

Poetry Series

Thomas Coston
- poems -

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Thomas Coston()

A Commie Grows Up In Brooklyn

Who is this fool preaching socialism to our youth?
A wild-eyed man whose hair stands on end
Spittles class envy with pastrami breath.
Everything is Free!Free!Free!
Which is easy for one to speak,
Only fools and tools think money grows on trees.

He is a modern-day messiah to those on the left.
A man with a silver tongue that spittles with every breath.
A work ethic this man has never known.
Even a commune couldn't abide his lazy bones.
For Pete's sake, he didn't earn a paycheck until he was forty years old!
Government is all this man knows.
Now he's a rich politician who owns three homes?

This commie who honeymooned in Moscow has all the answers.
He's going to redistribute your wealth to all the teat squawkers.
A modern-day politburo with centralized power
Will ensure misery equal to Venezuelan dumpster divers.
America will no longer be that fabled promised land
Because Bernie Sanders and his ilk will make damn sure of that.

Thomas Coston

A Firefly Symphony

As the sun falls over the horizon
And the sky dims to a theater lull
We sit outside on eventides
To enjoy nature's show

No ticket is needed for this affair
The swamp provides for free
All you need is a front porch and a chair
Maybe a glass of beer, or some sweet tea

Sit back, relax and enjoy this occasion
As nature's symphony begins a cacophony of sounds
You'll witness God's creatures take the stage
It'll make the irate calm down

Listen to the cicadas with their lengthy vibrato,
The crickets chime-in with their concertos
Owls hoot as if on a jug
Bullfrogs bellow in their baritone songs
While smaller ones harmonize with melodious croaks

Then come the fireflies with their light show
Multitudes blinking a neon fan dance
Hovering around ancient bearded oaks
Playing hide and seek in its spanish moss.
Lord, there is nothing more peaceful than a home in a swamp.

Thomas Coston

A Gorgon Horror At The Crumbles

It's getting dark. Is that a distant rumble?
I'm getting goose-bumps from the prospect of thunder.
Did the temperature drop? It suddenly got cold.
For what time I have left, it's hard to be bold

The crime I committed, and yes, it was heinous
And for that, I'm about to be hanged.
But to prosecute my execution, in these conditions,
Is more than I can take.

Oh, I don't deserve pity, that can't be denied.
But to dance at the gallows to a thunder's clap,
While lightning flashes my last gasp;
Now that's irony at its best.

Yes, she was my mistress and with child.
But to leave my wife, I couldn't abide.
So, instead of leading a double life,
I decided to commit the most odious of crimes.

I enticed my moll with promises of love;
An elopement to some foreign land.
But to stage this getaway, we needed a place to stay.
Somewhere, no one would pry

The plan was simple enough:
I needed a cottage with a tidal rush.
To commit this deed might entail screams;
Shingle Beach would do just fine

So blind was her love that she didn't see the club.
The blunt end of an axe I did swing.
With a thud she splayed on the rug.
So vicious, her hands twitched in a pool of blood

Realization had come to pass, I have a difficult task:
The dismemberment and disposal of my spinster lass.
As you could tell by the mess, I underestimated the rest.

A plan, as everyone knows, I half-assed.

I built a big fire and stoked the flames,
To begin the ghoulish work ahead of me.
I sawed off her head and threw it on a bed
Of glowing cinders that popped and hissed.

It was then, I witnessed the din, of a Gorgon horror.
Writhing hair waved in serpentine flames biting venomous strikes.
I recoiled from this attack, and while stepping back,
Her dead eyes opened with a Medusa stare.

And with that, a thunderous clap,
Coupled with lightning that shook the whole cabin.
I ran with a scream into the pouring night;
Not to return until daylight.

That's , now I go to the gallows pole
For the whole world knows my sins,
And soon I will pay a repentance price
Dancing in Hell to thunder and lightning

Thomas Coston

A Park Bench Ghost

There is a neighborhood park a couple of blocks away
Where denizens stroll and children play
As squirrels scamper, stamp and chatter
Protesting that this is their domain

'Tis a bowl of pleasure and sometimes pain
Where laughter wafts a quarter mile away
Punctuated by a high pitched cry of a siren whine
To stutter and stop from a mother's touch

Down the steps and to the right
There is a park bench situated under a light
And when the weather permits
You'll see an old man sitting there until sunset

No one sees this gentleman
They pass him by without a care
They'll sit next to him without a glance
To say hello or inquire is too much to ask

