLY TRY AND RIGHT THEMSELVES
BEFORE THE PALE PREDATORS CONVERGE
The floor of plaster and the wall of dung
Where your family picture hung
Traces the blood in your veins
They say you can never go back
But here you are in this crumbling shack
Facing the dilapidated past
Mother hated father
Father hated brother
And you were left out
Fending for life in the dirt
You saw up the preacher’s daughter’s skirt
Shame and shutter down your spine
The moon was big and bright
That hot and sweaty night
When you wanted some more pie
One time your father came home drunk
And crawled into your brother’s bunk
An unfortunate man trying to make amends
Now the walls are all but broken
And you swear the mystic must have misspoken
For these memories are nothing but debris
Tears spilling down your cheek
Yet another reminder of the times your father called you weak
Redemption does not lie amongst this heap
I see the sickly treacle people
fusing with the frigid Fridas
melding with the melting mentals
grinding with the grimy grabbers
netting with the nasty nationalists
combining into a column of fear
binding the briers with the fires
the structure of incomplete completeness
draws them over the edge
they tumble and flail
screaming obscenities like freedom and rights
words they know not the meaning
yet know their value
shouts ringing in their hollow heads
valuing love
but breeding decay
corroding the foundation of their cursed union
open their eyes
they shut their minds tight
guzzling poison
crying out in pain
yet lifting the bottle back to their lips
just one more kiss of death
Oh humanity
where art thou
thy lover of peace
worshiper of love
bringer of life
those you hold on high
love thy self
worship wealth
bring destruction
Oh humanity
what is thy value
Oh squimy squirmy anxiety
buried deep in my chest
will you ever rip out
flee far away from me
find someone else to wreck
or are you here till the end
forever reminding me of my past
stealing the words from my lips
dulling most social interaction
does my isolation bring you joy
is it what fuels your desire
but
you're not really there
not a you at all
just a figment
a fragment in the genetic code
a misshapen electronic flaw
malfunctioning chemical pumps
a malformed physical form
yet an intelligence resides
one that can overcome
one that can survive
February 14th
A day of love for most
Loathing for others
Capitalistic manipulation for some
For me a reminder
A reminder of two lives
One bright and seemingly
full of good humor
The other dark and brooding
full of frustration
One a school room acquaintance
for a handful of years
The other a brief online companion
Regardless of duration
Or friendship proximity
Two marks have been made
upon my memory
By the end of the end of these two lives
One found at the end of a rope
The other the wrong end of the gun
One a victim of the self
The other victim of an ex-lover
Two gone too early
And one day as a reminder
February 14th
The city I live in is a ghost
while life may course through it
the soul is nothing but tatters
filled to the brim with movement
yet lacking any finesse
a skull full of brains
that does nothing more than mumble
and plead
muscle firm and strong
yet physical strength does not make up
for the mental malaise
goodbye fabled city
for you were probably always
a bloated corpse
An escape at times
Mere distraction at others
Rarely a revelation

Yet forever a pursuit
Dreams of creating them
Like the masters I seek

Time consuming
Emotionally draining
Even failure can be success
Once they are complete
But complete is just another word
For a beginning and an end

One can cut and cut away
till nothing of essence remains
Or build and build till a mountain reigns

Sometimes just a pile of rocks
Others a build up to a majestic peak
All in the name of cinema
The fluffy furry beasts that scamper run and hide killers of birds mice and snakes dozers in the tall grass upon personal towers inside of cardboard box connoisseur of pungent aromas like that of discarded socks you will forever have a place within my heart from those that share my living quarters to those quickly running down street corners
Orange banana lemon
Mango on the lamb
Splitting the hairs of trees
Across the romantic land
Cherry tulips dripping dew
Into a bowl of crystalline
Overflowing into the Nile
Where the crimson crickets
Pull out their violins to sing
Cinnamon spice brings the dead to life
And the rotted corpses dance throughout the night
Licorice liquor wraps up the wounds
That time has struck and sundered
Time slips back and forth
Rewriting lives
Till fathers and mothers
Become sisters and brothers
Mutating the family trees
The bees pollinate children
Instead of trees
And as the sun sets
It's already started
to rise
WHEN IT’S OVER

GRAY GRASS SPLINTERING
NEAR A FIRE
SPUTTERING AND GAGGING
WILD CATS WHINE OUT
A GENTLE TOUCH STIRS
WHERE ONCE A HEART GREW WARM
IT NOW GROWS COLD
AND CRACKS APART

THE MOUNTAIN SIDE
DESIRE’S FLAME BURNT OUT
IN ITS LAST BREATH
WITH THE PASSING
ONLY A DULL SENSATION

NO TEARS

ONLY ABBREVIATED REGRETS
SWIM
IN THE SHALLOW END OF THE POOL
The Human

Frank conversation on the lawn
Breathtaking stranglers up by dawn
Young lovers court each other with their fists
Lonely teenage sufferers get hard whacks upon their wrists

Playful pacifists preach
Racists riot for free speech
Big man up top screams that he's the cream of the crop

While the missteps he takes never seem to stop
Workers keep on punching the never ending clock
And ships keep arriving and departing from the dock

The world keeps on spinning around the sun
At times it seems that mankind may be undone
But it's all just wavering pattern of puzzle pieces
That will keep going until man ceases

cycle
Ways of war

FROZEN FIELD
BREAKING BLADES UNDER TATTERED BOOT
FEET ROTTING
WOODEN GRIPS OF RIFLES TEARING AT FLESH
LANTERNS BURNING
WAR MACHINE KEEPS TURNING DEVOURING THE YOUNG
STOMACHS RUMBLING
WHILE THE INFANTRY MOUNTS THE THE ASSAULT
MACHINE GUNS CHUGGING
MOWING
DOWN
FIFTY
MORE
SOULS

NOW THEY SIT IN AIR CONDITIONED CENTERS
DROPPING BOMBS ON WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS
REDUCING HOSPITALS TO RUBBLE
RUNNING AROUND IN ARMORED VEHICLES
STUFFING THEIR FACES FULL OF TACO BELL
WHILE THEY KEEP ON DYING
IT'S MOSTLY DUE TO GROSS INCOMPETENCE
Brutal lamb
Running through this land
Take the hand
Of those who feed you
For they only feed you
To make you food of their own
Possum Paul

Possum Paul wasn’t bright at all
Or even tall for that matter
His eyes were there
but he often did stare
And saw nothing at all
He liked to crawl up into trees
When something scared him
Mostly starving dogs
That munched on rats
Occasionally the dogs would nip
Catching the tip of Paul’s naked tail
Somehow the sluggish possum
Could scramble up the trees just fast enough
One day he met his match in something a bit too fast
As he crossed the road to find out what was on the other side
He heard a loud rumbling noise
And saw a large truck barreling down on him
He scampered and skittered
but his feet just weren’t fast enough
The Midnight Bandit

Into the night creeps Raccoonous
Slowly
Carefully
Avoiding anything louder than a rustle
Sniffing around for a bit o’crumb
Standing on hind legs to get a better view
Using gloved hands to go through knocked over trash cans
Eating the food left out for cats
Fighting with dogs over bric-a-brac
Drinking from streams
Before raiding campsites
Throwing down seeds from the trees
Scattering at the sound of footsteps
Then disappearing before the sunrise
Looking for a Bite to Eat

Fox Friend
Built a den in a stack of sticks
A mother
two kits
Emerging from the den
Into the heat of the afternoon
Stepping swiftly
Then stopping every few feet
Glancing around
Searching for danger
Finding nothing
She moves on
Toe nails clicking on paving stones
Rounding the corner of a mobile home
Stopping in her tracks when on the porch she sees
A human with their kitty friend
She stands and observers
As the porch dwellers stare back
One with curiosity
The other apprehension
Slowly she approaches
Paw before paw
Until one paw rests upon the first step
The cat hisses
Sending her running back the way she came
Ginger Tom

