

Poetry Series

Joseph DeMarco
- poems -

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Joseph DeMarco(July 19th 1976)

Joseph DeMarco was born in New York City; he lived most of his life in Buffalo, NY. He now teaches seventh grade on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. He is the author of the novels Plague of the Invigilare, The 4 Hundred and 20 Assassins of Emir Abdullah-Harazins, At Play in the Killing Fields, Blind Savior, False Prophet, Vegans Are Tastier and The 4 Hundred and 20 Assassins: Green Mourning. He is currently working on several new projects.

Adam Vs. The Animist

And so it came to pass that after ten thousand years the Animist finally agreed to duel Adam, in what would be a David versus Goliath match up, winner take all. The prize: planet Earth. The Animist arrived early to scout the terrain. He searched for tracks and the presence of a divine deity. He found none. The Animist was mostly human, meaning he had the body of a person, except for a few strange anomalies such as a hog's nose capable of smelling across miles in the fresh morning breeze, a bull's horn jutting out of the left side of his forehead, and a raccoon's tail. He looked rather inhuman carrying a spear in his hand, and had a slingshot slung over his back, his striped tail dragging at least two feet behind him. The Animist was a towering six-feet, four inches tall with bulging muscles, wearing the hide of some deceased animal around his waist. Most might be quick to call him a savage; certainly he did not think of himself as savage. He killed when food needed to be provided. He did not kill when unnecessary, for instance for sport, and he certainly had not declared an all-out war on the animal kingdom like his brother Adam had so feverishly begun ten thousand years ago. Slowly but surely Adam had begun to snuff out all species that might pose a threat to him. After ten thousand years he was closer to his goal than ever: world domination. He figured if he could once and for all slay the Animist, he could silence the critics, mostly because the main critic was the Animist and he'd be dead.

The Animist had been there an hour and a half, had slouched down in the shade and was taking a nap, when a fifty-foot tall Adam showed up in his shiny red sports car, wearing a blue Armani suit, talking into his miniscule cell phone. Adam came to a sliding stop, smashing into an orchard, killing a family of squirrels, some groundhogs and a plethora of fruit trees in one swift blow. He did not care. He might have arrogantly blurted out "That's how I roll" if questioned about the annihilation of the squirrels or groundhogs or fruit trees. As Adam got out of the car, he held up a finger shiny with rings, indicating for the Animist to wait while he finished his call.

"I don't care that the place is a historical landmark, " Adam yelled into the tiny rectangular box that was his cell phone. "We either expand or we die, do you hear me? "

The Animist sat up. He had been having the weirdest dream about a woman named Eve who thought she had acquired the knowledge of the gods by eating a piece of fruit from a tree. Eve had been sorely mistaken. The Animist shook off his weariness and rose to meet his aggressor.

Adam shut his cell phone and removed his jacket. "Shall we get this over with? " Adam insisted towering forty-four feet over the Animist. "I have a one o'clock appointment with a masseuse."

Adam neatly folded his jacket, "But you wouldn't know anything about happy endings. You can barely form a written language." No sooner had the insult been fired, when the Animist hurled his spear. As the spear flew through the air, for an instant the Animist had an inkling that it would hit its mark, before Adam smiling smugly, swatted it away like a toothpick.

"I'm going to enjoy crushing you, " Adam remarked. "It's been a long time coming." He started to back the Animist into a corner. The Animist picked up a rock and grabbed his slingshot. He waited for the fifty-foot Adam to move in a little closer, then he was going to let the rock fly. As Adam stepped closer, he tripped over a branch. At that exact moment the Animist let the rock fly. The rock went high into the air in an arc, sailing clear over Adam's head. The Animist picked up another rock. Adam stumbled but did not fall (at least not yet) .

The Animist was cornered. He had nowhere to go.

"I'm going to enjoy this, " Adam said.

The Animist remarked that only the descendants of Adam enjoyed murder, but it was lost on this fifty-foot giant. As Adam brought his fist down to smash him, he found that oddly his hand went right through the Animist as if he were a ghost. Adam tried to bring his fist down a second time, but found as the Animist raised his hands, an invisible-force field seemed to stop him from smashing his prey. Adam swiped at the Animist again, but found he could not touch him. What he did not know or possibly couldn't understand was that the Animist belonged to a deeper magic. Animal magic. He was in a sense the god of all animals including humans, and Adam was just a man.

"The only way you can destroy me is by destroying yourself, " the Animist revealed, but Adam did not believe him (descendants of Adam did not trust their own kind) .

"Homo sapiens man was around 190,000 years old before you came around and started fouling things up, " the Animist explained. "Man, if you're merely talking about people without the ability to foresee the future and reason cognitively have been around 3 million years."

"Three million years! " the Animist roared.

"In just 10,000 years you developed a pervasive culture that would put us all out of business, and I have been there since the beginning, ensuring balance, that all animals live within the laws governing nature, and you my friend have been defiling them, " clarified the Animist.

The fifty-foot tall Adam laughed, "So what are you going to do about?"

The Animist shrugged. "Nothing." There was very little he could do about it. This was more of a warning. "But you will destroy yourself VERY SOON if you don't change your ways, " the Animist explained. Adam's cell phone rang. He picked it up. The fifty-foot giant had recently been diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder, which meant he didn't have to listen to you if he didn't want. What it meant to Adam personally was that he could act loud and outlandishly brash and it wasn't his fault, he had a disorder.

"Sue me! " Adam yelled into the phone.

The Animist shrugged (he knew a stubborn animal when he saw one) , pulled some magic sand out of his pocket, threw it at his feet, and POOF, he was gone.

Joseph DeMarco

Adults Don'T Read To Their Children Anymore

The Judas Cow had a self-fulfilling prophesy
That he was going to betray his species
And lead them all to genocide by way of slaughter
He laid down in the road as an alternative
His remains were given to a poor family
so they might eat well for half a year.

When the stock market crashed
Chicken Little fell out of bed
and broke his back
Chuck Little the investment banker
(Chicken Little's substitute)
Ran to the top of The Empire State Building, yelling
'The Stock market is falling!
The Stock market is falling! ! ! '

The three little pigs foreclosed on their houses
And fully expected a bailout
They didn't get it
the FatCats in Washington refused
They only wanted to bailout the Sheeps on Wall Street
And the Monkeys in Detroit

The greed meter is broken!
The clock is ticking way too fast! !
Something has gone terribly awry
Even in the Fairy Tales
Adults don't read to their children anymore.

Joseph DeMarco

Art Feels Pain

Art feels pain
Statues Cry
Tears of stone
Even in the rain
Granite hearts beat Heavy
Limestone egos can easily break
Beneath layers of Sandstone
Dolomite made a fatal mistake
He asked to be a sculpture
Not like his cousin Shale
And now he aches with hurt
From the lifting of the veil

Joseph DeMarco

Athens Shall Burn For The 3rd Time

The three hundred shall perish again,
As history repeats itself.
Although this time, it may only be 297.
My mother was possessed by the God, Apollo,
On the 21st the new Oracle of Delphi is crowned.
And although the prophet is blind,
it makes the prediction no less false,
the narrative no less compelling.

We live in the time of the 7th great extinction,
Yet our people, occluded like a rat in a maze
dance, drink, and watch.
For we are passengers on a ride
of great forgetting
Our remembrances of false events
and fictional commemorations
Very much on autopilot
And asleep at the wheel.

The prophecy is no longer about Athens,
Or democracy's demise,
But rather civilization as a whole.
We are unsustainable,
on a path to destruction.
Denial is not just the river,
At the birthplace of civilization,
But a reminder of the devastation we have already caused.
Just 12 more lifeforms need to expire,
and nature will unleash the 6bea6st6 upon man.

The event has already started
with most creatures, including man oblivious
We eat and be merry
murdering pigs and slaughtering cows
But the true beast is obvious.
And nature always has a way of balancing out that which is disproportionate.

Joseph DeMarco

Aumakua Rant

I was running up the mountain,
Just dog tired,
Suffering,
My mind drifting
Between the Infinite Rift.
My Aumakua (spirit animal) stops on a branch nearby.
He starts to chirp a mile a minute.
I cannot understand him.
For a second I imagine his chirps as something other than sounds.
This is what the little bird might have said,
'If Friends come and go
Enemies must
Stay and stop
Or what happens
If I don't think?
Does that mean
I am not?
Could I just fizzle away
into the immaterial matter in the air?
Become one with the universe,
Dissipate like the wind
Which has a pulse and a spirit
And a really bad temper.
The wind gets really pissed
If you break its rules.
For every reaction
There is a bell that goes off in a parallel universe
And two porcupines make love very carefully
Until one of them pokes the other
In the way that poking is bad...'
I put my finger in my ear, and realize the bird is still chirping and chattering, But
for some reason I can't understand him any more. Maybe I never could.

Joseph DeMarco

Conversations With Time

Three thousand ginger bread cookies
On a purple path to shade
Twisted Time Diagonally
Elusively Disfiguring Reality
Green was Blue
Blue was Happy
Happy was Sneezy
And the other Six dwarves
never showed
They didn't believe in fairy tales
Time jumped out the window
To see if it could fly
And found out literarily
That Time does not fly
It Bends and Twists,
Manipulates
Sometimes it even Backflips
But Time is different for everyone
'We see what we want to see, '
Time whispers in my ear.
'I see a girl in a coconut bra, ' I say.
'She's not ready to see you yet, ' says Time.
'But Why? ' I ask.
'The answer will not make you any happier.'
Time insists.
'No question or answer ever will.'
For some reason
I trust Time's transdimensional perspective
'Then can we stay in this moment forever? '
I ask Time.
'We only believe what we want to believe, '
Time says before Nature and Gravity right Themselves
Causing Motion and Misery and Noise
to hurl itself back into my lap
I hear the clock ticking
And cannot believe that
for one moment
Time stopped

Cynical Or Criminals Casting Stones

We are being taught what is not important
'Follow your Hear- a... your money or time is money.'
We are being taught an illusion
Disconnected from the land that feeds us

Keep building more buildings
More highways, more factories, more trains
Never mind about producing food
We'll eat the cement and steel

How many teachers will leave their job
As the youth runs wild
Parents have television raise their kids
Teacher appreciation is lost

Mrs. Bright a sixth grade teacher
Received a pen and cookie from administration
when she smiled, her students gave her a look like, 'WHAT? '
She would have been happy with a 'Thank you, '

She didn't get it,
Neither do the clowns in Washington
The bailout rewards GREED
And punishes self-reliance

Common white-collar criminals run our country
They ought to change
Orange prison jumpsuits to black business suits
It just seems more appropriate

Wall Street's been invaded by stingy suffocants
The banks have privatized their own money
while leaving yours in a paper shredder
Or some overdrawn offshore account

The jails are over-crowded with petty drug users and homeless
In some sort of government scam
To advance political careers
And funnel untraceable dollars into their own bank account.

The real criminals make the laws
It's not that they don't want you to use drugs
They just want you to use, their drugs
Zanax, Zoloft and Propecia

While Gabe Grant is
Serving two to ten for growing a plant
And Ronnie a homeless man in Waikiki
Was locked up and they threw away the key

We know not what we do
We look but we don't see
Now everybody's pointing fingers
Next you'll want to cast the stone at me

Joseph DeMarco

Dancing With Dragonflies

Flip-pity fly,
Swoop-pity sail
Catch a dragonfly
By the tail
If he buzzes
Let him bail
Flip-pity fly,
Swoop-pity sail

My mother said
that looks are only
skin deep
and it's on
the inside that counts
but society has
other ideas

The best ones
are not
the most attractive
they certainly aren't
the nicest

She was after
my money
She was trying
to change me
She wants me
to be more fit

My mother said
to pick
the best one
and you
are
not
it

By: Joe DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco

David Opu

David Opu had more money than money could buy.
He lived his life wanting more, he was corrupted by a lie.
That money can make you happy and tuck you in at night.
That money replaces love, forget wrong and right.

What David didn't understand is that we are all connected in a symbiosis of Earth.

If he would have learned that he might have saved his net worth.
The recession was bad, still David wasn't losing money.
But business without profit was anything but funny.

David called for layoffs, so that profits would soar.
And fired so many, yet he still wanted more...
He rode about town in his black limousine,
What happened next is easily foreseen.

When David got out, Bob Roach was waiting.
Bob was a disgruntled ex-employee there was no debating.
Bob pulled out a knife, and stabbed David in the gut.
David fell to the ground like a wounded, forgotten, dirty mutt.

And he lay on that pavement, bleeding in the warm sunshine.
A victim of circumstance, fresh out of time.
David died on that sidewalk, his life over in blink,
A living testament that we're all part of the same link.

By Joseph DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco

Dear Miss Rigby,

The Beatles are frozen underground
Like some sort of Prehistoric Cave Drawing,
Art Incognito.
The Ground is Hard
And my Fingernails break.
The Clay inbeded in my DNA,
Some part of me is Buried
Should I attend my own Funeral?
Nobody Else seems to be going
The Eulogy is short and unsweetened,
There are no Tears.
It hasn't rained in days,
I long for the tropics,
Where things make more sense.
I long for that girl
from long ago
who was never anything
but beauty personfied.
The butterfly on her lower hip
flutters and is perhaps my heart.
Desire is an impossible suspect,
My fingers slide under her yellow underwear
Past the Tattoo which dances,
Subtly stopping to admire the colors of her wings
The Moment is perfect.
The Cold outside in perfect contrast
To the warmth I feel for her,
beneath the Reptilean Skin
I crawl looking for this moment
Because that is all I can do
To pass the time

Joseph DeMarco

Demarco's Secret

Energy Ions

Bounce

Balanced Between Behavior

Moods Mistaken

Synapses Struggle Silently

Woefully Waking Up

Could be Contagiously Contracted

Positive Power

Negative Neurons

Secrets Surface

As Aggravation is Alleviated

'It's all in your head.'

We Whisper Wonderfully

Stress Struggles

Forlorn and Forgotten

The answers aren't getting harder

The secret is simple

'It's all in your head.'

PEaRLS of WISDOM-DeMarco's Secret-Part 2

I hide in my shell in the dark blue shade
under miles of refracting liquid glass
beneath an army of animals
a squad of sharks
guard me most closely

If you can find me
I might show you the pearls of wisdom
(The pearls are both respected and feared
on six continents and four oceans.)

They were lost not so long ago
probably around the time of the motorcar
They were accidentally thrown away
mistaken for old Christmas rubbish

It is these pearls before swine that give me my power
The lost secret, the found Atlantis
The more we rely on Technology
The further we get from the secret
The closer we come to eliminating ourselves

'Go back to the woods, '
You will find the secret there
It's in the dewdrops on wildflowers
It's in the sweet frosty air

'Go back to the ocean, '
The secret sleeps inside
In the holes in the reef
In the fall of the tide

You won't find the secret,
in a mall or a store
'Go back to the woods, '
to open the door

By: Joseph DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco

Extinction Is Forever

Anthropologist: (Vlad Vittorio) : 99.99% of species go extinct. It is evident to most scientists that all complex large organisms on a long enough timeline will go extinct. Humans are, of course, no exception. The woolly mammoth is something of an anomaly, in that it went extinct then made a brief but miraculous resurrection from the bowels of extinction. They are all once again extinct.

Sunday - 06/22/2049

8: 43AM - The door to a vehicle slams; there is the sound of plastic clomping against concrete. Leaning long and stretched like two skeleton stick figures on the concrete are the shadows of two Homo sapiens, one adult, one child; the adult appears to be holding the camera. We move forward with no commentary and no indication of who is filming. Past parked vehicles new and used, battered and shiny. The vehicles are all neatly lined up in rows. This parking area goes on as far as the eye can see. The group of two squeezes between two parked vehicles and is crossing a field. Around the field is a track and many Homo sapiens are out for a leisurely jog. They cut diagonally across the field, as you hear the trumpet of an elephant in the distance. The group of two appears to be on some sort of walkway made of slabs of gray concrete. The camera zooms out and one can see a rather large crowd of Homo sapiens. What they lack in speed, they make up in numbers. Because of the three-dimensional holographic image, they are all around you, all walking in the same direction, the way birds flock to migrate and the way fish swim in a school. A branch breaks out to the left and crosses the roadway. They dart between moving vehicles, heads down, scrambling. An angry Homo sapiens from inside the vehicle presses his horn in aggravation at having to slow down. Most of these Homo sapiens are bundled up in attire that covers most of their body but they are moving in a herd-like fashion toward some final goal, some final destination. Although there are a lot of adults, one can't help but note the abundance of the brood. Homo sapiens children are everywhere, crawling, climbing; some are running free, chasing birds; a few have looks of fear on their faces and clutch little fake cloth animals. A lot of the offspring, however, are being pushed in wheeled strollers.