He is a ghost to the denizens of the park
A wayward spirit whose time is sparse
He is just a shadow on a bench
A being whose sunset has come to an end

Thomas Coston

A Soliloquy Of Sighs

Gone - gone, I sit in darkness and cold
As I watch moonlight shadow the falling snow
My breath palpable upon the night's air
Dissipates before the next exhale

This room once filled with gaiety and warmth
Whisper remembrances stilled by time and thought
I feel her presence, I smell her perfume
My love, my life, my friend - my wife

Would you know these aged hands that once caressed?
Or the love in these tired eyes laden with worn and care?
My body infirmed by years of toil
A mind beguiled by memories long sought

I remember conversations we , what wit!
I recite them aloud and laugh and laugh.
The joy of your words brings me to tears

Until a soliloquy of sighs sings me to sleep

Thomas Coston

An Aged Vessel

By T.L. Coston

Ah, who is this stranger staring back at me
An imposter mocking youth and vitality
Eyes once bright and fair
Are now creviced within folds of an aged man

A lifetime seen through the prism of self
Weighted in experience; Leaden with guilt
I see the boy trapped behind hazel guile
He, who was once fair, I barely recognize

I see him standing askance in a stare
And beside him others who I am unaware
They are multitudes spanning time and space
Imprisoned in a vessel not long for this race

The hour glass has passed the pessimist test
Soon, there will be time for plenty of rest
For, this old man is about to give up the ghost
And join those in another human host

Thomas Coston

An Autumnal Requiem

As I look down upon the valley in the misty morn
God's censer dissipates as the sunshine shorns
From His cathedral, a bucolic majesty is borne
An autumnal requiem whispers a melancholic song

Spangled hues of florid splendor reveal His masterpiece
Solemn beauty attest to our Lord's majestic feat
Leaves of deciduous trees rain down around me
I close my eyes in this rustic fragrance and breathe

From these heights the trees are half barren and cold
Apples have turned brown, shriveled and mold
Soon the valley will succumb to Death's enfold
Another autumnal requiem will dissipate - nevermore

Thomas Coston

An Impeachment Eve Soliloquy

Now is the time for calumnies most foul,
When inflamed passions of disaffected malcontents
Shall besmirch character and country for votes unfavored.
'Tis responsible to protect party and power from hayseeds
Who seek liberty guaranteed in an aged document, outdated and unwanted.
A Constitution - a mere rag - unworthy of the least menstruation.
But what casualty is truth when one must suffer imbeciles for the greater good?
Words as false as the teeth that rattle in my mouth shall not be impaired.
Words shall topple a president as a sword smites a king on battlefield, or blade
on scaffold.
A bloodless coup committed not in shadows, but openly and most false.
I toast my Democratic confederates. A cloudy chardonnay can be rancid or most
tasteful.
May our fermented hate harvest a fruitful vintage!

Thomas Coston

Apples And Snow

I wandered through the countryside
To escape the pain of emotional tides
To be free from disappointments over the years
Looking for a sanctum to ease my mind

An abandoned farmhouse providentially found
A brook with clean water rushes abound
Fields scarred with stubbled rows
Poke through a blanket of freshly laid snow

No more fruit does the old, apple tree bear
A hopeful harvest to last this winter's dread
No more tears can I shed
Every indication points that I should be here

I'm barely existing in this icy cave
Where a single furnace heats my way
By miracle, one vent keeps me warm
I believe God knows where I am

I can't escape thoughts of food
Daydreaming about everything, even apples stewed
Lamb chops, turkey, a regular holiday feast
This I would enjoy with my husband, Steve

It didn't take long for the countdown to end
I ate my last apple, now starvation begins
Weak from lack of food, I can't make it to the brook
How am I going to get out of here?

In the mirror, I saw a ghastly sight
My drawn and haggard face gave me a fright
Clumps of hair fall from my head

If I stay here, I will die

The snow is all the sustenance I have
My head and stomach aches
I'm dizzy and lightheaded; starving is a painful thing
But don't worry, God sees everything

The nights are longer and extremely cold
I lay down to pray for my soul:
Dear God, please save me.
I'm trying, but I don't know what to do.