Ginger Tom was a cat built of muscle
His coat was patchy
All scabs and scars
He roamed from patch to patch
Running down his competition
The land was his land
And not yours
Occasionally he’d be sighted
With a svelte admire
Some say he once was tame
A friend to humankind
Now quite wilder
Disappearing for weeks and months
An orange and white phantom emerging from the tall grass
for a bit of food
It’s been awhile since he was last spotted
Though maybe some day soon
he’ll come walking down the drive
Waiting for the Old Man

Alone in a field
Underneath the lone tree
Stands a donkey
Just waiting
Waiting
And waiting
Then waiting some more
For the old man to bring some oats
The old man is slow
Keeps the donkey for last
The donkey knows the old man’s arrival
Before it even sees him
The sputtering old tractor
Gets the donkeys ears flicking
The jangling of the chain
fastening the trailer to the tractor
Gets the donkeys ears drooping
It does not care for the harsh metal clang
But it dare not move from it’s sacred shade
There it waits
Waits
And waits some more
For that gurgling tractor to come to a stop

Then the donkey waits some more
While the old man creeps and peps
Just like his faithful tractor engine
Still the donkey waits
Waits
And waits
For the old man to get the food out of the trailer
Then slowly as a spry donkey can move
The donkey makes its way to the feeding spot
A well trodden bit of land
Where bits of old hay stand
Still holding the smell of old rain from a week ago
There the donkey stands near by watching the old man
Always the same procedure
Scattering the hay in a neat little pile
Leaving a little spot in the middle
Where the old man dumps a bit of oats
The donkey’s favorite bit
The old man makes the noise he usually makes
Which makes the donkey’s ears lift
Then the old man rubs the donkey’s nose
The donkey watches the old man leave
Then eats
Eats
And eats some more
"When will we discuss the changes that are in all of us?"
"August."
"What is the purpose of that month?"
"Discussion."
"It is the time to generally discuss?"
"It is a time."
"Like today and tomorrow?"
"Just the same, but not yesterday."
"For yesterday has come to past."
"For yesterday has come to past."
"Will revolution take flight tomorrow?"
"Time will tell, though sometimes it must be informed."
"In what form?"
"Sights, sounds, and other ways that send society spinning around."
"Then what? Peace?"
"Chaos, for it is the way of life."

"And then there will be peace?"
"No, just more chaos. As there was in the beginning and as there will be after our end."
"So why bother with revolution?"
"Cause it's ever a bother to just sit around and be depressed."
"I suppose you have a point."
"Maybe I do, maybe I don't. One should never waste time on the words of others without having words of their own."
"So if I were to follow such words, would I then also betray them?"
"They are only a reference, and there are plenty that would say otherwise."
The Lord Who Could Not Take a Hint

There once was a handsome suitor who traveled from afar to take the hand of the fairest maiden. Even in the land where he came from there were stories of her beauty. He was convinced that his main goal in life was to see all the beauty he could find. Yet as soon as he set eyes upon this particular maiden all the beauty that he had ever beheld smoldered into ash. From then on he declared to himself that he would make the maiden his. Which he surmised would be simple as he heard it told that he was the handsomest man from any land, and beauty looks well upon beauty.

First he jumped through all the traditional hoops to even get a moment of her time. The moment he found to be cold and dreary, her beauty merrily an unreachable lighthouse in the fog. The more he tried to pry into her clammy mind, the tighter it clamped shut. Mentions of his riches and lands got nothing but a stray glance. Defeated, he arose and left her there in silence. Before he opened the door he turned and declared, “I will return and you will love me.”

His first act to win her love was to conquer all between his land and that of hers. It was a long bloody time spent upon the field of war. Once what was a beautiful visage was scared almost beyond recognition, yet he had won. Though when he made it back to his pursuit, she was even more frigid. Just like before he turned and said, “I will return and you will love me.”

The second act he decided on was that of forgiveness. He went throughout the lands that he had torn asunder in the name of love. In each realm that he conquered he set forth to repair the damaged that was done. Atrocities addressed as best as he could do, captured men he did release, and families he reunited. All this repair took even longer than the carnage he’d unleashed. He was sure as he rode toward his prize that she did know of all the good deeds he had done, yet still when he arrived she refused him. So just as before he turned toward the door and said, “I will return, and you will love me.”
The Folly of the Enlightened

There once was a person who journeyed up a hill
They huffed and puffed
While sweat poured out
And they thought their mind had grown clear
With each step they took
another revelation
Till they arrived at the top
Where they shouted down at those below who couldn’t hear a sound
“I’ve made it to where I can see all, yet you see nothing!”

Upon a mountain near by another spied through a looking glass
“Look there”
They said to their companion as they handed over the looking glass and pointed to the hill
“Another blind soul.”
The third and final act he did commit was that of humbling. To his land he returned and sold all that he had, renounced all his claim to the lands, and set off on foot to the women he loved. A journey which was treacherous on horseback, suicidal upon foot. Offers of transport were given, but not taken. Years and years passed by as his two feet carried him on. When he finally arrived at the domain of his true love. His skin had grown taut, hair long and gray, feet well worn and rough, and a stomach that was long past empty. A long talk with the guards ensued before he was brought before his true love. Her hair was a bright shimmering silver, but her face no less fair. Slowly he approached and croaked, “Will you now love me?”

“No, and I never will. You first came here expecting love because of your long journey. Never had I met you or had you met me, and you expected love? Then you commit murder and take people's land. Why would I find love with a villain? Then you try to make amends with the people that you wronged. You claimed to do that for love, but if you knew love, why would you have wronged those people so? Finally you humble yourself for me, but never did I ask you to. Never did I ask you to come here. Never did I ask you to war and rage. Never did I ask you to seek redemption. You believe you did this all for love, but never did you learn you did it for yourself.”

Struck dumb he collapsed upon the floor and died.
Not All Want to Return

A farmer stood in a field examining his withering crops. Taking the dried and dead leaves into his leathery hand, and then tore the branch asunder. As it crumbled in his old hardened hand, he heard the approach of another. Turning from his wretched lot, he saw a thin man in a long black suit. Jet black shades covered his eyes, hiding them from the slightly shocked farmer.

"Can I help you mister?" the farmer asked the man in the suit.

"Are you Arthur Kent?" the suited man responded in a low rumbling bass tone.

"Yeah that's me...how can I help you stranger?" the farmer said motioning for the man to follow him to the shade of his house.

They approached the shade of the covered porch of the old farm house in silence. The boards creaking and ever so close to finally cracking, was the only thing in the farmers ears. Then nothing. Shrugging without a thought of what to do, the farmer sat down upon his favorite rocking chair and motioned for the stranger to sit in his wife's chair. A chair that hadn't been sat upon since his wife had died last year.

"You sure are a friendly lot." the stranger finally spoke as he turned and stared with the dark sunglasses trained upon the farmer.

"Who? Farmers?" the old man queried with a bit of shake to his voice.

"You really haven't a clue who I am?" the stranger asked ignoring the farmers question.

"No...no I can't say I reckon I know who you could be. I'm paid up on my bills, and I ain't never been one to commit any crimes." the old land tender replied.

"Your wife was the same way. It would almost be humorous that you both met the same fate, though it rather seems like a common occurrence."

"How do you mean mister?" the somewhat frightened farmer inquired.

"Look out into the field, Arthur." the man said slowly pointing towards the field.

The old man attempted to stave his fright when he saw his old familiar boot tips pointing up to the clear blue sky. He glanced down at his feet and then back to field, then back down again.