As the camera pans even farther out on the herd, there are strollers far and wide, single strollers, double strollers, even some triple strollers. Males pushing strollers, females pushing strollers, some adults walk with two strollers, one in each arm. Some of the children look emaciated and malnourished, but most are still healthy looking. Keep in mind, by this time all milk had been taken off the market because of the Mad CuuD pandemic. The crowd thickens into a miasma of bodies; the closest adult male has a scary look on his face. Pervasive panic

prickles your spine. You seem to be in the middle of a wild, frenetic pack of stampeding hominids. The ground under you seems to rumble in the rush. There are some rather large male specimens. As you gain perspective, this cyclone of rather excited hominids seems to be pouring toward a large gate with a sign that says The Buffalo Zoo. Some of these Homo sapiens seem to be in a hurry. Most are wearing some type of solar clothing that absorbs sunlight. A lot of them are carrying bags and backpacks, and a few are carrying strings with strange, silvery helium-filled balloons floating up towards the steel gray sky.

Up ahead there is a chain-link fence. It isn't a long fence, it stretches for maybe a hundred feet like a fallen oak just lying in the way. The crowd moves like a flood toward the fence, with an excessive number of people spewing out over both ends like a broken water main. The crowd has been backed up by the fence, causing a people jam. Many people have stopped walking. Some of the crowd still moves in surges, waves of currents sweeping up and down. As the camera arrives at the fence, one male stops, takes a step back, and makes a running leap starting to climb the fence. His pants get stuck at the top and, holding his leg, he falls down onto the other side. The hurrying hominids pay little attention to their fallen comrade, but at least they don't trample him.

The camera patiently walks along the fence, stopping three or four times.

An unseen little boy's voice questions, "What are we waiting for Dad? Why are there so many people? Did you see that guy in the elephant suit?" In the distance behind three or four more fences, the camera picks up rather large cages with giant metal bars. Some of the cages are thirty to fifty feet tall. Cages so immense that the average Homo sapiens might easily slip between the bars. The camera has made it around a corner and is now turning down a small strip of concrete that has trees and grass all around it. Lining the grass there are small bushes with blooming flowers. Some of the crowd walks on the slim strip of concrete, but most flood over the grass, trampling it. A few even cut through the bushes, ruining them.

Off to the left is a concrete area with strange white lines otherwise known as a parking lot. The parking lot is full; still vehicles move creepingly slow looking for that sole spot in a labyrinth of parked vehicles. The cameraman eventually reveals attached to his other hand (the one not holding the camera) is a small Homo sapiens child. Estimated Body Fat 12%. He is a small male and he almost immediately, after coming into focus, starts complaining clichely, 'Are we there yet? '

The cameraman ignores him, just pulling him along. At long last the front entrance is visible behind a regular wall of people, some of which appear to be blocking the entrance. These people are shouting, yelling. They are angry Homo sapiens. A male with long hair is holding a sign that says, 'STOP THIS ABOMINATION! '

'Dad, what's an abomdination? ' the boy asks his dad (the male holding the

camera) . The little boy doesn't seem to understand what they are protesting. The dad is too busy pushing his way through the picket signs. He wipes the sweat off his brow. His face is red. "Excuse me," the father rudely tells a woman in a rainbow-dyed tee shirt. There is music blaring from an unknown source, and it feels as though these relatives to the monkeys are restless. Lights flash. A three-dimensional holographic advertisement comes on. "Buy Melonada, Buy Melonada, Buy Melonada." A Brazilian woman in a bikini appears to be rubbing lotion on you. You can feel her fingers glide over your back, and smell the sweet aroma of coconuts, and you think you feel something else prickle, but you're not completely sure. "Melonada, the only sun screen that guarantees you won't get a sun lashing by ultraviolet rays in today's ozone-less sky." The advertisement fades out. The little boy has his eyes covered. He has a scared look on his face.

"Did Mom get Melon No-No?" the boy asks the camera.

The dad does not answer.

"Isn't that why the men with guns came and took her?" the boy questions.

The dad continues to ignore the son. They are wiggling through a crowded hominid jam that has come to a standstill. Off in the distance, a male with eye spectacles stands on a platform, explaining to the crowd, "How feeble male has become, to try and undo God's work. God's work cannot be undone, and I SAY THIS WILL BE THE UNDOING OF US ALL." He points his finger out among the crowd.

"Who among you will cast the first stone?" the male with spectacles asks. He picks up a rather large rock. He can barely pick it up.

"It is this kind of mad science that caused the CuuD pandemic in the first place," the male yells as if he is avenging something. He holds the rock over his head, his arms scrawny arms shaking.

The dad and the boy push past this spectacle, and after waiting in a long line that moves rather fast, the boy and his dad pay the price of admission at a little booth and walk through a turnstile. You feel a cold metal bar touching your solar plexus as you walk through.

The traffic of Homo sapiens inside is no better. You can barely move. You feel boxed in, maybe even claustrophobic. There is as myriad of smells and fragrances, from jasmine and jojoba to sweat and stink, surrounding you. There are animal smells of urine and feces. You feel lost in a sea of tumultuous bodies. The crowd is so unusually thick, you begin to sweat. A computerized analysis of all words used by the crowd reveals the three most used words in order are NO, Want, Mommy. A trickle of sweat runs down the shoulder blade of your back. A dribble runs down your forehead. You feel overwhelmed with energy. The noise comes at you in waves. Off in the distance there is music playing and the chatter of monkeys. NO, Want, Mommy. There are random cages and islands present as

far as the eye can see scattered all over this place, which is basically just a prison for animals. Cages and islands, islands and cages. Some large islands, some small cages, some small islands, some large cages. Some of the cages are massive structures holding spotted horses with elongated necks, which I'm sorry to say are no longer on this planet. Some of the cages are smaller, holding finches and ducks, and an unusual bird with a colored bill which has become extinct. Some of the islands have moats that are filled with goldfish, koi or snapping turtles.

Right inside the entrance is an island with exquisitely elevated pink birds that are also no longer a species on this planet. Some stand on one leg, drinking placidly from the pond. Children point and exclaim, "Look at the birdies" and "Wow, Mommy, they're pretty." A little male child attempts to hop the fence surrounding the pink birds, but is pulled back by his mother. "No, enough, " she scolds him. "Do we have to take you home now? "

As the camera follows the surging crowd further into towering foliage, down winding jungle paths that look nothing like the African savannah, the road forks several times. Next to a crowded exhibit that says Spotted Lemur is a stand selling steaming hot pork sandwiches with mustard. The Homo sapiens line up to get their hot meat sandwiches without batting an eyelash about the species barrier that exists.

"Daddy, can we get a snack? " the little boy says stopping. The father drags him along. "Maybe later." There is a sign in the shape of an arrow pointing left, that says "Ice Age Exhibit."

The camera goes left, seeming to follow where the bulk of Homo sapiens are going. Past a thicket of trees, off to the right is a huge, gray one-horned beast that looks like a cross between the legendary dinosaur and an elephant. The beast is immense, not actually caged but rather incarcerated by a rather large moat filled with sullied water. The beast grazes rather peacefully on some grass and stares at the crowd of Homo sapiens.

The boy seems perplexed. 'Dad, I've been to a zoo like eighteen times, ' the boy says getting tugged by his father through the crowd. 'It was never this crowded.' 'Even the San-Dee-Ego Zoo when they had that Ko-Walla, " the little boy says, having trouble pronouncing the last word.

The dad isn't listening. He has stopped in front of a wall of people. They all seem to face in one direction. This wall of people is the line into the Ice Age Exhibit. Another advertisement zaps into their head (and yours) . A male in a white coat is standing in front of you. He is holding a clipboard, you hear a voice, "G-rehabilitation, have you ever wondered what your descendents will think like? G-rehabilitation, have you ever felt you were destined for more? G-rehabilitation, do you long to evolve light years before your time? Genetics rehabilitation, come on in now and evolve for less." The hologram closes revealing the boy back

at the zoo among a crowd of Homo sapiens.

'I've seen elephants a hundred times, ' the boy explains.

The dad just shakes his head, 'Imagine reviving an Ice Age plant-eater 10,000 years after it went extinct.'

The boy still doesn't understand.

'Extinction is forever! ' the father explains. "Except in this case! "

Now the boy is totally perplexed.

They push past a mother and her daughter.

'Mommy, ' the little girl whines, 'I want to see the polar bears! '

'Honey, ' the mother tells her daughter. 'The polar bears are extinct.'

'Well, when are they coming back? ' the little girl asks.

The irony is so thick you could break it in half, and use it as the ends for your sandwich.

Again the boy asks, 'What's the big deal, it's just a zoo? '

'Just a zoo, ' the dad exclaims. 'Do you know these things didn't exist when I was a kid? '

'Zoos didn't exist? ' the boy questions.

The dad seems to be racking his brain.

The boy seems to realize his mistake.

'If they went extinct, how do they exist now? ' the boy asks.

'Didn't you ever see Jurassic Park? ' the dad questions, shaking his head.

'Yeah, ' the boy nods. 'But wasn't that make-believe? Mommy said it was make-believe, ' the boy states looking a little worried.

'Well, it's a little freaky how more than a few science fiction stories have become reality, ' the dad explains. 'Did you know Brave New World was science fiction when it first came out in 1932, but now cloning is a fact of science? '

'What's Brave Nude World? ' the boy questions.

'Sounds like a title in the backroom of Shaunte's, ' the dad tells the son.

"What? " the boy asks.

'Never mind, the important part is that a research team of scientists retrieved the sperm from a mammoth frozen in the tundra and used it to impregnate an elephant.'

The boy listens as the dad continues a more detailed explanation. None of it makes any sense to the boy. The line to get in to see the first LIVE woolly mammoth in 10,000 years wraps around the elephant domicile six times, winding and weaving like an enormous snake.

'Once they had the half mammoths they bred them together, until eventually you get a full woolly mammoth.'

'What's the difference? ' the boy asks.

"Well a mammoth is larger, " the dad tells the boy. "They are fluffier, " the dad says smiling at the boy.

"Can we ride it? " the boy asks honestly.

"I'm afraid not," the father says seriously.
 "So why do you want to see it so bad?" the boy questions.
 "Cuz they didn't exist when I was a boy." The father looks perturbed.
 "Ain't you listening?"
 Another hologram is zapped into his head (and yours): a male in a funny paper hat is popping popped corn in some giant silver contraption. The male stops, wipes his hands on a towel and says, "Welcome to Animal Snacks Shack and Snack Bar. Can I take your order?" The male with the funny paper hat says this quickly, so it sounds like a tongue twister. The boy stares up at a screen riddled with peanuts and pretzels and caramel-covered apples and Popsicles. The boy's mouth begins to water; strangely, even if you do not like sweets, your mouth begins to salivate also.
 "We also have newly invented genetically modified kernels of corn." The male wipes his hands, puts on plastic gloves, opens a glowing drawer and pulls out a single piece of popped corn that is perhaps the size of a softball.
 "We call them Krazy Kernels...most folks like the kettle corn flavor, of course, we have cheese, caramel, chocolate and peanut butter," the male says shrugging.
 The boy licks his lips, but still says nothing.
 "Oh yeah, we also have radioactive isotopes, brand spanking new, cutting edge candy," the male is saying. All of a sudden a hand breaks through the holographic image. The hand grabs hold of the small boy by the shirt and rips him right out of the hologram.
 "Sorry," the father says, "I got distracted. They were trying to sell me a subscription to...ah..., " he blushes slightly, "never mind we'll grab lunch later."
 "But I'm hungry now," the little boy insists.
 "All right," the father concedes. "One snack."
 The little boy jumps up and down, and even wiggles a bit. "Oh, animal snacks snack and stuff," the boy yells triumphantly.
 The hologram reappears like an apparition in front of the boy. The male in the funny paper hat asks, "What can I get ya?" Above the male in the funny paper hat, a digital menu appears with all types of enticing images of food. As the boy reads through the list, the menu highlights exactly what his mind is reading.
 "How about rip rocks?" the male with the funny paper hat says turning over a box of purple exploding candy. "Not just a candy, an adventure."
 The little boy frowns. "I was looking for something more substantell."
 The screen seems to darken a bit, and the boy notices the complexion of the male with the funny paper hat has changed to a shade of green. "Come around the side here," the male with the funny paper hat says softly. The

little boy comes closer, so he is up close and personal to this attendant. "I can sell ya something, but ya can't tell anyone I sold it to you," the male with the funny paper hat says in almost a whisper. The eyes of the male with the funny paper hat draw closed in a slant and he looks around this virtual reality to see if anyone else is listening. "How about a hamboiger?" the male with the funny paper hat asks, uneasily. There is a tickling sensation in the back of your throat.

The boy fingers his lip. "I don't know. What's that made out of, ham or cow, 'cause cow's illegal?"

The male with the funny paper hat is sweating. A bead of sweat runs down the image that is his face. He appears to be in hurry. He wipes his brow. "Do ya want the damn hamboiger or not?"

"Never met a boy who didn't like one and this might be your last chance," he adds.

A hand appears reaching in and after aimless searching, snatches the boy out of cyberspace.

"Son, what do you think you're doing?" the father asks.

"Ordering a hamboiger," the little boy answers.

The father shakes his head.

"I've never had one and Uncle Mark says every red-blooded American should be entitled to eat a hamboiger."

"Son," the dad says with uneasiness in his voice. "Do you want to get sick?"

"No," the boy says firmly.

"Well then you can't eat hamburgers anymore, and if Uncle Mark knows what's good for him..." his voice trails off. "Who tried to sell you that?" the father says, his voice rising.

"The male in my head, with the funny paper hat," the little boy confesses.

The male picks up a little rectangular box. "Cyber police," the male says.

"Can you please check out the last connection that was logged into my son's head?" the male says quietly.

"Sir, we provide a juvenile blockade for your protection for just a small fee of ninety-nine ninety-nine," says a firm authoritative voice.

"I'm afraid I can no longer afford such luxuries...the economy," the father whispers.

There is the sound of tsk, tsk, tsk-ing.

"Very well, sir, we'll check it out," says the firm authoritative voice. The father closes his device, a faraway look in his eye, as if he is remembering some event.

"But why can't I get a hamboiger?" the boy whines.

"You really want to know? " the father asks.

"Yeah, " but the boy looks unsure.

All of a sudden a hologram appears around them. A female is standing in front of a building, Homo sapiens are shuffling past, some stop and wave to the camera. A little yolk points at the camera and says, "Mommy, look." The mother drags the child out of camera view. The female's smile is straining as though she is in pain, as she grasps a metal microphone. "Tom, " she says, "I'm standing in Omaha, somewhere in middle America. What the media and other reporting outlets had hyped-up to calling Ground Zero, for it was here less than two years ago when Melvin Cuud had a seizure right on the steps just to our right." In the upper right hand corner of the screen there is a picture of a male Homo sapiens. He is wearing vision enhancers and is a timid looking creature, not at all a dominant member of his species.

"Melvin, pictured here, " the female grasping the metal microphone continues, "was brought to a hospital and eventually diagnosed with a rare form of neurodegenerative spongiform encephalopathy. For you laymen, it's Mad Cow Disease or the shaking sickness. It is basically a protein that eats holes in your brain. Doctors were quick to dismiss it as a form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, but then five others in five different states showed up in emergency wards with similar symptoms. What some are calling the biggest..." the hologram disappears.

"So do you understand why you can't eat hamburgers? " the father asks.

"Cuz the pro-team is gonna eat holes in my brain? " the boy questions.

The father nods, the camera rocks slightly.

"So Mommy ate hamboigers? " the boy questions.

The father does not answer. He seems quiet.

"But what am I going to eat then? " the little boy complains.

"We'll pick something up, " the father says.