As my mind drifts away in hope of better days
I envisioned a miracle of God's grace
That the old apple tree bloomed
Resplendent with fruit, here, in January

Thomas Coston

Celestial Spider

Powerful blows resound through the sky
Tears in a blackened veil reveal a bolt of light
High above a celestial spider mends the firmament
As torrential tears of rage makes a descent

Bellows from this struggle emit gusts of wind
Diligent, the spider exerts
Bombardments of light tatters its heavenly web;
Yet, he persistently works

A deity perturbed at the arachnids toil
Strikes his celestial mandible.
Severing the cloak, sunshine appears
The conflict comes to a close.

Thomas Coston

Children Of The Terror

Listen to their wails waft through the night
Sugar-coated slogans designed not to slight
For humanity and mother earth are their domain
Liberty subordinate to a collective complaint

Fraternity is bestowed on their terms
Affluence and independence are scarlet letters
Misery loves company, so the saying goes
Oh, these wretches are determined to gloat

Equality of outcome is their battle cry
Justice perverted to assuage historical slights
Tearing down statues that offend their sight
Institutions burned down if they don't comply

Today's Jacobins oil the guillotine blade
As Sans-Culottes blacken their face
Freedom of speech and association is their foil
Fascism projected to hide their scandals

Government is their God; centralized and true
While Christianity should be outlawed if not outright sued
Children of the Terror: a legacy of an enlightened age
When socialist propaganda educates the human race

Thomas Coston

Complaints Of An Ingrate

Capitalist pigs! Taking advantage of the working man!
Where is my Uber? And why is my smartphone so slow?
The game starts in an hour! I'm going to be late for the show!
Damn these capitalist pigs!

Why can't I find a seat? Where are my comrades in this sea of humanity?
Damn these capitalist pigs enjoying themselves at my expense.
Why are these appetizers so high? And what is a health insurance tax?
Damn these money-grubbing, capitalist pigs.

There must be fifty beers from which to choose.
Where is Schlitz and Coors?
Damn these capitalist pigs and their microbrews.
Always raping my wallet. I'm tired of getting screwed!

One of these days, socialism is going to show them all.
When these bourgeois companies are taken over.
Bartender! Over here! I'll have another!
Damn these capitalist pigs and their pursuit for a dollar.

Thomas Coston

Cries Of A D.C. Clique

What is that noise?

'Tis the wails of the self-righteous and entitled.
A loudmouthed rabble of a D.C. clique
And their squawking minions searching for a tit.

Power over others is their main concern.
Bureaucracy is the life blood for these twerps.
Liberty and equality under the law is for suckers,
As these grifters laugh from the bowels of that stinkin sewer.

They wave the Constitution in our face,
While they pervert those articles to advance a Marxist disgrace.
Language has been bastardized to deceive;
To propagandize voters into believing they are aggrieved.

Lip-smackers around the world bewail America's success,
Because we elected a president who's looking out for our interest.
Citizens of the world is a stinking joke
'Tis a slogan for globalists to slap on the communist yoke.

To all those central planners wailing at the sky,
All I have to say is, I didn't know snowflakes could cry.
That a president had the audacity to make America great
And exposed the Swamp and the traitors that reside

Thomas Coston

Cry March And Let Slip The Dogwoods

The month that is March, how do I know you are here?
My eyes water and sniffles appear
The dogwoods bloom and pollen fills the air
A sneezing fit renders me incoherent and unaware

A tissue, a tissue I shout aloud
Hurry before I snot on those all about
Spring has assaulted my nostril hairs
Approach with a hanky if you dare

My body buckles with every hitch and delay
Followed by sneezes that won't abate
How I curse you, the month of March

And the dogwoods with every breath they assault

Thomas Coston

Death Eatin' A Cracker

Horrified is the least I can say
When words fail to convey
The shock and dismay
Of a friend whose condition
Was worthy of a mortician
Just days away from the grave

Pallid and taut
His sockets blackened and wrought
From abuses that brought to a nought
A life once vibrant and gay
During youth's florid days
Rendering decades of memories lost

Indulgences of every character
Licentious beyond parameters
Diseased by everything amoral and contrarian
A wastrel's life should never be sought
A righteous path, he never thought
Now his aspect is Death eatin' a cracker

Thomas Coston

Isolation And Madness

Did you expect a slobbering fool,
Ranting and raving with spit and drool?
A wild-eyed man whose thoughts are scattered at best
Dressed in his own filth and basking in stench

Maybe I am that man, whom all consider insane
This room suggest my faculties are suspect at best
To be isolated from the general population for fear of murderous intent
No, it is to protect me from the unseen that makes me sick

Oh yes, this is the cause for all my troubles and woes
All these devices that penetrate my brain
Electromagnetic waves that induce headaches
I had to get away - to escape - from this modern-day inferno

Oh, the mountains were so picturesque, and the quiet gave me rest
A haven from a technological assault, few could understand or know
I began to feel like back in the day before this cursed age
Where ubiquitous phones turned people into slaves

This was heaven for sometime, but humans are social
As we all converse, laugh and sing
Interaction with another is a necessary thing
Without it we would go...dare I say - insane

But I was fine for awhile
Conversing in my head wasn't something to dread
But to hear a voice without a muffled sound
Found me talking aloud, and what conversations I had with myself!