"How?" the old farmer asked, not expecting an answer.

"Just like your wife. A heart-attack," the stranger said.

With a bit of strain, the old man got up out of his chair and began to pace the porch. The stranger watched the old man, somewhat confused as to what was going on. As the old man began to sit back down in his trusty rocking chair, he let out a laugh.

"Well it might not be funny to you, but I got quite a kick out of it. I even went on the same day she kicked the bucket too." the old man let out after a period of rocking, "So what's next?"

"Rebirth," the stranger said.

"Aww shit!" the old farmer exclaimed.
“Everyone's awful.” she mumbled through bits of her hair that had caught in her lips as she rolled upon the bed.

“Everyone?” her roommate/best friend/riotous band-mate asked.

“Everyone.” she retorted still in the middle of her afternoon blanket contortions.

“Even you?” the multiphasing spirit animal word-prodded.

“Especially me!” the bed dweller exclaimed, spitting it out with bits of hair.

“How awful?” the ever-present, effervescent cherub chirped.

“So very, very, very, very, terribly, terribly, terribly, dreadfully, fretfully, awful.” the rolling pillow princess spoke, while the rolling had come to an end.

With her hand she parted her hair to look upon the burnt sienna skin that wrapped around the skeletal frame of her confidant. Tracing the air she formed the shape of the body that occupied the space inside the door frame.

“Beautiful, kind friend, tell me that I'm not a tyrant. Loving, gentle friend, tell me of my good deeds, so that I may drown the horrors down down deep!” the tearful spring supported roommate pleaded.

“What are friends for?” the door space dweller quizzed.

“For moments such as this?” wondered the bedridden wretch as she rose and collapsed back down upon the mountain of pillows she had amassed.

With a sigh and a shrug the so called out friend approached the bed and set herself among the discarded sheets.

“Friendship still burns bright between the darkest night?” owner of the bed squeaked.

“The flowers of spring shall be long forgotten in the coldness of winter. They all might be remembered at times when lights seem not to shine as bright, or give off heat to drive out the frost. And like those flowers I now try and brighten up your life.” the friend responded with a playful flick to the nose.
Nothing

“What does it mean to be a man?” a father once inquired of his son.
“One who has a penis.” the son replied.
With a laugh the father shook his head, “So your favorite cat is a man?”
“Among cats, yes.” the son responded.
“When he was a kitten was he a man?” the father asked.
“No, I guess not.”
“Your guess is correct, for what you’ve confirmed is that he is biologically male.”
The father paused for a moment while the son considered the subject at hand.
“What else could possibly make one a man?” the father asked after he felt enough time had passed.
“Strength.” the son put forth with confidence.
“What sort of strength?” the father quickly followed up.
The father watched his son's face as the young child considered the question.
“Physical strength.”
“Can't a woman have such strength?” the father suggested.
“Yes.”
“So, it's possible that it's not a physical characteristic.”
“I guess.” the son responded a bit downtrodden.
“Why do you look so harmed?” the father asked his sad son.
“I don't know the answer.” the son sobbed.
“It's alright.” the father said as he embraced his crying son, “For there is no answer. It is only symbolic, and symbols rarely are perfect. To pursue symbols is a fault. Just be you, for you are the only one who can define what that means.”
As the son's tears subsided he pulled away from his father.
“What about what others might think of me?” the son asked.
With a laugh the father said, “That’s a discussion for another day.”
Four Years of Fallout

It was the class pariah that brought the news that day
that messenger was quickly shot down like an old tin can
though truth had hung upon her lips
as the day went by the facts came flowing in
by the second class that day
my German teacher was giving a speech
on how after that day our lives would change
a gloomy speech
for a gloomy day
that's all that remains of that day for me
that was freshman year
by my senior year
I'd seen all the terrible bigots that got their fifteen minutes
heard the idiot president
saw people I thought reasonable
devolve into reactionary monsters
when simply asked to think about the war
a question asked by a substitute teacher
I still remember the look of horror on his face
while a loud mouth ranted about getting a job from daddy
and not needing to think on such things
another lackey spoke up in support
the sub tried to press on just to think
but thoughts were weakness to them
not long after that
I never returned to that school
I left before September eleventh
March tenth
nineteen-forty-five
one hundred thousand
were burned alive
so much death and destruction
your airmen put on their oxygen masks
to escape the smell of burning flesh
the smoke so thick
they flew outside of the flaming x
doing the devil's work upon the witching hour
over a million people left homeless
in the ashes of Tokyo
Then in nineteen-sixty-two
when the nuclear warhead of Damocles hung in the world view
you were shouting for destruction
even when the ships withdrew
you shouted for destruction
those shouts were ignored
during those thirteen days of yore
you were ignored once more
during the war of wasted youth
your lust for bombings
went mostly unfulfilled
quotes of bombing into the stone age
you said were misunderstood
but time tends tell
the truth of your words

Curtis
LeMay
You boosted your myth
Tail-gunner Joe
Tossed mud upon La Follette
called him a war profiteer
when you lined your pockets as well
with a campaign funded by communists
you won in forty-six
Spent four years as a nobody
then in nineteen-fifty
you said you had a list
of spies and communists
the enemies within
infesting the state department
oh how that red menace
made you a star
but even brightest star collapses in on itself
your list of fifty-seven
grew to eighty-one
then when the time came
you were left with only nine
men and women
and not a single red
once the dust had settled
you kept on searching
then your cross-hairs were trained
on the weakness of the homosexuals
how easy they could be blackmailed
or at least that's what you said
four hundred and twenty-five
were fired because of your scorn
in fifty-three
you were awarded
your own subcommittee
harassed the VOA
to the point that one ended up DOA
once done with that
it came time for book burning
once the communist rags were turned to cinders
it came time to find the red in the green
all you found was a dentist
you asked how he was promoted so quickly
when it was you who had helped doctors to fly up to the top
so quickly
a fight with the army would be your undoing
condemned by 67 of your fellow senators
they said you weren't the same after that

Joesph
McCarthy
Wanted to be a big man in the war
never made it to the front
but you still got an award
joined up with the HUAC
not long after your congressional win
tried to register all the reds
but that didn't quite pan out
In forty-nine you ran again
this time headed for the senate
by giving the pink sheet to Douglas
what a Tricky Dick you were that day
spent your time opposing communists
palling around with McCarthy
voting for civil rights
and immigrants
a slight hiccup in fifty-two
when you were running with Dwight
covered it up with a speech about your dog
almost got booted out Ike's second term
but voters cried a foul for you to return
helped with the Civil Rights act of fifty-seven
In nineteen-sixty you tried for president
though maybe that televised debate didn't help you
it was in sixty-eight that you managed to grab the reins
when the country was disarray
said you were ending the Vietnam War
while bombers took at least one hundred thousand lives
from seventy to seventy-three
paved the way for Pinochet
got a little SALTy with the Kremlin
arranged for a New Federalism
which brought about OHSA and the EPA
started the new age prohibition that continues today
did some things for integration
even supported the Equal Right Amendment
you did some right
and then what did you do?
You built yourself a tower
made out of lies and deceit
that you did take a long fall from
so like most of history it is the darker parts
that are remembered
and that's where your legacy lies