Many Homo sapiens leave the line, or what is perceived as a line, but slowly the boy and his father are nearing the exhibit entrance. A dwelling is just ahead less than a hundred yards, and the line seems to snake into the structure. Off in the distance is a cage of spotted monkeys (a cousin to the Homo sapiens, still a distant enough relation to be housed in a cage) . The last thing you see is the monkey swinging freely from tree to tree.

Another holographic image is beamed into your head. You are in a small room. The room is crowded with Homo sapiens. A bell rings, and a number lights up on the wall. The floor appears to be descending. An announcer's voice says, "Tired of odiferous gas in elevators? " The smell of rotten eggs penetrates your nose. The crowd looks at you with disgust in the eyes. Some move to the other side of the small room, some pinch their noses, some fan their

faces. The smell is overwhelming and does not seem to waiver. The scene changes. You are in a small room in front of a big gray machine. There is an attractive female in a business suit and skirt. "Ever in the copy room and let one rip?"

There is the sound of a squeaky release of gases followed by a whiff of something resembling prunes.

The announcer asks, "Is your flatulence making females faint?" "When you break wind do people break down and cry?" the same announcer asks.

"Get B & O and women will praise your decision to convert to fart fragrances."

All of a sudden you are surrounded by women. There is a little sign on the bottom of the vision that says if above 18 click here. The Homo sapiens child is too young. Still the women are surrounding him, fondling and caressing him. Hand on his thigh, on your thigh. They are surrounding you, fondling you and caressing you. You smell flowers and perfumes, female fragrances. You feel warm breath on the back of your neck. All the women are smiling or puckering their lips at you. You feel a hand run along your stomach. The air is filled with the fragrance of roses. The announcer's voice says, "Now in new mango flavor." The last thing you smell before the hologram ends is a hint of mango.

As the hologram fades, a large building looms in front of the camera. The building is made of massive gray bricks and is at least four stories tall. This is the structure the father and son have been waiting to enter. The father and son enter the edifice. They move through two large metal doors and into a large high-ceiled structure where the air is cooler and the lighting much darker. Just inside, the line continues just as long as outside and seems to double-back more times than one can count. Behind a barrier are a plastic iceberg and two mannequins of Neanderthals crouched around a false paper fire. The plastic figures are much smaller than actual Neanderthals. On a screen high above, a male with a white coat is talking. Most adults' eyes seem focused on the screen. The male on the screen is standing in front of a giant block of ice. Inside the block of ice appears to be the carcass of the ancient elephant. The male in the white coat on the screen is talking. There is a lot of background noise, children screaming, parents scolding. The voice of the male on the screen fades in and out; he says the word DNA a lot. He keeps saying the word genome. He is explaining that only 70% of the genome of the mammoth could be retrieved. The other 30% had to be borrowed from a modern African elephant, so what you're about to see, is not actually a woolly mammoth, but more of a hybrid of a prehistoric pachyderm.

The line moves quickly. Most people move in and out quickly, seemingly disappointed that this hairy elephant does not come complete with a musical

number or a prophetic reading. The camera zooms in on a male youth who is actually attached to his mother by a sort of children's leash. The leash is attached to the child around the wrist and attached to something around the mother's waist. The child is wearing a shirt with the word spoiled on it, as though this were labeling him for all the world to see. The young male has used the maximum length of the leash to get dangerously close to one of the exhibits. The young male climbs up onto an alien landscape with a fake tree and a skeleton which has been resurrected piece by piece and fused together to resemble the actual shape of an extinct feline. The skeleton is of a saber-toothed tiger. "Cool," exclaims the little male Homo sapiens, who is now trampling over the set, heading toward the ancient skeleton. "Look at his fangs." The Homo sapiens child is mere paces from grabbing hold of the brittle skeleton, but as he reaches out his arm in a final gesture of contact, he is yanked back by his mother, his arm moving drastically in the other direction almost tugging him off his feet. The leash makes a slight slapping sound as the mother redirects her child.

Following a complex system of turnstiles and gates, they are herded further into the building. They pass more screens. On the series of screens are Homo sapiens drilling into a giant block of ice. There are a number of complex instruments and many scientists calculating things. Inside the ice is a shadowy mass looking nothing like a pachyderm.

In the distance are big blocks of plastic ice that are probably supposed to represent glaciers. Huddled between plastic glaciers and fake shrubbery is another skeleton that has been welded together. These are the bones of a giant ground sloth.

Another advertisement is beamed into your head. You feel steamy and relaxed. The atmosphere has gotten all hazy and moist. You feel beads of sweat on your forehead. In the background, there is the sound of running water as a salesman's voice echoes, "Always on the go go go...got no time to slow slow slow." In your head is a male in a suit, hurrying to work. The male is carrying too many things in his arms. He is fumbling and bobbling the things in his arms. He is hurrying out of his dwelling. The salesman's voice comes back on, "Have you found that showers are giving you rashes...you may be allergic to many of the pollutants in normal tap water...after years of atmospheric abuse our natural water is only slightly below the toxic level necessary for life...If your last shower gave you hives hives hives....don't miss the chance to change your lives lives lives." A different feminine voice whispers seductively, "Waterless." You feel her breath on the back of your ear. "If your last bath gave you a rash rash rash...Try the new waterless shower," says the salesman's voice. There is the sound of suction. Suddenly in an instant, you feel as if your skin has been vacuumed clean.

The screen voids itself, and the camera is back in front of the skeleton of the Ice

Age giant sloth. Some of the bones are clearly cast instead of real, but most of the skeleton is intact. The line continues to twist and turn, snaking further into the building.

The little boy looks likes he's dancing, but he is really just antsy. "Can we go?" the little boy whines. "I don't wanna see the hairy elephant anymore."

"We'll go after we take a peek," the father insists. "I've waited my whole life for this."

"How'd you know it was gonna happen?" the little boy asks.

The father does not answer. The line continues to move rather swiftly. They pass more plastic blocks of ice. In the distance you hear the trumpet of an elephant. Perhaps a woolly mammoth. The crowd murmurs. As they get closer to the elephant house, the noise escalates, and that strong stink of domesticated wild animals that consists of urine and feces begins to overpower the senses.

"P...U...." the little boy says pinching his nose.

There is another turnstile, this one is singular. The little boy slips under the turnstile without registering. "Look, Daddy," the boy says.

"Fifteen Hundred Thousand People have already been here." The little boy's calculations are slightly off. The turnstile says 15,088. The father does not bother to correct the son, instead starts steering him toward the front. The crowd flexes and fumes like an angry sea. The crowd has already started acting more like animals; people are pushing and shoving to get toward the front. The crowd of people becomes thicker as they push their way to the front. Most of the young have been picked up, many are sitting on their parents' shoulders. The bodies are packed extremely tight and finally, when it feels like you can't breathe, you reach the railing. It is a normal railing; behind it is what looks like a very hairy African elephant.

"Now can we go?" the little boy implores.

"Yeah, now we can go," the father says with a touch of disappointment in his voice. They turn and head for the exit. Much of the crowd is headed in the other direction, so they have to stop abruptly several times to allow excited people to pass. The minute they get through the doorway, the crowd immediately begins to thin out. The boy lags behind, being dragged by the father. "Are we going to eat?" the little boy questions.

"Not yet," the father tells him. "I have a few stops to make."

The little boys eyes light up. "Can we get chicken?"

The father changes the camera to his other arm, as he sighs. "Son, you know we can get ten times as much concentrated protein for the price of one breast of chicken."

"I know," the little boy sounds disappointed.

"Maybe we can stop at Aunt Silvia's," the father tells him.

"Really? " the little boy questions sounding excited.

Sunday - 06/22/2049

1: 43PM - The little boy and his father are seated on a cushioned area in front of a manipulation screen. They are snacking on homemade cookies. Aunt Silvia is in the kitchen area which is a small standing area consisting of a cooking and refrigeration unit built right next to each other. This manipulation screen is flat as a painting. The male on the screen is another reporter. He appears to be reporting on some type of suicide booth called a Gottlieb booth named after the German doctor who designed it. The booth is gray, made of lead and opens like a clam.

"Turkey paninis will be ready in a few minutes, " Aunt Silvia announces.

"Yeah, " the little boy cheers.

"George, turn that thing off, " Aunt Silvia says wiping her hands on a towel in the kitchen.

"I'm documenting the ascent into American madness and the crumbling of an Empire." the father explains. The little boy nods, a cookie half stuffed in his mouth.

Two males on the screen are arguing, both middle-aged, sitting in comfortable chairs and wearing business suits. "We're dealing with tens of thousands of bodies...we may be dealing with more...all of these bodies need to be incinerated...they cannot be buried."

"So let me get this straight. You step into this lead booth and presto the door closes and it incinerates a living person. Are you suggesting that people with Mad CuuD should just openly and freely commit suicide? " the other male on the screen asks attackingly.

"I think people need to realize we're dealing with a global pandemic that...ah...I mean nothing has happened like this since the bubonic plague hit Europe... in all likelihood it could get worse. These machines were designed to dispose of bodies at a local level in case the body count becomes out of control and government agencies get tied up. Dead bodies carry any number of infectious bacteria..." There is a Ding. "Turkey's done, " Aunt Silvia announces.

Both dad and the little boy clap their hands together in applause. Aunt Silvia comes out in traditional apron and pot holders. She serves her two guests hot sandwiches with meat in the middle and potato chips. The little boy starts crunching along as the two males continually argue. The words rights, civil, violation, violations, are spoken over and over. The males' faces have turned bright pink as all the blood rushes to their forehead. The male who is being attacked (or rather his agency is being attacked and he represents them) says, "Again we're not saying people should become vigilantes and start

executing people at a local level, we're just saying in case the need should occur."

Son bites into his sandwich oblivious to the connection between the sandwich and the feud going on on-screen. The male is now reading figures of death tolls from the Mad CuuD Pandemic in certain countries. All are well into the ten thousands and this is only the major countries.

America 100,465

Australia 30,458

Argentina 20,052

New Zealand 10,368

Brazil 10,258

Canada 10,189

France 10,004

It would get much, much worse. The son chomps on his sandwich, making a sound like an animal eating. The father puts the camera down to eat and we get a nice view of upholstery. The rest of the video was deemed inconsequential.

Excerpt from: Vegans Are Tastier

Joseph DeMarco

Going To A Funeral In Another World

The scene is all too familiar
(Except for the purple sky) ,
Has this happened before?
Deja vu on the edge of a waking dream?
In another life,
Or maybe all funerals are the same?

The same ceremony.
The same casket
(Well this casket is made of Phantom-wood) .
The same sadness, fear and joyousness,
from everybody that it is not
THEIR funeral.

We are all lined up
(Along the blue grass)
These familiar strangers.
They look like neighbors from past lives,

The lady next to me looks like
my 1st grade teacher
(Except she has five noses) .
She doesn't seem to know me,
Why would she?

Didn't I used to deliver newspapers to that man?
(Except without the eyes in the back of his head)
Not in this life
Maybe that was lifetimes ago.

On the way in
I brushed past the doorman
(who looks like this kid I used to play hockey with,
except he is thirty years older) .
But we say not a word to each other
As if we don't know each other
(or never did) .

The funeral is sad and I cry,

even though I never knew the boy in the coffin
I cry because things have to end.
Why can't they be endless?
I cry cause death is heart-breaking
I cry for his family's pain.

And I am glad to go back to my world,
Where we never die and love is endless.

By: Joseph DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco

Gone Green

They ask me
'If I'm going green? '
If my thumb happens to be colored
with the same filament
If I happen upon a tree in the woods
Would I hug it
or maybe do more perverted things to it
like smack its trunk from behind
and make it BARK
I reply
'I haven't gone green.'
I am green
I always have been
They've tried to teach me differently
'With religion and sex and T.V.'
They've tried to brainwash me
They've promised me a big house
And a shiny car
They told me my life would be easier than any humans
in existence
and all it would cost me was my soul
I didn't listen to them
I don't
I never have
I'll have Crypt-tonight
in my pocket
And even though I'm happy
Later, I'll be feeling glad
As though Superman himself
Flew backwards around the Earth
And slowed time
So we could
live in this moment
forever

Joseph DeMarco

Have A Wonderful Summer Break

Twass the day before summer break,
And all through the school
Not a single kid was studying
or following one single rule.

The books were all stacked in the corner with care,
while paper and spitballs
were airborne everywhere.

The children would not listen to what teacher said,
As visions of vacation
danced in their head.

They'd have parties and picnics, plus get to sleep in
The only downside was dealing
with their family and kin.

But that was a very small price to pay,
A very small sum,
Because sweet summer break had at long last come.

The clock ticked toward three,
soon they'd be free
Half left their seats before their teacher could decree,
'HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER BREAK! '

Joseph DeMarco

Huckleberry Finn's Raft

"Huckleberry Finn, a shaman, the Lizard King and me...were floating on a raft down the Mississippi, " Siann heard Joe Kaye announce, as if he were a narrator in a play. Siann felt like she was the audience, but there was no stage, they were really on a raft. And there was really a black medicine man with white face paint and hoops through his nose. There was really a guy who looked like Jim Morrison with a beard and a large gut, and there was a dirty little boy in overalls with no shirt, and well, of course, there was the False Prophet of Fennimore Place: Joe Kaye. It seemed to Siann that she was invisible to the other four members, as they paid no attention to her. They (Huckleberry Finn, the shaman, the Lizard King and Joe Kaye) seemed to be involved in a strange discussion.

"The soul is not whole, the secret's been stole, " Jim said in a voice that was quintessential Morrison. The raft floated through an eerie, ominous fog that engulfed them in a mist. In the middle of the raft on the ground in the center of the four of them, was a large, circular, silver disc. There were several trinkets, a glass statue, and several shiny objects lying on top of the large disc. Joe Kaye spun the disc; as it moved it glinted in what little light the fog allowed.

"Tain't fair...Tain't fair and it ain't right, " Huck said shaking his head.

"I reckon Mister Mark Twain entrusted his soul with me for some reason, " Huck complained.

"You don't have to give a big piece, " Joe Kaye reasoned.

"Besides you're getting three for the price of one, " Joe Kaye reminded Huck.

Huck pulled out a baggy of what was presumably marijuana, but could've been any herb. He fingered a yellowish-green plant. He broke off a piece of the plant and placed it on the disc. The Lizard King reached into his leather pants and pulled out a satchel. Inside the satchel was a purple plant. He placed all of his plant on the disc.

"I was out for a stroll...An act in self-discipline of losing control, " Jim laughed. "I wasn't really doing anything constructive with my soul."

Joe Kaye pulled a baggy out of his pocket, and broke off a small piece. His plant was dark green. The shaman (whose plant was amber) in turn broke off a rather large piece. The disc had stopped spinning. The shaman placed the four

pieces of the plant in a cloth baggy.

The four then gathered wood, which was stacked at the corner of the raft, and were placing it on top of the large disc. Siann thought it looked like wood for a bonfire. When the wood was stacked, the shaman pulled out a piece of string. The shaman's hands moved like magic, as he turned a piece of string and two pieces of wood into a beautiful bright burning blaze. The baggy was then placed in a pot of water. The pot was put over the fire. They were making tea. Soul tea?

"Shamanistic soul tea, " Jim echoed answering Siann's question.

"Have you ever had it? " Jim asked Joe Kaye.

"If I did, I don't remember it, " Joe Kaye shrugged.

"You'd know, " Jim Morrison insisted.

The shaman did not speak. Siann wondered if he could speak. The pot began to steam. The shaman pulled the cloth baggy out and dunked it back into the pot. He did this numerous times.

Joe Kaye was singing in a rough voice, mimicking Kurt Cobain, "I sit here and drink Shamanistic Tea, Steals the soul that's inside of me."

The shaman sprinkled something else into the pot.

Siann thought she heard bells jingling.

The raft drifted further into the ghost fog. Siann looked for signs of a shoreline or even a skyline, but could see neither. They seemed to be drifting through an endless fog on their way through oblivion. The wafting aroma of the tea was starting to make its way around the raft. The shaman pulled the baggy out and was wringing it out with his hands.

"Don't that hurt yur hands none? " Huck asked the shaman. The shaman shrugged.

"Pain is life, " Jim remarked to Huck. "Life is pain."

"Life is..." Joe Kaye stopped, "fill in your own blank, whatever you want it to be...don't let Morrison here sell you the poet's excuse for a wicked living."