It wasn't until things went awry
A shadow in the corner came alive
At first a blob without definition or shape
But, through time, morphed into something I could not mistake

This being - this devil - an affront to nature
Assumed my aspect, tone and gestures
Until, I could not distinguish spirit from flesh
For this horror mirrored my image much to my distress

He sat there for sometime, studying my every move
As I did him, each staring at the other not knowing what to do
This went on for days and nights
He and I eyeing each other, measuring - waiting

It was he who broke the silence
I was startled by the sound of his voice
Years of being alone can cripple a mind
Hearing from another made me want to cry

It didn't take long to know his intent
My doppelganger wanted more than a cabin
He had grand designs on the human race
While I stay imprisoned in this sanctuary

All his evil would be in my name
Death and destruction would be mine to blame
And he laughed and laughed at the prospect
Of a hapless fool stranded on a mountain in a cabin getaway

I could not allow this evil to abide
My doppelganger had to die
But how do you kill a shadow turned to flesh and bone?
Easy, with a knife and strokes that are hard and bold

My doppelganger laughed and cried
As I plunged over and over to watch him die
Blood splattered on my face and eyes
Half blinded I slipped and slide in his spectral gore

It didn't take long for a knock on my door
For a loner is cause for much concern
My neighbors kept a watchful eye
It didn't help when a fight wakens the whole mountainside

I was arrested for murder in the first degree
Fratricide the papers decreed
They say I did my brother in
That the demon was actually my twin

I was judged criminally insane

Because all my protestations went up in flames
For the demon tested with my DNA
So now I sit here in my stench, drooling and spittling my innocence

Thomas Coston

Legend Of The Pimpernel Skunk

I have become a hostage in my own home.
A bandit with a distinguished plume
Has turned my backyard into his throne.
A menace that has ruined my prized jewel -
My luscious garden ravished and bored,
Even my garbage is turned and strewed
His calling card a vaporous stench
Sends shivers through and through.

This polecat with it's weaponized glands
Lurks along a conquered periphery.
To terrorize and raid at its opportunistic best,
He hides amongst another as invasive as he,
A flower whose sap can cause a rash,
His fellow menace - the pimpernel weed

I have set numerous traps
But this weasel keeps besting me.
I'm at my wits end about this polecat.
And now a legend has begun to take and bleed.
About the follies of a hapless man
And the Pimpernel Skunk's audacious deeds.

Thomas Coston

Little Girl Buried In A Rum Keg

I was strolling down Ann Street in ole Beaufort town
When darkness rolled in, a seaside wind bellowed through vacant halls
Alone, I was caught in a maelstrom of dirt and leaves
Under protest was pushed and shoved with relative ease

This abuse did not abate until the gate of The Old Burying Ground
There in a window of a clapboard church
A singular light pulsated and lurched
I thought it odd how this rhythmic throb mimicked a beating heart

It was then, a giggle descended from the tombs of moldered lore
As I questioned what I heard, there echoed a third
This I could not ignore
There on the gate, a beaded necklace laid
"What an odd place for a trinket," I thought

It was then the gate swung in. At this I cried aloud
I hesitated once, maybe twice, then looked to the rolling sky
Silhouetted in the fore, great oaks groaned
Bearded sentinels wary, embraced their charge

As I entered the grounds, the smell of rum assaulted my nose
As soon as I recovered, a flash darted from stone to stone
It was a girl, around ten, if I had to guess, dressed in her bedtime gown
I saw her look back as she darted down the path
What's a child doing in a graveyard at this hour?

She wasn't far away,
I could hear her play
Laughing - laughing all the while
As I came around the bend
I spied her bent over a toy-ridden tomb

She shot up with a smile
Then bade me goodbye
Then faded in the nighttime air
What just happened? Where did she go?