Richard
Nixon
Started out on the silver-screen
served your country by making training films
Presided over SAG while snitching on the commies
started on the left and ended up on the right
became governor of California in sixty-seven
signed the Therapeutic Abortion Act
then decided you were pro-life
tried to steal Nixon's thunder in sixty-eight
but realized that his boat was still afloat
and walked away
In sixty-nine you sent in the cops
to crack protesters skulls
were a little upset you only got to take one criminals life
and moved on out
then tried to move up during the seventy-six election
didn't quite make it that time around
But then in nineteen-eighty
you turned it all around
started off your presidency by getting shot
fired eleven thousand air traffic controllers
cut taxes
then increased till you left office
kicked people that were already down and out
always had a cold mood to civil rights
poured all your pennies into the cold war stockpile
poked your little toe into a civil war
and got two hundred and forty-one killed
invaded Grenada with a fury
started the war on drugs
that cost two billion dollars
kind of took your time responding to AIDS
granted amnesty to three million illegal immigrants
got into trouble giving guns to rebels
told Gorbachev to tear down that old Berlin wall
now people on the right worship you like a god
even though they usually don't quite know your story

Ronald
Reagan
A FIRE IN THE WOODS

depth in the woods
a fire burned bright
on a starless night
not even the moon
illuminated the tall branches
just the bright yellow flickers
illuminated the lower branches
the flames also cast an orange cast
on cloaked faces
several robed figures gathered around
the only source of light on this dark night
in silence they stood
only sounds that bothered to break the silence
was the insects creeping underneath the surface
a low drone emanated from one of the robes
it quickly spread throughout the circle
drowning out all the small steps of insects
tongues long forgotten erupted erratically
out of the mouths of the robed figures
sounds strange and otherworldly
filling the darkest night
the fire grew brighter and brighter
as the voices strained and cracked
gouts of blood erupting from mouths
then the flame went out
the voices eased into silence
and darkness hung heavy upon the robes
who dares to speak with me
a voice both wicked and cruel demanded
only us lowly mortals
one spoke out to the infinite darkness
slowly as you may well be what would you ask of me
the wicked voice inquired with a poison tinged tone
only the key to immortality
said the voice of a robed one
with a laugh and a single syllable uttered
the robed figures caught fire
the night once more lighted
till the last figure was no more than smoldering ash
then darkness once again
THIRD STRIKE

Sam woke up with a pounding headache. Stumbling into the bathroom he gripped the sink with one hand to steady himself as he flung open the mirror above the sink. Lacking fine motor skills he brandished his hand around inside the medicine cabinet in search of relief. Various bottles both plastic and glass rained down into the sink spilling pills and liquids as they shattered and cracked. Finally his frantic hand gripped onto the bottle of relief. For a moment he paused wondering if he could remove the hand he braced him up. Another wave of pain told him it was a risk he would have to take. A risk that would be his undoing.

Removing his hand from off the sink, he lost balance and fell to the floor dropping the bottle into the sink with the rest of the mess. Lying on the cold tile floor he felt a small moment of euphoria as the tile melted the fever that was growing. Fear sank in quickly as he forced himself to stand back up. Looking down into the sink panic began to grow. He wasn't sure which bottle it was, and had to fight the desire to start searching through the sticky glass filled mess. One by one he removed pills and broken bottles trying to find the right one while he fought the pain back. With sticky cut up fingers he finally found the right bottle. One pill remained inside it. One pill was not enough, but it would have to do for now.

He dropped the single pill into his hand, but before he could pop the pill inside his mouth the change began to take hold. Sam watched as the pill fell from his hand and down the drain. His last hope lost down the drain. Coarse hair began to erupt from his skin and the pain took hold sending him back to the floor. Bones broke and fused back into an inhuman form. Muscle bulged out underneath the furry skin and hands became massive paws. As his sound mind turned to fury, the last thought he had was that this would be his third strike and no one came back from that.

With the strength of ten men or more the changed man threw his front door off the hinges and into the street. A small dog that thought itself much large provided him with a breakfast snack. It wasn't quite enough though as he padded down the avenue. His ears perked up and his movement slowed as far away he could hear sirens blaring. Without a thought his paws carried him in the opposite direction. Muscles working in over time as cars went zooming past him. One massive truck swerved right into his path, he quickly avoided being roadkill and ran into the woods. Shouts echoed behind him as he broke branches beneath his massive paws.
As his paws carried him onward he stopped when he found a clearing. The sirens were still far away, but the sounds of a single pursuer slowly crept closer behind. Sam listened to the slow rhythmic breaking of branches growing louder and louder with each step. A small sliver of humanity rose up and turned the massive beast body towards the sound. It turned out that the pursuer was quite idiotic as they came into view not taking any measures to hide. That small piece of humanity was quickly drowned out as the paw pads pounded their way towards the hunter. Heaving the large rifle the hunter carried they aimed, but proved a poor shot as the bullet clipped a tree far from the beast. Sam could see panic set in as the hunter fired off a second shot that also missed. There would be no time for a third as the massive beast leaped onto the dimwitted hunter who was devoured by tooth and claw. Sam set in on the man with sheer ferocity slinging blood and entrails into the tree branches above.

“Holy shit.” a dumbfounded voice said distracting Sam away from the carnage before him.

Turning away he saw the wolf catchers. It was finally over the little bit of humanity thought creeping its way into the wild mind. The large wolf closed its eyes as the wolf catchers did their job.
THE ROOSTER

rustling the dead leaves beneath clawed feet
the rooster makes its path
suddenly it hears a noise
one that puts it on alert
stopping dead in its tracks
it waits
the sound draws nearer
the rooster starts to run
faster and faster
it jumps erratically
knowing death is moments away
if only it could take to the sky
the pace of the pursuer grows quicker
snarls and shouts directed at the poultry
grow louder and more vulgar
with each step the rooster takes
a loud thud nearby
scatters dirt
sends the rooster into brief flight
another thud clips a single feather from off the rooster's wing
a shout of frustration
and a lunge of desperation
finds the rooster with a fist around its neck
a kick here and there
tears the flesh of the pursuer
the fist releases
and the rooster sees an escape
a deeply wooded area
where the pursuer can't dare fit
paradise awaits the plucky chicken
but as always the axe falls before it reaches those pearly gates
Long dead Fred
is more bone than flesh
he rolls around in a motorized wheelchair
cause his muscles no longer move the remaining flesh
quite like it used to
been quite awhile since he had his last meal
it's hard to crack a skull when you can barely make a fist
and most of the living aren't bound to help him out with that
so he rolls around in his wheelchair
going to places he'd never been when he had first lived
his trusty wheelchair isn't quite what it used to be
sometimes he sits for days and days
waiting for the battery to recharge
various wildlife passes him by
not stopping to waste their time
his flesh long past its expiration date
he'd spent no time outdoors when he first had been alive
just watching the tv screen after a long day at work
occasionally looking out the window to see a pigeon fly by
but never had he seen a road runner speed on by
or a desert fox leaping through the moonlight
now these sights are his only entertainment
and he cherishes each and every sight
A NIGHT OUT

Into the night steps the black cat
with powerful purposeful steps
slinking through the cemetery gates
stepping across multiple graves
leaping up onto tombstones
chasing mice from the crypts
brushing up against the striped socks
of a goth girl looking for the tomb of some dead occultist
quickly scampering across the overgrown grass
of the forgotten plots of those that died long ago
walking through the remains of the original gate
finding its way to bushes near a neighborhood
watching in the shadows
as children scamper and scream
wearing bright plastic pieces
and the older children
wearing jeans and a t-shirt
with some rubber mask dangling from their faces
who get distasteful looks but still get treats dropped into their bags
the black cat runs from shadow to shadow
observing the costumed children as it goes
eventually it finds a quiet end of a street
where a jack-o-lantern sits upon a porch
quickly running up to the orange squash
the black cat marks it as its own
then moves along
the scent of food catches its attention
following its nose
it finds the bits of food left out for some other cat that is not around
quickly it feasts
then sprints off for a cool dark place to take a nap
The Last Thanksgiving

Vivica grasped the brittle stem of her wine glass, filled a bit too high with a dark red wine. She took a sip dripping a bit down the edge and down her fingers. Overcorrecting, she splashed some drops upon the off-white carpeted floor. It seemed that maybe this would be the last glass for the night. Everyone else had gone to sleep and she stood staring out into the night at Don McKenzie putting up Christmas decorations. Taking another sip, she began to wonder why he insisted on always beating them to it. When they moved in they first put them up on December fifteenth. Don had noticed them starting to work, and made sure he was finished before they were halfway through. The next year, for whatever reason, the family got out on the lawn on the tenth of December and Don somehow had known this would happen- he had his up the day before. Now here he was over twenty years later climbing up to his roof the night before Thanksgiving. It had been Vivica's idea to put out Frosty on Monday, just to see if the old coot was up to it. So here he was a bit slower, but starting his plan of attack upon his modest (for the neighborhood) house.