Under Jim's wooly façade was a lengthy smirk.

The fog was growing thicker.

"But I would agree all great art is caused by pain, " Joe Kaye added.

The shaman had pulled out cups, which were really just coconuts cut in half. He was stirring the tea with a large staff. Siann thought she saw a face appear out of the steam directly over the pot. The face floated towards her whispering, "The time to hesitate is through, " before dissipating. A smug smile dawned upon Jim's lips as if this special effect was done intentionally. Could Jim see her? She was fairly certain he couldn't; no one had acknowledged her presence as of yet.

Joe Kaye asked the Lizard King a question, "Jim did you ever feel that when you were producing something that there was this invisible force or being trying to stop you? " He was completely serious.

Jim remarked, "It seemed whatever I did someone or something was collectively trying to stop me, but then that could be because I was testing the boundaries of reality."

The shaman gave a huge smile; his mouth seemed twice the size of a normal mouth.

Joe Kaye remarked, "When I was writing this novel Blind Savior, it seemed like there was this invisible being that was trying to stop me from writing it, " Siann's ears perked up at the mention of the lost manuscript, "and this being could transform reality around me to make my life more difficult; gates would lock, things would get stuck, poles would fall down, cars would box me in, but it was weird." Joe Kaye stopped as if he were pondering something deeper than the Marianas Trench.

Joe Kaye continued, "Sometimes I felt like it was trying to give me my edge by making me stress and suffer, thus making my writing better, like deep down it was trying to help me by hurting me."

"If I don't suffer my writing does, " Jim remarked.

The pot began to bubble, and the shaman gave Siann a strange esoteric kind of grin. Could the shaman see her? He had looked right at her. Siann felt the hair on the back of her neck stand up. Siann wanted to run away screaming but found

she could barely move beyond the perimeter of the raft. Anytime she did she would merely be pulled back onto the raft by some elastic invisible force. Siann was forced to watch as the shaman poured four cups of soul tea into hollowed-out coconuts. The three men and one boy held the coconuts up.

The fog was growing so thick it was difficult to see.

"PU KINRD, " Siann heard a deep voice say. It was the shaman. He had finally spoken.

Jim started in with one of his poetic toasts, "I drink to you my new soul friends, again we'll meet where the crossroad ends, for when the game is said and done, we will all be only one."

"Closer to the sun, " Joe Kaye added oddly.

Huck, who was worried, spoke up, "I reckon this'll mean I'll start hearing voices."

"You very well may, " Jim assured him.

Huck looked like he was having second thoughts.

"You won't hear voices, " Joe Kaye insisted, "unless you used to hear voices before this whole episode."

"I knowed this ain't right, " Huck muttered under his breath.

"How's it work? " Joe Kaye asked more for Huck's benefit than anything else.

The shaman did not answer. Jim felt obliged to field this question with poetry. "Well, part of me will be in you, and the shaman and Huckleberry Finn also too, we'll share some thoughts, mannerisms and quirks, but that's really all it does, if it works."

"Anda sole, " the shaman reminded him.

"And we'll share a soul, " Jim added.

Huck looked like he was on the verge of freaking out.

"I believe, along with many shamans, after one dies, all his mannerisms go into those he was closest to anyway, " Joe Kaye shared.

"Even when you end a relationship, " Joe Kaye explained, "that is a death. You exchange certain mannerisms with your partner. I once dated a girl with a scorpion tattoo, who gave me a photic sneeze reflex after we broke up. She was a witch, it was a gift."

Huck, Jim, and the shaman all gave Joe Kaye muted expressions, mouths open.

Several moments of silence ensued.

In the distance an unseen whippoorwill whooped.

The shaman spoke once more, "Now is da time."

"We are one anyway, we are just moving closer to the original origin quicker, " Jim said nudging Huck. Huck looked at the smoking coconut in his hands, filled with shamanistic soul tea. A look of determination crossed his face.

"I warn't gonna get into Heaven anyways, " said Huck.

"That a boy, " exclaimed Jim, in a pretend Southern accent.

The four knocked their coconuts together, and then it was bottoms up. Siann thought she heard fingernails scraping a blackboard, as the four slugged their coconuts.

Excerpt from: Blind Savior, False Prophet

Joseph DeMarco

I Met A Young Girl, She Gave Me A Rainbow

blAck pearls

and broken ocean sHells

cAnnot stop my love for you

we are shipwReckeD

on a jagged Reef

A pIrate's treasure of booty

with Nothing to spend It on

the curSe is on now

it is the dark time

and the thunder clouds

Grumble and grOaN

the rainbow above us

is Not Artificial

as dylan holds that note

like a little kid holding

onto a helium balloon

he yanks it out of the sky

like a promise

not yet Fulfilled

An idea incomplete

our foLLy is funny

fumbling footloose

through the pillars of time

the color and sounds

continue to fall,

run, sparkle and fade

'And what did you see my darling young one? '

her lips are dry

her throat parched

the words wobbling in her mouth

'Were you wounded in hatred or love? ' she asks.

but she already knows the not-so-simple answer

when she looks in my eyes

Indian Ghost Song

Awake. Shake dreams from your hair, my pretty child, my sweet one, the boy hears in his head. He is half asleep. He rolls over trying to find comfort in this cramped automobile. There is none. No space, he thinks to himself, and it is as if time is an illusion. He looks out the window, a vast radiant beach and a cool, jeweled moon; it is almost dawn. They are moving southeast in a car along an old desert road. Inside the car is a mother, a father, a grandmother and grandfather, and a small boy. The boy in the backseat of the car cannot be more than four, maybe six at the most. The car is really cramped, and, truth be told, the grandma smells like cough drops and talcum powder. The small boy has normal brown hair, normal brown eyes, yet he knows he is not normal. He can feel things others can't, or see things others won't; he's not sure which. The boy remembers watching television with his mother. His mother had asked him a question about the show that was playing on the screen. He can't remember the question.

"The guy in the purple shirt, " the boy answered.

"Purple shirt? " his mother questioned. "The screen is black and white. There are no colors on that television."

"Show me the purple shirt, " the mother said confused.

The boy got up and walked up to the television. The next time the guy in the purple shirt came on the screen, the boy pointed to it. The mother only saw a gray shirt.

And so it went for the boy, though not swimmingly; he was an outsider, a stranger. He didn't necessarily get picked on a lot but he felt odd. At night he lay awake staring at the ceiling, counting stars. The insomnia would not abate, and sometimes the boy would tiptoe down the long, dark hall and whisper into his mother's bedroom, though he did not like to do this.

The automobile turns sharply; there is a bend in the road. At the bend several cars are backed up. The car begins to slow; apparently there is an accident. The boy feels a strange presence; he has caught the fear. It is hard to imagine what happened. There is a wreck; the boy can't tell if there are two vehicles or one. Whatever it had once been is bent and twisted, half turned over. It looks like a truck. Beyond the vehicles are what look like many bodies scattered along the road. As the automobile gets closer, the boy can see some of

the bodies are broken and bleeding; the road is covered in blood. The bodies are bleeding to death. The boy rubs his eyes, wondering if he is dreaming, peering out into the breaking dawn. It feels like a dream, he notes. Squinting through the windowpane, the boy sees that the bodies are dead Indians. Native Americans. They are dressed in dirtied workmen's clothes. As the car gets even closer, the boy can see some of the bodies are all mangled and mutilated. Vehicular manslaughter. Murder by machine. The car pulls up and stops. The boy's father and mother are trying to ignore the fact that this gruesome accident is unfolding right in front of them like a poisonous lotus blossom. They won't even make eye contact with each other or the dawn's highway, but the boy looks right into the road, into death.

From the mangled bodies, someone lets out a cry:

Ah—ooo,

AHoooooooooooo,

Ah-oooooooo,

Aoooooooooooooooooooooooooooo.

It is a wailing of deep despair as if he were letting go of something he had held onto for a long time. His soul? Even with the windows rolled up, the cry sends shock waves through the car. The boy's father fidgets with several buttons on the steering wheel, while his mother looks cautiously in the opposite direction of what is really a gruesome roadside attraction. The grandfather clears his throat, but no one says a word. They pretend it is not happening, except for the boy who will never be able to let this moment go.

There is a white, blinding light. Most would have said it was just headlights bouncing off enormous boulders in the distance, but the boy knows the Indians' spirits have ascended. The blinding white light flashes. The wailing Indian has died.

The boy feels a whirling above his head, but he knows it is not physical or of this world. It is the Indian spirits. They warrant his attention. The wailing Indian, the one that just died, is panic-stricken. He is freaking out. He is running around the ethereal plane with a look on his face which says, I have not entered the spirit world. He is afraid. He runs toward the boy, surging, jostling the child. The boy tries to defend himself, but the Indian's fear gives him great strength. The Indian is still panicking, a look of horror on his fearful dead face, his spirit in

a fit of hysteria, raging around the other side. He buzzes the boy once more, their spirits melding for a moment or two, then splitting apart violently.

The boy flops down on the seat having what looks like a seizure. No one notices; they are trying to ignore the accident outside. Each family member trapped in his or her own bubble of trepidation, the car is silent; no one, not the father, mother, grandmother or grandfather, seems to know this is happening to the boy. He is alone. The Indian spirit retreats quickly gathering more souls from the highway, only to return to the car and the boy. The spirit is now, not just one spirit but many spirits, a collective spirit, if you will. The collective Indian souls once again blanket the child. The music and voices are all around him. They are swarming and teeming, overflowing. The ghosts crowd the young child's fragile eggshell mind. The boy buries his head in his hands, hiding his face, but the Indians burst through. In a rush of confusion and frenzied trepidation, the ghosts of the dead souls of those Indians leap up into the air, and come crashing down into the boy's soul. And they're still in there.

Joseph DeMarco

Indigo Spring

How I Wonder What You Are?

July 5th 1982

□

The moonlight trickled through the top of the window, little Leonid lay awake in bed long after all the lights in the house had been shut off. This always seemed to happen, well not always, it seemed to happen in phases. How often? Was it monthly? He didn't know he hadn't been keeping track. He just didn't need as much sleep as the average person. While the average person could get by with 6-8 hours, Leonid just needed 4-5. Some nights, if he had a really refreshing dream, he could go 2-3. He always knew he was different, not normal. Last year, he and his parents had gone on vacation to Las Vegas. He was not allowed to gamble as he was too young, but he was allowed to walk the casino floor. The place just felt wrong. It was hard to say what was wrong about it, the place just felt horrible. The weirdest part was no one else could feel what he felt. The badness, the way the lighting seem to turn everybody into a robot. They just walked around like machines shoving quarters into slots, exuding this green greed that seemed to emanate from the top of their head. He hugged his bankey tightly and put his thumb in his mouth. His bankey was a light blue blanket. Plus it had been washed so many times, it was down to a very faded aqua blue. He petted the faded aqua blue blanket, massaging it, it seemed to calm him, the softness, the color. From down the hall, he could hear his father snoring, as he stared up at the ceiling.

One star, two stars, three stars...

Twinkle, twinkle,

On the dark ceiling he had stuck some glow in the dark star stickers, so that now, they glowed like stars in the night sky. There was even a Saturn, but Leonid had saved that one.

Four stars, five stars, six stars...

How I wonder what you are?

He was counting the glow in the dark stars on the ceiling, but even he knew that counting stars would bring him no rest tonight. He continued (mostly to himself) to sing slightly off key, "Twinkle, twinkle little star. How I wonder what you are? "

What you are?

What are you?

Cause you're not like these people.

This part of the song seemed to repeat itself in his head.

How I wonder what you are?

Tears started to stream down his face as he muttered this fabled symphony of

young Mozart.

What you are?

What are you?

Without saying it aloud, his lips whispered, "What am I?"

Not a star, but not so much like a boy either.

How I wonder what you are?

He got up and tip toed down the hall, his feet lightly padding over the wooden floor. He past his parents room and stepped onto the linoleum and into the bathroom. He took a few steps and then turned right to face his dark reflection. The mirror was ghastly and he would not look directly into it. He swore that if he did it would reveal something he didn't want to know. He stepped forward, reached out and grabbed a cup. He turned the faucet and placed the cup under, then took a sip. It was cool and refreshing. It invigorated him. He loved water, sweet nectar of life. He finished the cup, put it back on the counter and padded over to his parents doorway.

He peered into the darkness and the bundled mass that was his parents. He could hear his Dad's chainsaw snore, ripping through the air like a blade through wood.

"Maaaaaaa-ooooooooom," Leonid moaned lightly, "I can't sleep."

There was no answer, but he knew his mother had heard him. She lie in bed dreading that this would happen every night, as a baby Leonid screamed non-stop.

Eventually his mom rolled over, "Just go lay down and rest," his mother whispered.

"I can't," Leonid told his mother.

Leonid's mother rose slowly (with a deep sigh) and walked him back to his bedroom.

"I'll lay with you till you fall asleep," the mother explained. Leonid had a worried look on his face.

"What'd you have nightmares again?" the mother asked.

Leonid didn't have to answer. He was afraid to go to sleep and he didn't know why. Must be nightmares?

"They're only dreams Leo, they're not real," the mom assured him.

"My dreams are different," Leonid reasoned.

"They're just dreams," the mother assured him.

"How do you know?" Leonid asked.

"What if ...they're real?" Leonid asked.

The mom shook her head, "They're not," then quickly added, "Did you dream of that other home?"

Leonid nodded, "First I went to the station."

The mother closed her eyes, "Station?"

"You have to go the station, to find the door...Well, first you have to die in your dreams."

"Leo...StOP," her voice was shaky but evened out, "you just have an over active imagination."

"It's my home," Leo said.

"In a galaxy far away?" the mother said smirking slightly.

Leonid did not get the sarcasm. He nodded again.

"Could it have been Earth?"

Leonid had tears in his eyes as he closed them. He shook his head. He tried to sleep. He was terrified to fall asleep, but he didn't have any idea why. He didn't know about dream catchers and I'm not talking about those Native Americans things you hang next to your bed.

Joseph DeMarco

Indigo Spring - Part II

The Unscheduled Meeting
January 8th 2012

Leo (who was no longer little Leonid) normally didn't eat breakfast. He unusually also didn't eat lunch, he'd have one big meal at the end of the day and that was it. Leo was an adult. But his eating habits reminded him more of a snake than a human. Well, he was sort of an adult, he had long hair and wore a blue cap that became aqua at the edges. It had been knitted, and given to him as a gift from some mysterious Hawaiian lady. To be clear, he would never have described the cap as indigo, but for some reason he believed it held some magical power. His surf shorts had several holes in them and were faded off white.

Today however, he had decided to eat breakfast, he had woken up early (or rather couldn't sleep) , so he had gone to the ocean to surf. He had gotten to the ocean to find it was closed. Just kidding, the ocean was as flat as a lake, so now he was in a crowded café sipping coffee and picking at French toast. He really wasn't eating breakfast today either. The cafe was mobbed. It was so crowded, Leo had even had to sit with people he didn't know because there was no empty tables. They ate their meals in silence, Leo really didn't even look at any of them. He had no sooner finished his breakfast when the older man wiped his mouth and announced to everyone at the table, 'I bet you're wondering why I called you all here today.'

Everybody at the table seemed to perk up, as if some subconscious part of them wanted to exclaim, yes, yet no one said a word. The old man smiled. The idea was ludicrous of course, everyone at the table was a complete stranger to Leo including the old man who had supposedly 'called' the meeting. He hadn't been called here by this man? Had anyone? Leo didn't think so.

'We are here to discuss destiny, ' the man explained.

'Whose destiny? ' asked a blonde who had been sitting off to the side.

'Why all of OURS, ' the old man prophesied.

'Yours and mine, my very special friends, we are here for a very special reason, ' the old man continued.

'At this café or on Earth? ' the blonde questioned.

The old man smiled, his large eyes were gray like winter's day. He had gray eyes, so help me God he had gray eyes. The kind of eyes you get lost in, like an aquarium on a stormy day.

'You surely must have noticed you're different, ' the old man brought his hand up to rub his temple, as if he was under tremendous strain, 'There is nothing wrong with you. You are actually more right than the rest of them.'

'Who said there was something wrong with us? ' the blonde questioned, she

seemed hostile. Her posture had entered into that position where an animal may attack, but she was not vicious.

'You are not alone.' the man seemed like he was finished at least for the moment.

'What is the meaning of this and what is this meeting you supposedly called, ' another smaller woman on the end demanded. She wore glasses and looked scientific.

'You have been called across time and space, ' the old man started in again.

'This is absurd, ' said a white-collar worker, who was perhaps Mexican or Spanish. He tossed a few dollars on the table and got up and left. No one was saying anything. The café was hot, several flies buzzed around between tables. The old man did not seem to want to command any attention, yet Leo felt as if he may burst at the seams. This was his destiny. This was a definable moment. Leo ripped the aqua blue cap off his head. He always wore it, he could not even tell you why. It was indigo. Leo wiped the sweat off his forehead and tried to relax, but he had no inkling how to convey to this man what he was talking about. It was very simple: A calling for something greater in this life, something more. Leo rubbed his eyes; he had not slept well, since well, ever. What he didn't tell anyone was that he thought he might know the reason he was afraid to fall asleep. Well it couldn't be the real reason; the idea was quite silly, something on the border of Indian Folklore and Fantasy Horror. There was no such thing as a dream catcher. The idea was preposterous, a person who could harm other people in their dreams. This wasn't Nightmare on Elm Street. Still there it was: 9,18,27,36 and all had schizophrenia, actually to be fair, several had never been diagnosed, they were just listed as nervous breakdown and put in rooms with no exits. They were just assumed left for dead but then they recovered, but every single one of them had this to say, 'They never found anything wrong me? ' This was Leo's contribution.

'You? ' the old man pointed at Leo, 'You are an indigo, no? ' Leo wasn't sure what an indigo was. Was he asking if he was gay or did that mean some weird sexual deviation? Leo didn't think so, he thought he was talking about his dream catching ability or his fear of sleeping. Which was it? Leo looked at his cap lying before him on the table, 'You never even knew the reason you wore it, did you? ' the old man with the gray eyes asked. Leo did not have to answer, you didn't need to be an indigo to read his thoughts. It was a dreaming cap. The man with the gray eyes turned to the girl with the glasses, 'And you, you are an indigo, no? ' The girl with the glasses and the blonde said at the same time, 'What pray tell is an indigo? ' and 'Indigo that's a color isn't it? '

'Yes, it is a color, ' said the old man with gray eyes, 'but it also refers to your aura which makes you different than other souls.'

The blonde gave a, 'Hmmpf, ' but the old man ignored her. The girl with the glasses gave a rather interesting, 'Hmmm, '

'We may be the forerunners of the next civilization of mankind. The next phase in human evolution. The first thing you may or may not have noticed is those things that apply to normal humans like eating 5 major food groups, 5 senses, getting 8 hours of sleep, puberty at age 13, well these don't really apply to you.'

The four remaining people at the table all said in unison, 'What? '

The old man laughed, 'You don't function like normal human beings.'

'What does that even mean? ' asked the blonde.

'Picture subconscious like a door into the part of the brain that is unused, a part of the brain that is subject to things like telepathy, precognition and psychokinesis in most people that door is closed or only open in their dreams, but in indigos that door is ajar, ' said the old man with the gray eyes.

'When is a door not a door? ' Leo asked.

'When it's ajar, ' said the blonde and the girl with the glasses in unison. All three looked at each other with a shy knowing smile, like they shared an ancient secret.

The old man continued unperturbed, 'It is also believed many indigos go through a third development stage, between the ages of 27 and 36, not unlike a second puberty, a spiritual transformation so to speak. Some indigos have been known to grow 2 to 4 more inches during this period, ' the old man said it as if it was matter-of-factly.

'Bullpucky, ' said Leo still staring at his blue and aqua cap. Was his cap indigo? He felt some strange tidal pull on his belly button.

'Do you have any documentation proving these preposterous ideas you're saying? ' the girl with the glasses asked.

'It is understandable...' the old man looked at a loss for words then spit out, '...Your shock, some of you may not believe for years, but innately you already know it to be true.' The old man with the gray eyes pulled little folded slips of paper out of his pocket. On the slips were not names but characteristics of each of the attendees of this unscheduled meeting. On Leo's it said indigo cap and crooked nose.

The blonde asked suspiciously, 'Did you know we would be here.' she had a look of fear on her face, as if she suspected the old man of stalking her. Each attendee unfolded their piece of paper on Leo's it said, 'Dreamcatcher- focus on your dreams...they will teach you more than anything...Dream death is the key to your power.'

Joseph DeMarco

Invisible Prison

"Those who don't know their history
Are condemned to repeat themselves."
For we are reincarnation's red-headed step child
Beaten by the wicked path,
Repeating ourselves occluded by our amnesia
Walking where ourselves once were,
Unaware that we were ever there,
Unaware that the mistakes of our ancestors
Were OUR MISTAKES,
And the delusion grows deeper
As we CONTINUE
To build the walls of our BLACK IRON PRISON
Bigger

Taller

More complex

Moving further from enlightenment,
Further from the truth;
The rabbit hole is real
And few except Buddha and Jesus
Have ever been to the other side and back to tell about it;
The hollow hologram that holistically envelops
Like a matrix, a maze,
A maze with no end,
A prison with no escape
And no real reason for being
Other than it was built
By its prisoners.
PKD may have said it best:
'So-called reality is a mass delusion that we've all been required to believe For
reasons totally obscure.'

Joseph DeMarco

Literal And Figurative

Literal and Figurative
Are one in the same thing
I literally have a heartache
From that unused Diamond Ring
I metaphorically kicked myself
and I literally felt pain
And chaotic confusion
from the disdain in my brain
Metaphorical and Literal
There's really no Change
People create their sickness
From a wide number and range
Of solemn doubts and fears
From their guilt and their rage
they literally eat themselves alive
Like a snake in a cage
Literal and Figurative
We have to see what's true
there is no difference from
what's old and what's new
It's all in your head
The fat that you wear
Is protection from pain
Even if you say you don't care
It's all in your head
The cancer you grew
Is your bodies way of telling you
You don't like what you do
It's all in your head
Your throat that is sore
Is because you close your mouth
When you really want to roar
Let it out...Know Thy Self
And you'll always be whole
because there is no difference
Between mind, body, and soul

By: Joseph DeMarco

Magic Words

In the land of the lost
They dug up a book of magic spells today
No one had seen spells like this before
Some of them were extremely weird
The cover of the book said:
PO-etry
And the people wondered if PO-etry was a black or white magic. The book was
sent to an expert in magic and his assistant for examining.

Look at page 82
'Mumps on the breast
sleepless rest
Eastless west
I didn't have to study for my urine test.'

or
page 97
'Crazy insane
painless pain
evaporating rain
nothing changes perception
quite like the brain.'

or how about
page 115
'Vision blurred
brain is slurred
this is what happens
when I think like the herd.'

The expert in magic confirmed it was white magic and shared the spells with
everyone. The spells brought wonder and joy to the people in the land of the
lost. And perhaps that is magic in itself.

Joseph DeMarco

Meeting The Shaman In My Head

Beyond the invincible Death,
Past the infectious Icons,
The ever-winding spatial staircase,
And the crack between Time and Space,
Lies the unconscious mind, the ethereal plane, and the land of the lost.
I have traveled miles to be here,
And there are miles to go before I wake.
On a vaguely familiar cracked playground,
Where weeds grow wild
Between fences, bleachers, and tents,
At the crossroads of interconnectedness
I will be meeting him,
Or
He will be meeting me.
I notice distinctly that
It is light but there is no sun in the sky.
There is something non-real, yet realer than existence, about this setting.
On top of the bleachers a small black child beckons me
Toward him.
His face reminds me of my childhood;
His smile reminds me of my long lost home;
There is something both wise and foolish about the way he smiles.
He strides back and forth across the top bleacher;
As I get closer he informs me,
"Animals are the dead coming back to communicate with us."
Some of what he says doesn't make sense.
"Mij saw I, " he chants.
He informs me that if ever I want to see him,
I am to come to this spot.
As I try to look at my hands,
The child drops off the back of bleachers,
Disappearing into oblivion.

Joseph DeMarco

Mother Culture's Lullabye - The Culling Song

She sings to us,
Even when we hear no sound,
Especially when our eyes are closed.

She is always there subliminally,
Inherently in the background noise of everything
The city traffic and noise of the workday

She swims softly through our head in the after hours
Tempting us with Toys and Riches
Telling us what would make us Happy

She sings on the TV, on the BIG SCREEN
more, more, more
She fills our head with empty promises
of The New Golden Rule

Watch as the masses head to the mall
To worship at this shrine of materialism and greed
To pay grievances at Gap and Footlocker
To give thanks to Victoria's Secret and Macy's

She is No God
but a Blind Savior,
A False Prophet,
leading men away from enlightenment.

Joseph DeMarco

My. Blue. Heaven

'The Oshen Family was a simple family. There was a father, a mother, a brother and a sister. The brother and sister were twins. Some people even said they could feel each other's pain, but they were actually very different from each other. One day they were sent on a chore. It was their job to gather fire wood for evening supper. As the Oshen boy overturned a rock, a black adder uncoiled from behind it, and bit him. He lay on the ground shaking. His sister, Oshen girl tried to save her bitten brother and she too was bitten by the poisonous snake. As the two siblings lay there dying Oshen Boy asked his Sister, "Heaven (for that was oshen girl's name) , Are we going to Die? "

"Yes, " Oshen girl replied. "What will death be like? " Oshen boy asked.

"Well, my teacher told me you will see a tunnel of light."

"And all your relatives will be there."

"is that Nirvana? " Oshen boy asked.

"It could be, If you make it, " " Oshen girl told him.

Oshen boy seemed confused..

"What? " Oshen boy asked

"Death is consciousness nothingness, " Oshen girl replied, "Whatever you want it to be."

The poison began to sink in, and the siblings suffered, but not for very long. As Oshen Girl's spirit left her body she thought, "I am free this is wonderful, I am so happy. This is true freedom, I have no boundaries or limits. I AM GOING TO DO WHAT I've ALWAYS WANTED. I am going to be everything and nothing. Woo-hoo. Yippee. Wee."

AS Oshen Boy's spirit left his body he thought, "I am Free this is terrible, I am so scared, I have no boundaries or limits. THE FEAR OF WHAT IS OUT THERE IS SO TERRIFYING, IT HAS GIVEN MY SOUL PARALYSIS. Oh-no. Ugh. Ouch.'

Excerpt from The 4 Hundred and 20 Assassins: Green Mourning

By: Joe DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco

Noah's Gone Fishing

It snowed in Baghdad yesterday;
The Whales will have to find
Somewhere else to go;
The Islands are SOLD OUT.

The traffic in the sky
Is going to get worse;
As the Earth floods again,
The Lost City of New Orleans comes to mind.

Noah looked out his window,
And it was unseasonably warm,
Not a cloud in the sky.

He decided to go fishing,
But when he got to the ocean
They told him it was CLOSED for renovations.

The gods looked up from
Their studio apartment in the ghetto.
'He doesn't realize the flood
Will come from below, '
One of them says, which is not important.

"The land named by RED which was inappropriately christened
For one thing it is not, GREEN
Is the stage it will take place on."

'The people want to know WHEN? ' the God of Traffic asks.
'Tell them, sooner than you think, '
Says the God of Money,
Who knows death is imminent.

The Almighty Dollar goes home,
And takes a bath with a bread maker,
As Noah tries to resurrect
A miniature version of his ark inside a bottle of ABSOLUT.

By: Joseph DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco

Nothing But Bad News

Nothing but bad news.
The media manipulates,
A master mind scheme,
To scare and scar.
The truth is twisted and traversed.
The rich reek their wrath,
Upon us all.
Special interest groups
and carnivorous corporations,
Puppeted by petty politicians,
Ploy for power.
It matters not which you choose,
Both belong to them.
Public pressure produces nothing,
Money makes this machine move,
Demolishing democracy in its path.
The system is shaken,
The people want to take the power back,
If they would only wake-up.

Joseph DeMarco

Ode To The Duckdive

Throwing gravity aside
this is the magical enchantment
of the duck dive
Surfer God
Changing atmospheres
From liquid to gas
Body reborn
euphoric in the presence of eminent danger
Some how defying nature's authority
Against gravitational forces
Pulling
Ripping
Collapsing
Calling me
to that bone yard reef
That graveyard of epoxy and resin
Where the tombstones are surfboards broken in half
I become death's passenger
Floating towards the light
Rays of angels surround me
as this miraculous extension of me
This powerful staff
propels me through Hades
The underworld holds me back
The water demons grab hold of my legs
while my surfboard carries me
into the sunlight
I have survived
For the time being
Now paddle like mad
Cause here comes the sets! ! !

Joseph DeMarco

One Religion

All is written by the same hand;
Our God is the same God,
Who is everything,
Who is nothing.
Jesus and Buddha sought the same thing;
All major religions are the same
But different cultural aspects
Make descriptions that are hard to cling.

I may be crazy,
But I believe God has been trying to contact me of late;
It is all in MY cards along with our imminent fate.
God is not so special,
But there is some message
I was supposed to decode and know;
The message is occluded
Like footprints after the new fallen snow.

The message still eludes me
As the voice gets more and more clear;
The voice makes me stronger
And reminds me I have nothing to fear.
It's meandering on the edge
Of Bob Marley's One Love
But that's just the tip of the iceberg,
The fingertips in the glove.

'One mind there is,
But under it two principals contend.'
Light or dark, good or bad,
We choose to commend or offend.
You make it up as you go;
Reality is a mold of what is real;
It's all in your head;
You are mistaken what you feel.

Lao Tzu, Confucius and Elijah,
Moses, Krishna and Mohammed,
Were transistors from One Heaven,

Visionaries of what the world could be,
Interested in one main task,
setting the soul free,
As God whispers lightly in my ear,
'There is no you...there is only me.'

Joseph DeMarco

Poetic Justice

Visualize my children and you shall look
Upon the voyage of Captain James R. Cook;
It was the eighteenth of January in Seventeen Seventy-Eight;
Hardly a Hawaiian can forget the Date;
What befell upon the Islands was a terrible Fate.

During the Makahiki festival, Cook was thought to be Lono;
He would never live to see how he upset the (Balance) Pono;
The false god blew smoke from his mouth and had skin so pale,
Arriving on a floating island with a giant sail,
So Cook told them he was a God, never thinking this deceit might fail.

At first it went good they celebrated together,
But upon leaving the island, Cook hit nasty weather;
One ship had some problems and broke its foremast;
If they didn't turn around, the ship wasn't going to last,
So they headed back to the island faster than fast.

The Hawaiians had been generous and were generous again,
And even as the author holds this pen,
He knows 'boys will be boys' and 'men will be men, '
And the Hawaiian resentment, was starting to burn
For 'this god who ate so much, but gave so little in return."

When loose tools were stolen, men got even more irate;
Both sides Hawaiian and Haole began to fill with hate;
So Cook's men stole a canoe and there was a small fight;
Nobody died, but the European sailors remained on shore for the night;
When they awoke, another of their large boats was missing from sight.

Cook was angry now and wanted his large boat back;
He marched on shore with marines, in an attempt to attack;
He grabbed him a hostage Chief Kalani'opu'u;
In the wake, a riot began to ensue;
The Hawaiians got their clubs, while Cook waved in his crew.

Guns were fired, Hawaiians charged, and the Marines ran back to their boat,
And alone stood Captain Cook in his British red coat;
Cook was hit with a club, stabbed numerous times and killed;

Still more than two hundred years later the void can never be filled,
Like a cavity that's so deep it cannot be drilled.

What could the Hawaiians do?

It seemed as if the prophecies were coming true;
Death and demise would come from across the sea,
Though it never said what or who it might be;
Were these white foreigners, devils or the missing key?

One hundred years later, the Native Hawaiian Population was decimated;
Disease and materialism only helped to destroy all the Hawaiians created;
The US took their harbor and went on vacation on their white sands;
Now is time for change, the choice is in your hands;
Discover the truth, help return stolen lands.

Joseph DeMarco

Practical (Ly) Advice

Just because the plane has landed
And the pilot has turned off the fasten seat belt sign
Does not mean you should hurry to get out of your seat,
It will be five minutes before they open the hatch
And an additional ten minutes before all people in front of you
Clear out of the way,
So sit back, enjoy being safe and sound on the ground.