After taking a rather deep gulp from her modern goblet, she watched as old man Don took a tumble. From her perspective it seemed Don had missed the top step and couldn't regain his balance. She watched as the old man flailed through the air to the ground below and she could have sworn a bit of blood had flown up when he hit the ground. Though, she wasn't completely sure about that last detail. For what seemed like a lifetime she wondered if she should make the emergency call, or wait and hope Don's wife would have somehow heard his most likely fatal fall. A few sips later, as the old man continued to lay upon the ground without a sign of movement, she decided it was probably time to make the call. At the dining table, she set her glass down and lifted up her brand new cell phone. Her son Timothy had said it was the most impressive phone since the iPhone- not that she really cared, as long as the damn thing worked. Maneuvering through what seemed like one too many menus she managed to dial for help.

"Nine one one, what seems to be the emergency?" a almost too calm, placid voice said on the other end of the phone call.
"Yeah...ummm...I think..." Vivica began unsure of how to go forward.
"Ma'am are you alright?" The calm voice questioned.
Vivica knew she wasn't alright, but she was compared to Don.
"My neighbor is dead." Vivica finally said after some silence.
"Come again?" the uncomfortably calm voice asked.
"My neighbor Don is dead." Vivica said throwing the name in as if that was all that was being asked.
"Now how did Don die?"
"Fell off his ladder." Vivica said as she picked up her glass and drank deeply from it.
"You're sure he's dead?" the calm voice inquired.
"Uh huh." Vivica said taking a brief sip from her slowly emptying glass.
"What was that?" the calm voice asked.
"Yes I'm pretty sure he's dead. He hasn't moved in awhile." Vivica verified.
"So, there's no sign of breathing?"
"Well..."
"Yes?"
"I don't know."
"Why don't you know?"
Vivica started to feel like she was being investigated for killing old dead Don and took the biggest gulp of wine of the night.
"Well he's across the street. I saw him fall."
"Can you go make sure he's not breathing?"
“I mean what’s it matter really. He hasn't moved in awhile.” Vivica said regretting making the phone call.
“Wait, how long has he been down?” the now not so calm voice asked.
“I don't know.” Vivica said as anxiety began to brew inside.
“You said you saw him fall, how long’s it been?” the now somewhat accusing voice asked.
“I didn't say that.” Vivica said noticing Don's wife emerging from the house.
“Yes you did.” was the last thing Vivica heard as she hung up and heard Don's wife scream from across the street.
Sloppily setting her brand new phone upon the table with a loud clatter, she lost her grip on the wine glass and watched the red wine soak the off-white carpet.
“Shit.” she said.
“Want to tell me what happened last night?” the voice of Vivica’s husband, Ben, asked waking her from her heavy slumber.

Pieces of what had happened last night slowly collected together in a foggy, unpleasant nightmare inside Vivica’s mind. Not wanting to face what happened in the night she decided to avoid the more horrifying event.

“It was just a bit of wine, it will come out I’m sure.” she said to her husband as she pulled the comforter over her head.

“You could have at least picked up the glass.” he said.

Relief washed over as it seemed that Don’s fall wasn’t what he was referring to. Hopefully when that did come up it would be passed off like the death of a total stranger, she thought.

“Yeah...sorry about that.” she said peaking her bloodshot eyes out from underneath the comforter. Ben looked down at her already dressed and ready for the day’s festivities, with that all too familiar look of disappointment that always hurt her more than any times anyone had become angry with her.

“It’s alright. It will come out. I just wish you wouldn’t drink so much alone.” He said before making his way to the door, where he stopped and said, “Do get ready though, catering will be here any minute and that’s your thing.”

Retreating back to the safety of the comforter, Vivica dreaded the day before her. Why couldn’t this have happened some other day, she wondered as she rolled around upon the bed in frustration. Had it all been her fault for pushing Ben to put that snowman upon their lawn? That was insane though. Don was old, if he hadn’t fallen from the roof last night he would have died some other way sometime soon. For a moment this thought calmed her a bit, then she felt it probably wasn’t the best way to soothe her. It would have to do for now though, she reckoned as it was enough to get her to emerge from her fabric cocoon. A drink of water was first on her list of things to do to get ready, she decided as she made her way to the master bathroom. The feeling of the cold tile almost sent her back to the warmth of her bed, but that wasn’t an option, not today at least. The water seemed to flow too slowly as she filled up her glass. The water went down faster than the wine had, as she flushed out the bad taste from her mouth, refilling the glass a few more times until she felt as flushed out as she could be. With that taken care of she went about her usual routine to get ready for the day ahead, though put a bit more effort into getting it done in a timely manner. As she went about finishing converting her tight curls into long straight strands, a knock came at the door.

“Yes?” she short of shouting said.

“It’s me mom.” the voice of Heather said from outside the bedroom door.

“Come in.” she said, knowing whatever Heather had to say probably wasn’t something she really wanted to hear.

“What’s up?” she asked as her daughter walked in the door.

“Andy isn’t coming.” her daughter said with her head downcast.

“Oh.” Vivica said as she tried to remember who Andy was and embraced her daughter as warmly as she could.

“He said his parents wouldn’t let him. I think he’s seeing Jenny.” Heather said as Vivica gently rubbed her daughter's back trying to calm her. “Jenny’s such a bitch.”

“Well she sure seems like one.” Vivica slipped, as Heather pulled away a bit shocked at what her mother had just said. “I mean that was a little harsh, though you're right, she sure isn't much of a friend.”

“Thanks I guess.” Heather said walking out of the room slowly.

Well it appeared honesty might be the key to getting out of any further discussions she’d have
with Heather in the future, Vivica thought to herself as she made some final touches to her appearance.

As soon as Vivica reached the top of the stairs the doorbell rang. Just in time she thought as she made her way downstairs not into big of a rush. Halfway down the stairs the doorbell rang again with a follow up ring, as if that might get a more urgent response from the inhabitants of the house. Her eyes rolled as they had probably the year before, when she found herself with a hangover like she currently had. She knew no one else in the house would be getting up to answer the door. The males of the family were in the den watching some football game between some animal and some racially insensitive caricature made out of foam. Just a load of bullshit, as far as she was concerned. That her father and even Ben seemed to feel compelled to shout obscenities over the most minor drawbacks to their teams. As these thoughts flowed through her head a loud fuck emanated from the den just as she opened the door to find poor old Don's quite alive wife. She looked sad, which seemed like the obvious state to be in after losing a husband, but she also looked frightened.

“Mrs. McKenzie, can I help you with something?” Vivica asked hoping this would be brief.

The old woman stood there for a moment as Vivica watched the fear seem to grow. Then in the blink of an eye the fear was gone and replaced by a look of determination. The old woman fumbled for something in her large purse. Vivica stood unsure of what to do or say, then noticed the caterer walking up. She quickly saw her out of this awkward situation.