Just because you're late for something
Doesn't mean you have to speed and rush,
Putting yourself in frivolous danger.
It would be foolish, not to mention pointless,
To accidentally kill yourself because you're late for work.

Just because others are cutting ahead along the shoulder,
Causing traffic to back up much further,
Doesn't mean you have to contribute to the jam.

Just because you're at restaurant
That's serving an all you can eat special
Doesn't mean you have to stuff your face
Until you think you're going to throw up.
If you're full now,
Your stomach was full fifteen minutes ago.

Just because you have a tongue
Doesn't mean you should talk.
How many cliches talk about silence
"Silence is golden, "
"Talk is cheap, "
"The angry man opens his mouth and closes his eyes."
Just because you have wonderful freedom of speech
Doesn't mean you should exercise it by being ignorant.

I often think about what it was like before plants learned to flower,
And wonder if humans will ever learn to flower.

Joseph DeMarco

Rainy Day In Baseballland

It was a rainy day in Baseballland
The players were home in bed
One rookie rolled over his eyelids a flutter
With dreams of a stand-up triple running through his head

The cleats and spikes were all on hooks
Along with mitts, bats, and caps
And even Cal Ripken Jr. had settled down
For a long summer's nap

Outside the rain was pouring down
While puddles drenched the field
But little Eric Hopkins came to play
And his imagination refused to yield

His mitt lay soggy in a puddle
And his sleeves were drenched with rain
As his hands clenched a cold bat with a hope
"That springs eternal in the human brain."

Little Eric threw the ball up swung and missed,
And the umpire bawked, "Strike one! "
He tapped his cleats, picked up the ball, and reminded the ghost crowd,
"This rain won't ruin our fun."

For little Eric loved the game
And he loved the feel of stitched leather in his hands
As he waved to his mom, who sat with his fabricated wife
And his invented kids up there in the fantasy stands

And now the imaginary pitcher holds the ball
And now he lets it go
But little Eric swung and missed again
Which made two strikes in a row

He metaphorically dusted himself off
And picked up the ball once more
For often he wished that instead of three strikes
The batter could get four

But today he realized, it was his day
His wishes were his commands
So as he squeezed the water from his jersey
He raised his finger toward the left-field stands

He was Babe Ruth, Mark McGwire, Ken Griffey Jr,
and Barry Bonds all together
And anything you said about lightning or thunder
Wouldn't be getting him out of this weather

For in his head the sun was shining
And the grass was green and dry
And he sent that low and away 0-2 pitch
Like a rocket into the sky

And he arrogantly trotted around the bases
Stepped on third and headed toward home plate
While his mother yelled from down the street,
"Dinner's cold and you are late! "

Joseph DeMarco

Secrets Of The Subconscious

We don't wear our mind on our sleeve
We wear our mind.
Our body is an extension
Of mental characteristics and environmental dynamics,
Like a suit custom-made from our past,
Each scar a sovereign of pain and knowledge,
Each flaw a feeling not forgotten.
'Fat thighs packed with childhood anger,
Baldness from trying to control everything,
Breast problems from refusing to nourish yourself,
Indigestion from gut-level fear, dread, and anxiety,
Halitosis from a rotten attitude.'
As we speak, our cells are regenerating,
We are rewiring ourselves
According to what we THINK
The replicated cells are all confused;
They think MONEY is the same thing as WORRY;
The circuits have been crossed;
They think TIME is the same thing as FEAR.
You must synergize your synapses;
They have reconnected all crippled.
They think LOVE is the same thing as DISAPPOINTMENT.
They got all these ideas from patterns in your behavior,
And now like a run away disc drive, these patterns can't be stopped
OR
Rather they are difficult to stop,
Because you can't just change what you do,
You have to change the way you think,
You have to change the way you live
Or suffer your untimely demise.

Secrets of a Small Synapse

It starts when you're young:
The bountiful brainwash,
Careful coloring books,
Rules, regulations, rituals, routines,
'STAY BETWEEN THE LINES, '
Wristwatches and Bedtimes,

Watching time.
'At 6: 30 AM We wake up, '
'At 9: 00 PM We go to bed.'
It doesn't matter if you're tired,
Just Follow,
Don't question
Why?
'At 8: 00 AM We go to school, '
'At 12: 00 PM We eat lunch.'
I don't need a clock to tell me
I'm hungry or tired;
I don't need the television
To tell me
What time it is.
The writing seems pretty clear,
The possessive propaganda,
Eat three meals a day,
Five food groups,
Fully functioning Fear
Develops.
Those that operate outside the box
Are shunned and sequestered,
Denigrated and denied
Nourishment
Gifts suffer and
Dreams deflate,
Dying in the stomach,
Where they grow into something Else.

Secrets of the Psyche

'All learning is remembering
What we have forgotten.'
At the blessed birth,
At the dharmatic death,
The elusive Ego,
Not dipping deeply enough
To uncover ultimate understanding.
The original origins,
The destiny of the final destination
Is blocked by biological needs,
The message muted

Sounding like stale static
As harmony brushes by beneath us.
We vaguely feel the familiarity
Like a long lost home
We never knew we had.
Truth teases time,
Testing us,
Knowing the soul is forever,
Telling us
The body will soon expire.
Subliminally
We know ALL
Yet we
Only believe what we want to believe
And our frail bodies will die
Because of the fear that it is an inevitability.

Joseph DeMarco

Serenity Later Prayer

There is no amount of,
time or space,
that will ever eraser,
what you did to me.

There's nothing you can say,
I'd wish you'd go away.

I pray to higher being,
that someday,
I can forgive.
Until then,
I hope you don't live.

Joseph DeMarco

Six Degrees Of Bob Sausage

Bob Sausage was a movie star many years back, before movies became illegal. He was not the most popular movie star. He was not the most famous movie star. He was a rather mediocre movie star. He had reached such a level of mediocrity that for a while he was in so many films that people started to play a game with his name. Six degrees of Bob Sausage. The game was to see if they could name a famous actor that had been in a movie with another actor that had been in a movie with another actor that had been in a movie with the rather mediocre Bob Sausage. The game was pretty stupid, but it gained Bob Sausage tons of exposure. So much exposure that his movies could be seen at hour of the day, at any time, on almost any channel. The more films he was in the flimsier his soul got. The more times they duplicated his films, the thinner his soul got. He still holds the universal record for the thinnest soul.

Joseph DeMarco

Soul Pieces

The Lizard King has taken up refuge in my
Subconscious
The spell has been cast
I defecate on sacred ground
And the Earth quakes
Sending Tidal vibrations
Across the largest ocean
Cracked and broken
plates
like pieces of my soul
The puzzle doesn't quite fit together
The soul is not whole
You have to make the mold
Carve each jigsaw
into your own Tetris piece
or Jenga blocks
It's just me and a pile of rocks
As the mind struggles
to perceive something
That is beyond comprehension.

Joseph DeMarco

St. Valentine's Day Massacre

I climbed to the top of the clock tower,
With the wind lightly at my back.
I positioned myself ever so slightly,
And got ready to attack.
I brought back the bow,
And let the arrow fly.
I aimed straight for the spot in the center of the Bull's eye.
My only intent was to make him die.
I wanted to see how he would like it,
When I shot him through the heart.
I wondered if he could pull it together,
After it all fell apart.
I wanted to prove to him,
How he would react,
When the pain came on so strong,
It felt like a heart attack.
Would he wallow in misery
Longing for her scent
Getting drunken and stupid
With his mind half bent
I bet he would.
I don't think he could handle the pain,
And all the confusion
When it all goes down the drain.
Relationships are tough,
Believe me I know.
I wanted to see if he could handle it though,
I let the slings of outrageous fortune go,
And shot Cupid in the heart
With my arrow and bow.

Joseph DeMarco

Still Life With The Lorax

The Lorax is on top,
I wish it would stop.
All these bad and good memories,
of me and you.
The trees are all green,
and the water (like me) is blue.
The tree's tongues are tied,
and twisted,
searching for the place,
where the Lorax lifted.
If life give you lemons,
Well I guess you're blessed because,
Lemons raise the level of serotonin,
in the body,
The chemical responsible for making,
you happy.
I still feel crappy,
I squeezed a whole lemon into my water.
I'm still wondering how couples stay together,
when they barely have anything in common.
I'm still wondering like Tom Robbins in
Still Life with Woodpecker,
'How do you make love stay? '
And why does it go away?
I know I won't find out today.
I've got a thousand papercuts,
And the citric acid burns.
I'm fishing without worms,
Nightcrawler vision,
sinks inside my brain,
panic attacks,
and I can't stand the pain.
I wish I could turn back the hands of time,
but I can't,
so I'll trade one of my lemons,
for a lime,
cause I plan to drink this twelve pack,
of Corona with or without you,
I'm honestly trying not to feel blue.

Joseph DeMarco

Tapping The Energy

'I'm Never alone

I'm alone all the time, ' says The voice out of nowhere.

I'm sitting reading by myself in the woods.

I'm not sure if The voice is recurring radio waves or there is actually a being talking to me.

I look up into a clear blue sky.

I look around.

There is no one around.

'The answer is simple

The question not so attainable, ' The voice says

'What? ' I question a little antagonistically

'Have I found Eden

Or Am I lost?

Have I succeeded or failed?

Is this the end or the beginning?

Am I dreaming or being dreamt? ' The voice says pondering.

'What? ' I question again, 'this is nonsensical you're the one asking these Zen questions that can't be answered.'

'I can answer them, ' says The voice.

'The answer to each one of those questions is both.'

'Think about it, ' says The voice.

'Okay, ' I say.

'Wait! ' I interrupt, 'Don't leave yet! '

'Okay, ' The voice says calmly.

'What is the secret to happiness? ' I ask The voice.

For a second I think The voice is going to say being wet and warm, but that is not The voice's response.

'Sadness, ' The voice says plainly.

And then The voice is gone.

And I am sad.

And happy.

Joseph DeMarco

The (Not-So-Great) Bailout Of 2008

Gather round children,
as I tell the tale,
Of how all the banks
started to fail.
About how the government
bailed out the rich,
Rather than the poor,
which would have been a switch.

People were greedy,
for something called cash,
Brokers on Wall Street had plenty,
so what they did seems rash.
And so they started
robbing regular people blind.
That's how America (and the World)
got into a bind.

The banks began approving loans for homes,
to anyone who might need.
The value would go up,
and you could re-mortgage indeed.
People started spending
what they never had.
The way money was their religion
was awfully sad.

People would spend thousands of dollars,
On luxury items and diamond rings,
While poor children went without
food, braces and things.
The world was on a bubble
about to break.
Still banks pushed loans and investments
with ratings that were fake.

The economy crashed
like a run away train.
Regular people watched as their savings

and retirement went down the drain.
The president and congress
fearing another crash,
put together
a bailout plan fast.

They reasoned, if we don't fix the economy
the whole ship will sink.
'You don't understand, ' they claimed
the world is on the brink.
And so the government taught future generations,
handing (the rich) a bone,
That's it's okay to spend
more than you own.

Joseph DeMarco

The Amnesia Of Magic

Magic happens
behind closed eyelids
It is fading with a blink
And erased from your memory
almost immediately

Like a dream right after you awake
the forgetfulness of true magic is overwhelming,
An amnesia, occluding you from your dream
swallowing your memory whole

It never happened
##-Scene Missing-##
As if you were not meant to know
Consciously
You imagined him standing over your bed
with a wand wiping your mind clean

Go to the old road
The magic persists there
It's in the spaces and crannies
In the holes in the air

Walk in the footsteps of ancients
Tread lightly with care
It's in the paradoxes where they lie
It's in your dreams when you die

This has happened before
##-Scene Missing-##
Like some type of Vuja De
It happened in the past
on a distant day

Joseph DeMarco

The Arab And The Jew

Felix King couldn't remember a thing about the accident. He rubbed his eyes. He squinted. He still couldn't believe what he saw. Through weary, blurred eyes, he thought he saw an Arab and a Jew playing Chinese checkers. The pieces they were using were marvelously crafted glass marbles that seemed to change color when the light hit them. The Jew looked a lot older than the Arab, and had a long, snowy white beard. The Arab's beard was black like coal. Both were dressed in ancient nomadic fashion wrapped in light desert garments. The Arab and the Jew did not appear to recognize that Felix had awakened. They continued with their game, but it did appear, at least to Felix, that they were waiting for something and the game was just a means to pass the time. A light came on in the hallway, and there was a small Ding, as if someone's cake was ready.

"Do you think he'll discover the truth? " the Arab asked the Jew. Felix wondered who they were talking about.

The Arab moved a marble. The marble's color changed from electric yellow to hellfire red.

"Probably not, " the Jew answered. "Few do."

"And even if he does, behind every mystery, there is another mystery, " the Jew continued.

"Who's next? " the Jew asked, as if he was forgetful in his old age.

The Jew moved a marble. The marble's color changed from sky blue to aqua green.

"I am he, as you are he, as you are me, and we are all together, " the Arab answered.

Felix felt his body perk up. He did not know why.

There was a silence like each man was contemplating his next move, or maybe it was more important than that. Were they talking about the game of Chinese checkers, or something else?

"I should get to go last...I'm the last true prophet, " the Arab said under his

breath.

The Arab moved a marble. The marble's color changed from blood maroon to buttercup yellow.

The Jew smiled.

"I will admit the sequence is most peculiar, but there is a reason for everything, " the Jew said, his smile never faltering.

"Besides, I am the first true prophet. Why shouldn't I get to go first? " With that statement he moved a marble. The marble's color changed from evergreen to navy blue.

The Arab looked sour. "You are not the first true prophet." He moved his marble. The marble's color changed from chartreuse to ruby red.

"You are not even the first Bodhisattva or messiah or savior or first founder for that matter, " the Arab said with anger in his voice.

"I am the father of modern prophets and the father of modern religion, " the Jew said proudly, as he moved his marble. The marble's color turned from turquoise to algae green.

The Arab smiled. "You forget of the rest of the world." He moved a marble smugly. The fire engine red of the marble changed to glittery golden yellow.

"I am the father of the founder of your religion, " the Jew said tenaciously. "I have a whole branch of religions named after me."

"Perhaps you are chosen last, " said the Arab, "because our friend has little to learn from your arrogance."

The two continued bickering like an old married couple. Felix had a feeling it would always be that way. Eventually he dozed off. When he awoke they were gone. Chinese checker board and all, just vanished. He wondered if he saw that scene for a reason. Was that Abraham and Mohammed arguing?

Excerpt from Blind Savior, False Prophet

By Joe DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco

The Atheist

I am reminded of the atheist who died. Or rather was presumably pronounced dead for a short period of time, then revived. Upon waking, the atheist announced that he had gone down the tunnel of white light, had seen his dead relatives and in fact met God. He must have forgotten he didn't believe in God. Together, perhaps in a city in the clouds or the clouded foggy afterlife, God conversed with the atheist.

A crowd of people had gathered to hear what God had said.

"Did you ask God what the meaning of life was? " people wanted to know.

"Did you ask God what the one true religion is? " others wanted to know.

"Calm down! " the atheist assured them.

"It just so happens, I asked each of those questions, " the atheist concluded smugly.

"And? " people demanded.

There was a pause as if the atheist was conducting the energy of God.

"God told me the meaning of life is..." the people braced for the answer,
"Nothing, " the atheist said after a pause. He was ecstatic. The people were more than a little disheartened.

"Nothing, you mean there is no meaning to life? " the people asked.

"Well, that's one way of putting it, " the atheist said laughing.

"Or another might mean nothing, as in, you get to make it up as you go along, " the atheist said smiling.

"It's whatever you want it to be, " the atheist explained.

The people did not seem to get it.

A few looked suicidal.

"Well, at least tell us the one true religion, " the people demanded.

"Okay, " the atheist assured them.

There was a pause again as if he was God's instrument warming up.

"God told me the one true religion is..." the people braced for the answer,
"Whichever one is best for you, " the atheist said confidently.

"You mean there is no true religion? " the crowd shrieked.

"What are we going to do? " the people asked starting to riot. They started to push and shove.

The people got really angry and violent, and they eventually tore the atheist apart. As the atheist ascended to heaven he asked God how this could have been avoided.

God told the atheist, "There is only one way you could have avoided death...When the people asked you what God said...you should have stuck to your guns and told them, 'God...I don't believe in God.'"