“Excuse me Mrs. McKenzie but the caterer is here and I need to show them around.” Vivica said gently moving the old woman to the side as the caterer approached.
Vivica always hated large gatherings. The loud talking. The clinking of silverware and glasses. The sound of a full room of people all eating at once. Drinking wasn’t an option today, she had decided as she drank down some water. The plate before her was empty while everyone else had bits of food smashed all up together. She wanted to make sure to go get food once everyone had gotten there’s, the very thought of being alone with anyone and having to make small talk was terrify. Part of her thought if she said too much she might spill the beans about what she had seen and done last night. Another good reason not to drink, cause sometimes when she let something out it tended to just keep coming out when she wasn’t entirely sober. Excusing herself from the crowded loud table, she made her way to the kitchen. One of the caterers was still in the kitchen dropping off a few things.

“Well that should be it.” they said not really acknowledging Vivica other than with those words as they left out of the back in quite a hurry.

She didn’t even have time to say thank you, though as always she would write a thank you card to the company like she always did she figured. Giving the food a once over, she thought over what she would put on her plate. She knew she had to make the portions small to get everything she wanted, but even then something was bound not to fit. Slowly she fit the delicious pieces of Thanksgiving feast upon her plate. Now came the perilous journey back to the dining table weighed down before her personal banquet. On more than one occasion she had seen the perfect portioned plate topple to the floor to be replaced by quite the inferior anger fueled portioning. She was quite determined to make it back with full plate intact this year. That’s when Jim Jr., son of her brother Jimmy, threw open the kitchen door knocking those perfect portions into disarray as the scattered to the tiled floor with a loud crash as the plate broke. Vivica didn’t even notice the ruckus in the other room die down as the anger welled up inside of her.

“I’m sorry aunt Vivi.” Jim Jr. said.

Vivica’s hand started to pull back causing the young boy to cower a bit fearing the hit, but it would not come, as Jimmy burst right in. For her luck he hadn’t noticed her hand focusing on the mess on the floor.

“Come on Jim. Let’s help clean up this mess and get your aunt a new plate.” Jimmy said picking up the bits of broken plate.

“I’ll go get the broom.” Vivica said leaving the scene as the frightened boy helped his father with the mess.

“Don’t worry, it’s just a plate.” she heard her brother say as she closed the door behind her and started to cry.

Quickly, she brought herself back from the edge and wiped her eyes dry. Grabbing the broom and dust pan she went back to help with the mess. Most of the plate had been tossed in what she liked to call the celebration can. It was nothing more than a large plastic trashcan that came out on special occasions. Sometimes she even went through the trouble to decorate it, so it didn’t look so drab. This time, however, it was its old gray self with a black plastic trash bag around the rim. She set into brushing up the bits of food and small bits of plate that hadn’t been picked up. Glancing over at the massive gathering of various foods, she saw her brother plating everything that had been lost. Though of course being the considerate brother he was the portions were excessive, and not what she wanted at all.

“I’ll go set this at your place for you when you get that picked up.” he said carrying out her plate filled to the brim with food she would feel compelled to finish every last bit of.

“Thanks.” she said, lacking enthusiasm as he exited with Jim Jr. in tow.

As she scooped up the last bit of wasted food she stared at the very obvious smears upon the tile and felt a compulsion to go get the mop to clean it up. The thought though began to evaporate when she realized just how hungry she was.
There was a somber tone permeating the table as she walked into the dining room. Loud decla-
rations had drifted into one on one dirges between various family members. An urge to ask if
someone had died as she sat down stirred, but was quickly snuffed realizing that someone had.
They were all probably too stuffed to speak too loudly now, she figured. That's how it always
went she tried to convince herself, and besides she was probably just being paranoid. There was
no reason to be paranoid. It's not like she'd gone out and shook the ladder. Though she did take
quite some time to actually make that phone call, and wasn't entirely sure how long it had taken
for her to do so. Maybe the food before her would fill the hole left by the guilt she felt she figured
as she began to eat. The food seemed to be rather bland, as if not a pinch of seasoning had been
used. She continued to shovel down the food and felt like everyone was staring at her. Why didn't
they get up and leave if they were done eating, she wondered.

A loud knock came at the front door that just about sent Vivica out of her chair. No one at the
table seemed to notice, as their attention was directed towards the door. A few people muttered
as to who would be going around knocking on the door during Thanksgiving dinner.

"I'll go see who that is." Ben said as he got up from the table.

Everyone for the most part got back to their separate conversations. Vivica, however, was con-
cerned with who was at the door. She could hear the door open, but nothing more. A loud bang
silenced everyone.
Glances went back and forth as no one was sure what to do. The patriarchs seemed to be having a telepathic discussion on who should go see what that loud bang at the door was. Vivica's father nodded at Brad's father who slowly got up and exited the room to see what the matter was.

"Brad?" his concerned father said.

The answer was another loud bang. Vivica's father sprang up as if he expected a different fate than the two previous men. She noticed her mother try to bar his way, but he was determined to get to the bottom of what was going. As he entered the doorway to the hall there was another loud bang as the back of his head scattered out into the dining room raining down upon the table. Vivica's mother launched herself up to be by him as if she might save the man with the missing brain. Everyone in the dining room was in state of hysterics- either screaming or crying as Vivica's mother tried to come to terms with her dead husband wrapped up in her arms. Vivica was quiet and sat in shock at the sight, and watched as old Don's wife appeared in the doorway with a large rifle.

"Mom." Vivica said weakly causing her mother to look away from her dead husband as old Don's wife raised the rifle.

Vivica shut her eyes tight not knowing what else to do, but not wanting to see anything else more. She wasn't sure how many shots were fired but she heard silence and didn't dare open her eyes to see if anyone was alive. Why hadn't she been shot yet, she wondered.

"Open your eyes." old Don's wife said sternly.

Vivica could hear the sound of footsteps approaching her, then felt her hair gripped in a tight fist.

"Open your god damn eyes!" old Don's wife yelled in Vivica's ear.

"No!" Vivica yelled out just wanting to die already.

"Mom just do what she says." the voice of Heather pleaded.

Vivica opened her eyes and saw the horror around her, but her daughter still lived and didn't seem to be wounded.

"You're ok?" she asked her daughter.

"Shut up!" old Don's wife said tightening her grip on Vivica's hair.

The old killer let go of Vivica's hair and walked back to the doorway looking a bit uncertain about how she would proceed.

"You took everything from me," she finally shouted at Vivica.

"What?" Vivica responded.

"Don!" she exclaimed at the top of her lungs raising the rifle for a moment then lowering it back down.

"Mom, what's she talking about?" Heather asked from across the table.

"Tell her!" Don's wife shouted.

"Mr. McKenzie died last night." Vivica said meekly.

"Tell her the fucking truth!" Mrs. McKenzie said.

"I saw him fall off a ladder." Vivica responded.

"That's right and what did you do?" Mrs. McKenzie said.

"I called nine one one." Vivica said.

"And what else?" Mrs. McKenzie inquired.

Vivica sat in silence, not wanting to say what else had transpired.

"Go on and tell your precious daughter. She should know what her upstanding drunkard for a mother did when someone needed help."

Vivica looked at the partially eaten meal before her and wished this would all just be over already.

"Tell her!" Mrs. McKenzie shouted.

Vivica tried to ignore her as if that would make it end quicker. Another loud bang and Vivica felt
something fly past her head.

“I hung up!” Vivica shouted at the old woman.

“Do you know what they told me when they finally got to my house when I called them?” Mrs. McKenzie said walking close to Vivica. “They said if someone had called sooner Don might have had a chance. In fact they said someone had called earlier, but seemed intoxicated and hung up. I knew it could have only been one person.”

Vivica stared at the old woman, expecting her to finally lift the rifle to her head and end it, but Mrs. McKenzie walked away towards Heather. Mrs. McKenzie set down the rifle and dug in her purse pulling out a revolver which she handed to Heather.