Excerpt from: Blind Savior, False Prophet

Joseph DeMarco

The Browns' Dinner Party

The Browns were a family. They were, more especially, a family of bears. They were not a big family. There were three brown bears. There was Momma Bear, Daddy Bear, and Junior Bear. They were not your normal bears either. They were sort of like the kind of bears you read about in children's books, who wear clothes and go shopping or throw dinner parties. They didn't live in a cave either. They lived in a house on the edge of the woods. One Saturday, the Browns (mostly Momma Brown Bear) thought it would be great to have company over for since Junior had been born, they had had to cut back on going out and having parties. The Browns invited three couples over that night. Mrs. Brown Bear was very excited while preparing the feast.

"What're we having? " Junior Brown Bear asked, sticking his wet nose into the oven.

"Tut, tut, " said Mrs. Brown Bear. "Upstairs and wash your paws before dinner. Our guests will be arriving soon." She shook her head. That cub had been acting funny lately; he picked at his food, he never finished his dinner.

The first couple to arrive was from the farm down the street. They were Mr. Pig and Mrs. Cow. They waddled through the door and Mr. Pig immediately made a beeline for the appetizers. He stuffed himself with pork rinds.

"You know what those are made out of? " Mrs. Cow asked.

"What? " Mr. Pig said, looking suspicious, crumbs falling down his chest.

They were interrupted as the next couple arrived. They were from the suburbs, Miss Cat and Mr. Dog. These two did not get along well and were constantly bickering and barking. The last couple to arrive was from the woodlands, Mrs. Fox and Mr. Wolf.

The couples moved to the parlor for drinks, and chatted about the economy and how the forest was shrinking. They had some more appetizers, and eventually they sat down to have dinner. When Mrs. Brown Bear carried out the main course, what was on the plate was appalling to Mrs. Cow. She shuddered, as all four of her stomachs almost vomited at once. There, next to a side of garnish and several steamed vegetables, staring up at her, were the eyes of a person.

"Human, " she shrieked. "You're serving human."

"Well, yeah." Mr. Brown Bear said. "Why not? The economy is bad, and there are more humans in the world than any other animal."

Mr. Wolf came to the rescue. "I've eaten human before. A bit stringy, but I do say it does the job."

Then Miss Cat chimed in, "I've eaten human before, too. Remember when Miss Bixby died? Nobody came around to feed us for months. If we hadn't eaten her, we would've starved to death."

Mrs. Brown Bear started to slice the human up, and even the wolf had to admit he didn't want to look into the eyes of this confused and frightened animal. They were all glossy, and they were full of empathy.

"Well, I won't do it, " Mrs. Cow said. "Perhaps you have some greens I can snack on, you know, something that doesn't bleed." Luckily they did. So Mrs. Cow got greens and everything seemed resolved. Everything was resolved, that is, until Junior started whining, "I don't want to eat human either. It's gross."

"Finish your hand, " Mrs. Brown Bear told Junior Brown Bear.

"Eew, " Junior Brown Bear screamed, turning the clammy thing over on his plate like a dead fish. He picked it up and let it fall limp.

"Cub, " Mr. Brown Bear said, "bears eat meat, and humans are meat."

"But it's gross, " Junior Brown Bear protested, "and some humans are nice. Once this human gave me this delightfully sweet thing called a Choco Lot, or something like that. It was the best thing I've ever tasted. Besides, bears also eat nuts and berries."

And his mind was made up. So even though his parents wouldn't let him leave from the table without finishing his human, and even though he didn't get any honey for dessert, Junior Brown Bear refused to eat his supper.

Eventually he was sent to his room and as he stomped up the steps, Mr. Wolf commented, "Odd bear. Doesn't even eat meat."

Mrs. Fox stared at him.

"What? " the Wolf exclaimed. "It's all pretty much the same, the carcass of a dead animal. I mean, come on, meat is meat."

Some of the party nodded their heads and agreed, others quietly disagreed.

Getting up, Mr. Brown Bear decided 'I better go talk to him.'

When he got upstairs, the cub was sulking in a corner.

"Cub, did I ever tell you about your Grandpa Brown Bear? " Mr. Brown Bear asked.

Junior Brown Bear looked up with teary, hopeful eyes. "Nope, " he said.

"Well, your granddaddy was the biggest, brownest bear in this neck of the woods. One day he went fishing up at Salmon River. Was having a great day catching plenty of fish, when he ran into a lumberjack."

"Dad, what's a lumberjack? " Junior Brown Bear asked.

"They are these real mean, real hairy humans that go around chopping down all the trees."

"Why do they do that? " Junior Brown Bear asked.

"I dunno, " Mr. Brown Bear answered honestly. "Anyway, this lumberjack was big and mean and more importantly carrying a shotgun. Well, " said Mr. Brown Bear, "he took one look at your granddaddy and cocked the shotgun and unloaded."

"What happened? " Junior Brown Bear asked.

"Well, let me see, I'm not sure. Now I'm not saying they ate your granddaddy, but last I saw him he was mounted on the wall like a mural or a photograph, " Mr. Brown Bear informed the cub.

"That's not true. It's just another cubs' tale to scare little ones, " Junior Bear said confidently.

"Oh, it's not a tale, " Mr. Brown Bear said. "I swear on the ever disappearing forest that I saw your granddaddy's head mounted and it's a sight I'm gonna take to my cave...'Cause, cub, sometimes you eat the human, and sometimes the human eats you."

"Dad, they really eat bears? That's appalling, " said Junior Brown Bear.

"I know, cub, I know, " said Mr. Brown Bear, rubbing the top of his son's head, acknowledging the irony of two important facts:

Fact #1: Meat is meat!

Fact #2: All meat was once alive. Therefore, it must be killed to be eaten. Meat must involve murder! ! !

Joseph DeMarco

The Deck Of Disasters

Many years before Joe Kaye had moved to Hawaii, and became a writer, one of Joe Kaye's ex-girlfriends (the one with the cat that had the backwards name of Satan) had made Joe a special deck of Tarot cards. She was an artist or at least into the occult, her mother might have been a witch, and so for one Halloween she gave Joe a special deck of cards. This special deck of Tarot cards was not supposed to indicate the future of a particular person but rather the fate of the entire world. She called the deck of Tarot cards "The Deck of Disasters". It was produced at a pet cemetery in Lily Dale. Each card had a photograph that represented, a way in which the world might end. Instead of a normal Taro deck of 22, this deck only had sixteen cards. There was a card for each of the seven plagues God had supposedly released upon Egypt, and the three he supposedly never released. The cards were as follows: Blood, Frogs, Fleas/Lice, Flies, Pestilence (meaning all the animals, our source of food would die) , Boils, Storm (fiery hail) , Locusts, Darkness, and Death of Firstborn. The dark girl with a tattoo of a scorpion on her thigh that was Joe Kaye's ex-girlfriend also added: Nuclear Holocaust (which some might construe as a Storm of fiery hail) , Flood, Earthquake/Volcanic Eruption, Disease, Meteorite, and Ice Age. Those were the sixteen cards of disaster that took her nearly eight months to complete.

On Halloween night somewhere around the turn of the millennium, a group sat down in a dark room amidst a backdropp of candles to give a Tarot reading about the end of the world. To get the mood psychically enhanced each member of the group had taken a hit of ecstasy. While they rubbed each other's bodies and smoked marijuana they were in a good mood. Few were actually taking the reading seriously, and none were thinking about the end of the world.

It was really only Sarah (daughter of a witch, current girlfriend to Joe Kaye) who was anxious to see if this deck of cards she had made would give any little piece of evidence as to the end of the earth. Sarah closed her eyes; her red hair electric with glitter. She had blessed the deck by sleeping with it under her pillow for over a month now, but she hadn't given the deck a name. In the background, Bob Marley's "One Love" was chanting, "As it was in the beginning...So shall it be in the end."

"So howzit going to end?" said this faded-looking face. The face was not at all taking this reading seriously. He had a rocky smile on his face, like he was going to spit his teeth at you and laugh wickedly. Sarah, as well as the rest of the group ignored him.

Sarah was thinking of the way in which the cards should be played, as well as, the position that they should be laid down. Sarah and Joe Kaye had gone through a serious argument about how many cards should be dealt for the so called apocalyptic hand. Sarah thought only one, but Joe Kaye seemed to think

something as divine and Zen-like as the end of time would be more complicated than one card. This heated argument had gone on for three weeks. Finally, it was Sarah that would give in and go against her wishes (even though she was the maker of the deck) . Joe Kaye thought that since six was the mark of the beast, that six cards should be dealt in pairs of two. The first two would indicate the past, the middle two would indicate the present, and the two on the right would be the future of the planet.

The music had stopped, as Sarah began chanting some Celtic hymn that she knew. Some people were lighting incense, some were closing their eyes. Joe Kaye felt uncomfortable, as he usually did. Maybe he felt like this was information he wasn't sure he wanted to know.

"Why don't we do a practice run, " he suggested to Sarah.

Sarah looked offended. "You can't do a practice run with Tarot cards, " she stated.

"Fine, " Joe Kaye said, and then he asked, "Are you sure you want to do this? "

A male in the room jumped all over him, "What Joe...are you scared? " It was so cliché he should have made chicken noises.

Joe looked the male in the eyes. He did not comment.

"We should all hold hands, " Sarah suggested.

The group began to form a circle around the room, with the Deck of Disasters at the head.

Sarah had fallen into a trance-like state.

"All we are is all we all are, " she was whispering to herself.

"Arba dac arba, " she said in voice that was not her own.

Joe Kaye looked at her funny. "What was that? " he mouthed to his friend.

"Mib alas mis, " muttered out of the girl named Sarah's mouth.

"EHT EKO VNE EW NONAM, " Sarah said, her eyes turning black.

"What the heck was that? " Joe's friend asked looking worried.

Sarah held the cards in her hand. All breathing in the room seemed to have stopped. Sarah moved the cards through her hand like a sleight-of-hand trick. She dealt six cards, but instead of dealing them the way Joe Kaye had explained, she dealt them pentagram-style or like a faded star.

Joe Kaye breathed in heavy. He did not dare criticize her.

Sarah eyes were still closed, as she turned over the first two cards. The first two were supposed to represent the past, according to Joe Kaye's ideology. The first card that was turned over was the flood card, it was above the second that was turned over, which was the Ice Age card.

Everybody stared at the cards.

Flood

Ice Age

"Weird, " one of the guys said in a very pretend feminine voice.

Joe Kaye looked at him, asking, "Why is that weird? "

"You know, cause it's the past, and there are two of them, and you have the flood from the Biblical sense, ya know, Noah's ark, and all that stuff, and then from the Scientific sense, well, they can prove that the earth went through an ice age, probably wiped out most animals on the planet."

It was weird. Even Joe Kaye thought so.

Sarah closed her eyes, put her hands over the cards, and turned over the next two. These two were supposed to signify the present. The next card she turned over was Blood, and then the fourth card was Disease.

The circle stared at the cards.

Breathing once again stopped.

Blood

Disease

It was quite a while before someone made a comment.

Finally Joe Kaye made a snide remark, "So Einstein where's your Biblical and Scientific sense now? "

"Well, " he started to explain, when Sarah held her hand up.

The circle became silent. The girl Sarah looked as if a wind was blowing only over her. Her eyes opened, although they did not look like her eyes, and she turned over the last two cards. The fifth card was Pestilence, and the sixth card was Darkness. Somebody whispered, "What does it mean? "

"Nothing, " Joe Kaye stated.

He looked at the cards.

Pestilence

Darkness

He felt a chill go through his very soul. He had an eerie feeling the cards were right, but never spoke about it until years later.

Joseph DeMarco

The Forgetful Fisherman

The forgetful fisherman was as wise as he was forgetful.
Some even said that he used to be a Zen Master,
but that was along time ago and he had forgotten about that.
Early one morning a little boy approached the fisherman asking him for advice.
'Sir, my father would like me to help on the boat, but I am fearful of the ocean.'
'Every time I get near it, I am desperately afraid. What should I do? '
The fisherman sat contemplating the boy's problem.
Finally he spoke, 'My child, You have to learn to control your FEAR.'
'No, that's not it! ! ! ' He said interrupting himself.
There was a long period of silence,
and the boy was unsure if the fisherman had fallen asleep.
Finally, he opened his eyes and spoke, 'You have to learn to eliminate your FEAR,
'
But quickly corrected himself again by yelling, 'STRIKE THAT! ! ! '
This time there was an even longer silence
and the boy sat and watched
as the sun changed horizons
The boy thought the fisherman had forgotten about his problem
and was about to get up and leave when the fisherman spoke again,
'You have to learn to destroy your FEAR.'
But was quick to point out, 'Oh, Lord no that's not it! ! ! '
'Neither do you need to learn to bury it, ' he added quickly
and then was silent for a long time.
The boy sat with the fisherman until the evening started to creep up on them,
The sun was about to kiss the ocean, giving the sky a tangerine haze.
The boy really needed to go Now!
As he got up the forgetful fisherman told him 'STOP! '
'FEAR is a sickness that crawls inside of you and dies, ' said the fisherman.
'The SICKNESS grows, ' he continued.
'It penetrates,
infiltrates,
your every being,
doing,
going,
leaving you,
in a constant state of FEAR.
Making you its servant,
You need to learn to release your FEAR.'
'Is that it? ' the boy asked getting up to leave.

'Release?

I'm...

Not...

Sure...

Let me think about it for a little while, ' the forgetful fisherman replied.

Joseph DeMarco

The Girl Who Had Pele's Hair

For: Samantha

The beautiful young red head
moves in mysterious ways
as she pulled her lava orange stick of wax
from her box of crayons
She is not a girl
actually more of a woman
Yet something in her eyes
is where the secret lies

In the Hawaiian sunset her hair twists and turns
rips and burns
like rivers of burning lava
trust me when I say
'The Past is Today'
Part of Pele is in her

The red head sharpens her crayon
smiling to herself
'I used to have a box of crayons
like that when I was little, ' says the teacher next to her
His face is strained and stressed,
A perfect contrast to the girl
'I used to get upset when my crayons
wore down to nubs, ' says the teacher.

The girl with the lava hair smiles,
'You still do, ' she says softly.
The teacher looks at her,
his eyes far away.

Years later the teacher stops his car,
on a rural road, next to an old lady walking,
The old lady's formerly red hair replaced,
by Pele's grayish silver ash.
The teacher rolls down his window,
The old lady smiling through missing teeth.

'Do you need a ride? '

The Teacher asks the old lady.

The old lady looks down the open road.

She shakes her head.

The teacher smiles with tears in his eyes,

And a feeling that will not go away,

remembering the past today.

Joseph DeMarco

The Incumbent Must Die

From the tops of the skyscrapers
To the freedom bells that ring,
Let all the registered voters
And poor children sing,

'We have had quite enough,
Of this corrupt game;
We must vote them all out
Or suffer more of the same.'

Politician marionettes attached to
Wall Street banks and Big Oil,
Public interest groups partying it up,
While citizens suffer and toil.

Health care companies
Drive prices to the skies,
Then manufacture candidates
With a hidden agenda of lies.

Campaign finances are kicked back
Through greed and corruption;
Monuments built to the politician's vanity
That contribute to the environment's destruction.

From our once purple mountain majesties
To our diminishing amber waves of grain,
It is time for the incumbent
To feel some of the pain.

For WE have the power,
And we must take it back,
Chase them politicians,
Go on the attack!

Vote them all out,
Tell their lips that all lie,
Vote them all out,
The Incumbent Must Die.

Joseph DeMarco

The Persistence Of Memory

We all hear the internal clock ticking,
A self-contained Doomsday device,
Melting like a candle in the desert heat

Shaded by our consciousness,
We try to ignore the Fun House mirrors
That manipulate our memory.

Our minds as flat as pancakes
Are screaming for persistence
And there's something that looks slightly like a deflated goose on the sand.

Our memories are not real
They happen to be past-tense fantasies
Reality souped-up on steroids

Hounding us like a dog
we bargain with memory
and give in to its demands.