“Now I assume you know how to pull a trigger. I want you to aim that at your mother's head. Last thing I want her to see is someone she loves taking her life. I’m leaving. If I don't hear that gun fire I'll be back.” Mrs. McKenzie told Heather as she turned away.

Heather lifted up the gun and aimed at her mother's head. Vivica closed her eyes and heard a loud bang.
“You can open your eyes.” Heather said.

Vivica did so to find Mrs. McKenzie crumpled on the floor bleeding out, but not dead. Heather got up and helped her mother stand up.

“Let’s get out of here.” Heather said guiding her mother out through the kitchen.

As they emerged into the backyard Heather continued to help her mother out to the small glider on the back porch.

“I’ll go call the police.” she said before departing.

Vivica sat and thought about all the bad things she’d thought about her family. How many times she’d thought about running away from home when she was younger. The times she’d wished her father would just leave and never come back home. Even sometimes hating her mother for allowing her to be born. The times when she’d had a minor fight with Ben and wished he’d have just left her. How she’d joked more than once about wishing that her mother in law had died in car accident and couldn’t come over to help set up the house. Finally she thought about how she had almost struck little Jim. So much hate she had for this loving family, and now she wasn’t sure how she would move on from this. How did anyone move on from something like this, she wondered.

The sound of the back door opening wiped her mind clean as she managed a smiling waiting for Heather to emerge from the house. It wasn’t Heather though. Quickly she fell back into a state of gloom as Mrs. McKenzie emerged from the house gripping her bleeding side. Vivica began to grow less frightened as she saw how little life was left in the old woman. She watched the old woman limp towards the glider and collapse with all her weight next to her. Mrs. McKenzie used what little strength she had left to sit up straight.

“That girl must really care about you.” Mrs. McKenzie said through pained breaths.

“Why do you say that?” Vivica asked.

“Told a risk to save your life. Maybe you can learn something from her.”

“I sure hope so.” Vivica said turning to Mrs. McKenzie. “I’m sorry for what I did, or didn’t do more so. Mrs. McKenzie?”

Vivica noticed that Mrs. McKenzie was no longer with her as her gaze didn’t seem to deviate from the back of the house. Growing ever more uncomfortable sitting next to a dead body, Vivica decided it was time to seek out her daughter. As she approached the backdoor she hesitated before opening it. The kitchen was the same, like nothing terrible had occurred in the house. Though that was to be expected, she figured as she made her way across and hesitated at the door to the dining room, not wanting to see what was on the other side. With a long pause she finally opened the to find a room full of loud conversations and the clinking of glasses and the gnashing of mashed potatoes as if nothing had happened.

“Get to work, most of us are already done eating,” her brother Jimmy said motioning towards her overfilled plate.

She made her way to her plate and began to eat. The food now had the flavor that she expected no longer was it bland. All seemed well as she dined away on the plate before her. There were much too many pieces of food upon her plate, but she didn’t mind as she devoured every last bit. As she lifted the final piece of mashed potato soaked in gravy to her lips there was a knock at the door. The very sound caused her to drop her fork upon her plate.

“I’ll go see who that is.” Ben said as he started to get up.

“No honey, let me see who it is.” Vivica said as she quickly got up and made her way to the door.

She could tell who it was before she opened the door. The small frame of Mrs. McKenzie stood upon the stoop waiting for someone to open the door. Vivica gripped the knob and opened the door.

“Mrs. McKenzie, I’m sorry I was so abrupt with you earlier.” Vivica said.

“That’s alright dear. I was just wondering if I might join you for dinner. Don’t...he passed last night and I have no other family.” Mrs. McKenzie said seeming on the verge of tears.
“Of course, come right in.” Vivica said stepping aside to allow her to enter.
It's ok to Step Away

Santa stood propped up against the facade of a convenience store in some small town that he'd forgotten the name of already. A cigarette bobbed up and down between his puckered lips as he felt around his coat for his lighter. As his fingers grazed the cold chrome, a voice distracted him from pulling out the lighter.

"Should have just waited a minute, I'll get that for you." the voice said.

An unseen force lit the cigarette between Santa's lips, causing him to let loose, sending the lit cigarette to the sidewalk. Santa quickly stomped out the lit cigarette with his big black boot.

"I hate when you do that." Santa said frustrated, "You owe me a cigarette."

A demonic laugh erupted seemingly from all around Santa. He searched around him for the source of the laughter but came up empty. Then a hand firmly clasped around his shoulder, startling him and almost sending him to the ground as he quickly spun around. A rather slender form stood before him still chuckling. A baggy black hoodie was draped upon the bony figure with the hood up and an almost cartoonish black pointed beard stuck out like an ebony spike. Black skinny jeans that seemed almost unrealistically skinny clung to the legs like a second skin.

"All these years I would have thought you'd gotten used to my pranks, old man." the figure chuckled.

"I just keep hoping they send someone else to deal out the punishments other than you." Santa responded.

"But Santa and Satan has such a nice ring to it. Unlike Santa and Krampus. Such vulgarity in that name. I'm surprised they ever let that beast out." Satan replied.

"I could say the same of you." Santa responded bitterly.

"Come now." Satan said, drawing closer and producing a cigarette "We're partners. We're a balance of rights and wrongs. Now cheer up buttercup, the night is young."

Santa begrudgingly took the cigarette from Satan, and then produced his lighter and lit it before Satan could pull his old trick again.

"You're no fun." Satan said with a laugh before disappearing.
Santa stood smoking his cigarette slowly and methodically, not wanting to return to his sleigh to get the night started. A whoopee cushion or something else would be waiting for him to send that old buffoon Satan into a laughing fit at his expense. As he continued to finish his cigarette one of his impostors approached the store with a bit of a gait that signified the later stages of inebriation. Santa sure wished that the man was too sauced to even think of approaching or engaging with him. At first his fears abated as the drunkard passed on by, then quickly rushed back as the man pivoted on his heel almost losing his balance and taking great pains to return himself to what passed for balance in his state.

“Say...say buddy you shouldn't be smoking.” The man chastised Santa.

"Why's that?" Santa said humoring the drunk man.

“Cause...cause...uhh...cause that's a bad example for the...the uh...the children?” The man said shaking his head as he turned back to his destination.

“The children” Santa thought to himself as he dropped the cigarette to the sidewalk and crushed it beneath his boot. It had been some time since he'd bothered to really care about them. He cared for them as much as an overworked father or mother that put in extra hours to get the little brats some fancy electronic bullshit for them to waste their lives chasing some digital dream version of what life was supposed to be. Dreams of material wealth and not but a small glimmer of spiritual. Though maybe that was a fault of his own doing. Creating toys to distract from the plight of life for commoners, while his other half tried to dispense behavioral correction through neglect. Maybe this whole time the children had all been rotten little shits. With that thought, he shrugged his shoulders and made his ascent into the cold night sky. The drunken impostor emerged from the store just in time to see Santa disappear into the clouds. From the shock of what he had seen, the drunk man dropped his new bottle of booze and ran screaming into the night about the flying man.

Once above the clouds he found his sleigh with his only passenger, that oft times tormentor Satan waiting patiently for his arrival. Not even a single
comment from Satan as he slowly drifted over into his seat.

“Did you get all your pranks out already?” Santa asked just as his rear made contact with the cushioning of his seat emitting a rather riproarious mimicry of flatulence, which sent Satan into a laughing fit. “Seriously?”

Satan was still laughing as they arrived at the first delivery destination.

“You surely are easily amused.” Santa said as he reached into the large pack, pulling out the first gift.

“It helps pass the time when you live forever.” Satan said as he reached into his jacket to check his list.

“Anyone here?” Santa asked not really all that interested.

“The father.” Satan answered.

“What’s his sin?” Santa questioned still not all that interested and knowing what it probably was.

“Adultery.” Satan responded confirming Santa’s guess.

“I suppose a few sores on the pecker or some other venereal disease.” Santa said continuing the business talk that kept things moving along on the long, long night.

“Really Santa? They call them STIs now.” Satan stated with a bit of scorn as if Santa should be up to par on new naming trends.

“What the hell does that mean?” Santa fired back.

“Sexually transmitted infection.” Satan quipped.

“It was STD for a while wasn’t it? What point is there in calling it a disease over an infection?” Santa wondered out loud, not particularly looking for an explanation.

“To reverse the stigmatization of those who contract it.” Satan said rolling his eyes.

“These humans are fickle beasts.” Santa said as he dropped from the sleigh with presents in tow.

When he re-materialized inside the house he found a rather posh mini mansion. A tree that stood taller than most men and probably required a team to decorate stood in the ridiculously large living room. A tray of cookies and milk had been left out, which somewhat surprised him seeing as how most upper middle class families detested the idea of leaving food out for fear of vermin. Knowing full and well it wasn't good to subsist on cigarettes alone, he picked up one of the cookies and took a bite. While it sure tasted like a cookie something
did seem a bit off about it, taking a drink of the milk he found yet another not quite familiar taste upon his tongue. Whatever it was it sure hadn't come from a cow. Finishing what seemed to pass for a cookie and passing on the rest of the milk, he got to work. Quickly the empty stockings were filled, and a few presents were slipped underneath the behemoth tree. Standing there for a moment he admired his work, which was quickly ruined when an old familiar slap on the back scared him causing him to let out a yell. Quickly he teleported himself out of the house and back to the sleigh before anyone found him standing there. Not long after Satan appeared next to him in the sleigh laughing his ass off as usual.

“Oh how it brings me joy knowing no matter how many years I've worked with you, the same old gag gets you every time.” Satan said through bouts of laughter that caused tears to be shed down his burnt red face.

“One day your joke will backfire on us, and you won't be laughing then.” Santa said.

“You go around all the time among the mortals without even bothering to change your get up.” Satan fired back.

“Well it's a lot easier to move around them when it's not too out of the blue, you on the other hand would stick out like a sore thumb. I have enough impostors running around for me to blend in. Most people would find it strange for a devil to be running around during Christmas time.” Santa rattled off quickly.

“You know I don't like that term. If you must use it to refer to me at least say the Devil.” Satan said with a bit of hurt in his voice.

Santa wondered if the hurt was true or just another one of Satan's ploys to get set up some other joke. He figured he’d just let it pass instead of allowing himself to be made the butt of a joke yet again. There were plenty of houses to get to and therefore more opportunities for Satan to get one over on him, though it had grown awfully silent as they made their way to the next abode. It seemed best to bring up something unrelated to divert the conversation away from what had been stated.
“What do you have at the next house?” Santa asked breaking the steely cold silence.

Satan let out a sigh as he ruffled in his hoodie for his list and began to examine the next entry. Some time passed as he seemed to be intently examining this particular entry. He let out a laugh that bellowed through the night sky that sent a shiver down Santa's spine.

“A real sicko I'm afraid. You'll get to spend some time in the sleigh for this one big guy.” Satan said as he returned his list into his over-sized jacket.

Even though he knew better of it Santa couldn't help but ask, “What sort of situation is it then?”

“A child who will become a serial killer. He's already killing small animals, and eyes his first victim.” Satan replied with a joyous glint in his eyes.

“How old?” Santa asked.

“Just shy of twelve years old.” Satan said with a look as if he was reminiscing.

“What were you doing at twelve?” Santa inquired.

“Spreading disease across the slowly expanding world.” Satan said whimsically as if spreading death was something of beauty. “And yourself?”

“Exploring nature and escaping mankind.” Santa stated with a bit of sorrow wrapped around his words.

“What changed for you?” Satan asked.

Santa thought about this for awhile as they continued onward to their next destination. It was a question he hadn't asked himself in quite awhile. One he probably should have kept asking himself till he had a firm answer as to why he continued this pursuit. Was it simply that he had chosen to do so long ago, and why no longer mattered.

“Well, here's my stop.” Satan said. “Maybe when I get back you'll have an answer.”

With that he disappeared down below, leaving Santa above to think about the unanswered question. As he sat there alone his mind tried to wander back to his early years. To a time before he'd dawned his easily recognizable red suit. Then he began to think about how the very red suit he now wore wasn't even his own device, but one manufactured by a soft drink company.
At first he was slightly taken aback by the brazen attempt to co-opt his appearance, but then saw the proliferation of impostors that cropped up at social occasions giving him a chance to immerse himself in the population. A chance to be among them once more and see how they behaved instead of relying on reports he received from whoever sent them. Even Satan didn't know entirely where his list came from, and Santa figured he probably didn't particularly care about such details either. This made him wonder what exactly made it so easy for Satan to deal out the horrors he was tasked with and keep up an almost joyful presence. According to the mortals it was Santa that was jolly and fully of joy. Though as he sat up in the air all alone he sure was nowhere near such a condition resembling joy.

“So.” Satan said startling Santa who was still deep in thought when he reemerged. “Do you have an answer yet?”

“No.” Santa responded morosely.

“Well, on to the next house. Have you ever thought about giving up on this?” Satan inquired.

“Who would do it if I didn't?” Santa said almost defensively.

“No one.” Satan surmised.

This caused Santa to pause and think about the prospect of no longer trying to bestow joy on the good children to encourage them to continue to be good. Maybe they would be good without him around for encouragement. All this time he had no one around to encourage him to do what was right or good. Just a list to follow year after year. Even as he was losing faith in the children and so many had lost faith in him he continued onward. Maybe it was time to hang up the suit.

“You have made a good point, though I wish you might have made it long ago.” Santa said.

Satan looked a bit shocked by the statement, “You sure about that?”

“All these years no one has held me accountable for doing good. So I can only hope the good will stay good, and the not so good may see a better way through life.” Santa said.

“I guess we'll see if you're right some day.” Satan responded.

“Will you continue onward?” Santa asked, only remotely caring about what Satan's response would be.
"As long as there are people to be reminded of the wrong they do I'll be around," Satan responded with a laugh.

"I may not understand what brings you joy, but may you always find joy." Santa said disappearing from sight.
Snow for Simon

Simon watched the leaves fade  
the verdant spring  
turning towards an auburn hue  
before crumbling and fumbling  
to the dead grass down below  
many a times he'd seen such change  
yet never had he seen snow  
gray skies would pour down rain  
turning the ground to a mushy mishmash  
bits of leaf and bits of grass  
poking through the earthy sludgy ground  
yet never had he seen light white flurries  
slowly drifting to the ground  
just rain drops on the windowpane  
drip dropping on down blurring the winter scene  
then there came a winter  
when Simon had seen many a rain drop  
and as he grew weary of the gray days  
something strange and new occurred  
slowly but surely  
a snow flurry did stir  
at first a group of stragglers  
eventually joined by a horde  
white drifts slowly sashaying to the ground  
transforming the sickly brown tundra  
into a bright white sight  
not a bit of dead grass could be seen  
as far as Simon could  
he jumped up at the windowpane  
warm paws touching the cold cold glass  
dramatically wiping away the condensation  
"Would you like to go out?"  
the human in his house asked  
Simon felt some hesitation  
but the decision he knew wasn't for him to make  
as he was lifted quickly into the air  
the door flung open and quickly he was set down
the snow was colder than the glass
yet he showed a brave face as he sat upon the porch
tail swishing and swashing across the cold snow
   “I thought you wanted out?”
the human of his house said
and Simon thought him quite the ass