Joseph DeMarco

The Reverse Centaur

There used to be a great tower alone on the sea, although this tower was originally the prison of Daedalus and Icarus. After their escape and Icarus' fall, it became the cell of a centaur named Cheiron. It is from this tower that this myth bursts forth. How Cheiron, the centaur, became imprisoned there, well, I'll explain as the story unfurls. In all the Greek Isles, there was perhaps no more singularly pitiful creature than Delphi Papadakis. Delphi should have been extremely unique, in that he was a species many thought to be fictional and mythological, and although he was in truth proud of being a species that was so rare on God's green Earth that people were astonished at its sight, Delphi had a couple of severe problems. 1) He was an orphan, which puts one at a disadvantage to begin with, but when you factor in 2) that he had been born with a slight disfigurement, well, things look even more abysmal. Delphi was a centaur, but he was not your typical centaur. Instead of having a head, arms and chest of a man but the legs and lower half of a horse, he was born the opposite. He had a horse's head, arms and chest but a man's lower half and legs. It was not a pretty sight; he could barely stand up, and when he walked he had to hobble. When Delphi went for a hobble, other centaurs would turn away and avert their eyes. A mother centaur would often cover the eyes of her child centaur so that he or she would not stare at Delphi's disfigurement. Delphi felt a freak of nature, and what was worse, none of the female centaurs would date him or mate with him due to his disfigurement.

It seemed Delphi was destined to live a life of solitude and loneliness, for no female centaur would speak with him, let alone want to procreate. When he went out for hobbles, he was ridiculed and picked on. He got called chicken legs and ladies thighs as insults. Pholus, a giant centaur who was built like a Clydesdale, was the worst of his antagonists, for sometimes he even got physical. So Delphi, for the most part, kept to himself. I might as well be one of those lowly dog-centaurs, he thought.

Delphi sat alone in his cave. It was the time of the Harvest Moon when all the centaurs gathered on the hillside to celebrate. Games were played, fermented grapes were drunk and divine stories were told. The hills were alive with the galloping and prancing of many a magic spell and centaur game. Polo and lacrosse were two favorite games of the strong, virile centaur men. The centaur women went topless and many a behind was sniffed. During the festival the Alpha males were accustomed to running all night, and copious amounts of mating ensued. However, Delphi could barely walk and was hardly an Alpha male. Delphi personified Beta; in fact, forget Beta, he was more like Omega,

back of the pack, worst in his class.

During class or what might be considered class for centaurs, Delphi almost always got an incomplete or what humans might consider an F. The training exercises were too difficult for Delphi; his human legs couldn't willfully support that enormous horsehead of his. Delphi actually never received his Centaurus Diploma, an honor most centaurs coveted. Delphi eventually had to drop out. It wasn't that the teachers were horribly unfair or were picking on him. No, Delphi was really atrocious at trotting, galloping and jumping fences. He was beyond pathetic at archery and hunting (it is hard to hold a bow with hooves for hands): he was bad at almost all things that centaurs excelled at. He was really not much of a centaur; in fact, his college professor, Ixion, an arrogant old goat of a centaur, said as much verbatim. Delphi thought Ixion was a brute, even though he was considered a master in art and hunting, but not every centaur was cruel and cold to Delphi.

Another teacher, Chiron, had always been tolerant of Delphi's deformity. He counseled Delphi, trying to help him with his physical and emotional problems. He explained to Delphi that all creatures are different, and although those differences may seem like a flaw or handicap, sometimes those differences give us a distinct advantage over other creatures. Chiron insisted Delphi was meant for bigger and better things. "You are destined for greatness," Chiron reasoned, but Delphi was incapable of seeing this. Sometimes Delphi thought his teacher was just pulling his hoof. Still, Chiron may have been the only reason Delphi didn't wither and die. It was because of Chiron that Delphi was lured out of his cave on this particular Harvest Moon night; Chiron was giving a guest lecture and story time about Legends of the Labyrinth. Chiron was even gracious enough to send Delphi an invitation with the words

"You don't want to miss my lecture, trust me, I have something that is going to change your perspective on things" at the bottom. Honestly, Delphi wasn't expecting anything great; disappointment had become his expectation for all promises in life.

The lecture started at midnight and a whole host of centaurs had gathered in the grove to listen to him speak. Chiron was a well-respected teacher, orator and inventor; he was not pompous like many of the male centaurs, or so Delphi thought. He spoke eloquently, was kind and well-mannered. On this particular evening he spoke specifically of the Labyrinth on the island of Crete, the famed invention of Daedalus. "There are many gods and humans alike who would have you believe centaurs are of relation to the Minotaur. The very idea is offensive, for we are not slothful, rancorous and bovine.

"Moo-low

Lowww,

Mooooo

Lowwwwww,

Moooooooooo,

Lowwwwwwww

Moooooooooooooo."

He made moo/low-ing cows' sounds and all the centaurs laughed.

Chiron continued, "We are much the opposite; we are graceful and elegant, regal almost, if you will." Okay, perhaps he was slightly arrogant.

Chiron professed, "Yet still, we have a connection to this lowly beast. After Daedalus finished the maze, they had to trap the Minotaur in there. It was a hellish fight. The beast had already grown big and wild, and had already developed quite a taste for the delicacy that is human flesh. It is said that because of the strength of the Minotaur, centaurs had to be hired to haul the beast into the maze. It took as many as ten to twenty of the strongest, biggest centaurs (known as the Centaurus) to draw, corner and bind the beast, dragging him inside the labyrinth. The Minotaur was unrelenting and would not allow itself to be unbound without biting and scratching at all the mighty Centauri. It seemed they could not release it without feeling the beast's wrath." The story had reached its climax; all the centaurs were figuratively eating it up.

Chiron cleared his throat. "Legend has it that the Centauri had to leave one of their own behind. He was a brave Centaurus named Cheiron. They gave him a whistle with magical properties. It is said to have belonged to Nike, the Greek Goddess of victory. They told my great grandfather that the whistle could only be blown when he had claimed victory over the Minotaur, otherwise blowing it might make a shrill sound that would instantly turn him deaf." The speaker stopped; whether this was for effect or he was taken aback is beyond the gods themselves. There was silence in the grove; the wind whistled lightly through the trees. Chiron was lost in thought, his eyes fixated on boughs swaying above as he stared into space.

"And as some of you have presupposed, well, Cheiron was my great grandfather."

There were whispers throughout the orchard as many centaurs began to gossip at once. Centaurs are very fond of gossip.

"The story from there is rather hazy since he was never seen or heard from again, " sighed Chiron. "But perhaps today we can change that."

Many centaurs began to talk at once, "What does he mean? "

"How is that possible? " shouted Pholus.

"Preposterous, " said one of Pholus' crew.

"WHOA, " shouted Chiron, and the rabble-rabble stopped.

"The legend goes on to say that the great beast tracked my great grandfather Cheiron through the labyrinth for years. He was unrelenting and, as you know, the Minotaur already had a taste for human flesh and, well, a centaur is half-human. He was wild, fierce and mean. My great grandfather knew he had only one chance; he had to outsmart the Minotaur. He descended into the lower depths of the labyrinth, veering left and twisting right. Eventually he ran out of maze and space. Cheiron knew blowing the whistle would instantly give him a disadvantage and probably lead to his death, so he set a trap for the Minotaur. As the beast rounded a corner, a trip-wire attached to a loose brick, which had been set by Cheiron, caused a landslide burying the Minotaur. Cheiron galloped to safety and blew Nike's whistle. The only problem was that although the Minotaur was buried, he was a fierce beast. Little by little, slowly he clawed his way out of the rubble. Cheiron had not actually achieved victory over the beast, he had blown the whistle prematurely. Nike who was a bit of a trickster herself, came down, but upon viewing that the Minotaur had not been defeated, decided to transport Cheiron into Daedalus and Icarus's tower. And because horses and centaurs can walk up stairs but not down them, it is there that he stands to this day."

Chiron stamped his hoof and two large centaurs appeared carrying a large trunk. They placed the trunk at Chiron's hooves and he announced, "For I solved the problem. Tomorrow we will finally rescue my great grandfather, if, of course, Delphi the Reverse Centaur will agree to help." Delphi felt himself flush and although he could not point to himself, as he had no human hands, his horse

mouth mouthed, "ME? "

Chiron signaled, several trumpets sounded and the trunk was opened. As the lid was lifted, inside was some kind of saddle. The saddle was odd looking and sort of looked like a backpack rigged with levers and pulleys. Delphi didn't understand. If centaurs could not walk down stairs how would this help?

As if reading his mind, Chiron answered, "I have built a reverse saddle. The strategy is simple: tomorrow we will sail to Crete where Delphi will climb the stairs wearing my reverse saddle; once at the top, my great grandfather Cheiron will climb into the saddle and you'll carry him down to safety."

Pholus and his cronies laughed. "He is weak, " replied one.

"He will fall, " guffawed another.

"SILENCE, " bellowed Chiron and shut down the young wild centaurs immediately. "You have had too much wine, " he scolded them. One slumped away with his tail between his legs.

"Will you help rescue my great grandfather? " Chiron requested. "You, and you alone, are the only centaur that could walk down those stairs, " Chiron continued.

"You know I would do anything for you, but I fear I am not strong enough, " muttered Delphi.

"YOU ARE STRONG ENOUGH, " replied Chiron. "The levers and pulleys will make it seem as if you are carrying nothing at all."

Delphi was nervous but finally agreed, so the next morning with hundreds of centaurs on a large barge, they sailed to Crete (it was not that far away) and Delphi put on the reverse saddle and slowly climbed the numerous steps of the great tower. He was not sure what he would find up there. He was hoping it wasn't a centaur skeleton. Delphi's weak human knees wobbled but he made it successfully all the way to the top and it was an awfully long climb.

The door creaked; as he slowly opened it, he didn't know what he would find behind the door. What he saw was an enormous Centaurus with a black coat that shone like armor. Delphi knelt before the noble creature. "Cheiron, I know you do not know me. I am Delphi the Reverse Centaur. I was sent to rescue you, but I fear I will never be able to carry you down the stairs without falling."

The great Centaurus nodded seeming to agree with Delphi. The reverse centaur felt defeated and asked if possibly Cheiron still had Nike's whistle. He informed Delphi he did not and Delphi began to slowly lose hope. All seemed to be slipping away, but Delphi remembered his teacher's words, "Sometimes our differences give us a distinct advantage over other creatures."

"I can walk down stairs, " Delphi informed the great Centaurus.

"While that maybe be true, you'll never be able to carry the likes of my horse frame, " Cheiron replied nobly.

Delphi remembered his teacher's other words, "The levers and pulleys will make it seem as if you are carrying nothing at all."

"At least get in the saddle. If I can't walk with you, I won't attempt to carry you down the stairs, " Delphi explained. After a short argument, the great Centaurus agreed to at least climb into the saddle and see if Delphi could walk with him on his back. The weight of the centaur's first hoof almost toppled Delphi entirely, but he managed to balance the weight. When the belly of the horse climbed across his back, Delphi feared it would break him, but he told himself to have faith in his teacher. He would not send me here to kill his great grandfather, he found himself reasoning. As the Centaurus drew his other leg over, it was as if somecentaur had flipped a magical switch and instantly gravity did not apply. Delphi felt his knees shake, then strengthen, and he stood up straight. He was amazed at how light the Centaurus was. He had to even look over his shoulder to make sure he had not vanished and was still there. Delphi hobbled across the room with the enormous Centaurus on his back.

"The saddle makes it so you weigh nothing at all, " Delphi informed the Centaurus.

"But you can barely walk, " Cheiron stated.

"I can barely walk normally, " Delphi explained.

"Oh, " Cheiron said in shock. "Well, how are you going to carry me down the stairs? "

"I imagine with great difficulty, but I can do it. I've been waiting for this my whole life, " the reverse centaur replied with a hint of humor.

"What if you fall? " the Centaurus asked.

"Then we shall both perish, " Delphi replied.

He approached the long, winding stairwell with a fire and energy he had never exuded, but it's fair to say by the hundredth step, Delphi was already in doubt. He felt an extreme pain in his shins and he hoped they wouldn't give out. Every step he took, his human calves strained, his human knees wobbled, he shook and shimmied, staggered and stumbled, but he refused to give up. He took it one step at a time and never thought of how many more there were to go. He thought of all the hate and fear he had received for being different. Both of these thoughts seemed to push him on whenever he felt he could walk no longer. The journey took the better part of a day, and Delphi had to stop dozens of times, but at midnight, Delphi staggered through the door of the great tower and received a hero's welcome. He had done it. Then how the centaurs loved him; the female centaurs crowded around him. Within days word had spread; all creatures, hydras, chimeras, griffins, those chthonic beings from the underworld, had heard the story of Delphi the Reverse Centaur. Even Zeus had sent Delphi a card congratulating him and a special magical charm that he wore around his neck. Delphi didn't have an easy life; now that he had fame and money, he divorced more than a few jealous fillies, but I guess the thing to take away from this legend is that because of his experience it changed his perspective on life. Never once did he feel left out or different again. On occasion when a centaur would try to make fun of him, he would reply, "I saved the legendary Cheiron from Daedalus' labyrinth. I am Delphi the Reverse Centaur, the only one of my kind. What have you done that makes you my equal? " Maybe Delphi became a little bit too arrogant, too. Perhaps, the thing to take away from this story is: Remember your struggles, and no matter how successful you get, don't think you're better than everycentaur or everyone else.

Joseph DeMarco

Unzen

An Extremity of Polar Opposites

Attached to Plastic Magnets;

A Walking Hypocrisy

Jogging underwater;

Weightless Gravity

Inside an Absolute Vacuum;

Unconscious Thought

Inside the Mainframe of a Super Computer;

A Penguin that Flies south for the Summer

Through a coal storm on a black and white TV;

Clocks melting backwards

Behind surreal sarcasm and cynicism

Somewhere between Time and Money;

Can't figure which is more of an illusion?

I thought I knew myself,

Turned out it was just an illusion

Performed by Society's conformity

With transparent masks;

I'm outta ink,

I'll write with blood

Till I pass out;

After that I'll keep writing in my head

Looking for the answer;

Where did I leave it?

Past lives

In between words and incidental incantations;

Where was my first clue?

In a book?

In a song?

In a poem?

Why can't I remember?

Why can't I find it?

'Trust your instinct, ' says The voice;

'Instinct is drawn to the force that binds us all.'

The line 'Miles To Go Before I Sleep'

Pops into my head,

So we shall start with

Frost

Joseph DeMarco

We Can'T Work It Out

Every time I bring up the subject,
We get caught in the loop
perpetually.
It is as if we are frozen in this amber
forever.
forced to relive the same argument,
time and time again
'How could you do this to me? '

Opinions matter not,
Neither does the McCarthy/Lennon credo,
'Try to see it my way, '
There is only our way,
One Way.
We cannot see what our eyes perceive,
As the truth.
We are occluded from,
Third Person point of view
like a reader who can't quite
understand the vocabulary
Can't quite comprehend,
'You said you loved me? '

Each step closer toward you,
Pushes you further away.
I tiptoe down the hall
Hearing your whisper's call.
I dare not answer
Talking is a waste of my time,
'So you woke up one morning and decided you didn't love me anymore? '

The answers are only slightly more painful.
The questions like a Gordian knot in my heart.
Here comes the loop,
'How could you do this to me? '
We are trapped,
The only way out is to leave this place.

Wil Wheaton

If I were Sheldon Cooper
You would be my Wil Wheaton
My personal nemesis
buried on Planet Genesis
My Wrath of Khan
Put this Fish in your Ear
It is not parasitic
and in no way will control
your thought process
It's just a poem
About how I feel
lost in translation
How you treat me
the meaning all but extinct
just like your feelings
desensitized by cartoons and video games
that is why I hate you
'You task me, '
with broken promises
'You task me, '
And today I shall be set free
For none of this is real
I Wil close my eyes
And nothing Wil have changed at all.

Joseph DeMarco

You're Confusing Freedom With Always Getting What You Want

They just don't get it.
They never will see.
They just don't get it,
you can't teach the GOP.

Joseph DeMarco

Zen

Frightful courage
heavenly bad
pessimistic optimism
happily sad
Zen monk buddist priest
philosophic religion
pleasantly painful
colorless prism
Green colored stop sign
Oxymoron's twin
ageless bartender
with a twist of dry gin
hopefully hopeless
Paradise Found
If a tree falls in the forest
And no one's around
Does it make a sound?

By: Joseph DeMarco

Joseph DeMarco