I looked around but no one was there
This couldn't have happened! There is no way!
Did I just see a ghost?
The smell of liquor dissipated as I stumbled about
Shocked, I bent to read
a wooden marker with a simple epitaph:

Little Girl Buried in a Rum Keg

Enough said

Thomas Coston

Noel In The Holler

As the sun kisses the dusk to bid a nights pleasant dream
And Winter's crystalline blanket blinks its pinkish-blue hues
A few leaves cling to a branch in reverent stubbornness
While a gust of wind whistles through its wooden chimes

I sit on my porch on this blessed night
Wondering about the magis wonderful sight
Of a star portending God's gift to mankind
A distant flame of hope for the lonely and forgotten

Across the holler on a distant hill
A cabin light flickers without concomitant cry of a whippoorwill
Silent are these nights when the cold air bites
Even more so on this holiday tide

Faint was the sound of a distant song
Of a neighbor's melodious wail
About the heralded birth of Jesus Christ
And redemption for sins for which we must prevail

As I stopped rocking in my chair
I closed my eyes and listened with care
As I wiped a couple of tears away
And thanked our Lord for this Christmas Day

Thomas Coston

Onward They March

The rain was heavy as the troops slogged through the mud
Thunder, lightning and the rumble of guns flash through the night
Onward they march, through desolate space
Skeletal bodies and branches litter the way

The sick smell of war permeates the air
The groans of the dying weighing on their minds
Onward they march to the front lines
Silent they go, towards the fight

A procession of the wounded makes their way
Some cry for their mothers; others stare into space
Onward they march to the back lines
"May God be with you, " soldiers whisper as they limp by

The heavens cry as His creation dies
As war scars the earth and mankind
Onward they march, towards the fight
Praying to make the back lines alive

Thomas Coston

Paris Commune Of 1871

Paris is on fire! Roiling smoke blackens the sky
Wild-eyed revolutionaries run through the streets
Chanting slogans of a utopian life

Arsonists laugh with maniacal screams
Put buildings, books and antiquities to flame
Vandals topple statues with cheers of glee; nothing is sacred

An asymmetrical war against Western civilization
When murderers and thieves become the police
And doctrinaires rule committee chairs

Coercion and force destroy the old order
While nuns and priests are murdered in the streets
And the bourgeoisie flee the city

France must kill these Parisian rats
A vermin that reek of 1793
When fanatics terrorized the countryside in murderous ecstasy

A big relief, the army breached Thiers Wall - unopposed
The Jacobin rats scatter enmasse
Bureaucrats flee while others seek the banner of martyrdom

Social revolutionaries throw up barricades
But the army brushed them aside
Justice was made with mass graves; thousands who justly died

Marx, Engels and others of that ilk
Praised and mourned the Paris Commune
A model for dictatorship of the proletariat and social disorder

Thomas Coston

Primrose And Pride

There goes Youth skipping down a winding path
Urchins, how they are amused by their own shadows and glances
The day is night is short
Ah, Youth, your specter is underfoot

The path is primrose; promises around the bend
Flowers bloom, birds sing, and joys are your friend
The melody of life whispers in your ears
Seeing nothing; fearing nothing; dancing with yourself

Sing - Sing - Sing.
The world was meant for you
Laugh - Laugh - Laugh
Trouble is not your muse

Briars and burrs don't hinder this path
The trail doesn't river an impasse
And when the music lags and shadows become longer

Primrose and Pride dances until six feet under.

Thomas Coston

Protect The Witch Bottle

Come over here, son.
There are things that have to be done,
For my time is near,
And I have to make clear,
Instructions that must be followed to the letter.

My voice is weak and strained.
May God give me the strength to articulate
The dire straits of family and farm.
So, please heed my warnings, dear son.
Kneel and listen to what I have to say.

Over by the hearth,
Under a flagstone that is dark,
Lies a talisman that is filled
With bent nails, a lock of hair and urine secured;
'Tis a witch bottle to ward off evil spells.

You laugh, but evil does exist and so does the witch,
And you'll have to deal with her after I'm dead.
Decades ago, she showed up on this farm
Told me to vacate, or she would do me harm.
This land belonged to her and no other.

I defied this old crone
And she promised what was forewarned.
I nearly caught my death,
And the farm fell into neglect,
Until I procured that bottle for protection.

It was a matter of days
When the old crone came
Knocking on my door, pleading and wailing for mercy,
For the spell boomeranged with spectacular cruelty.
Pitiful was this witch, who begged for forgiveness.

I gave her none and told her to be gone,
That a talisman protects this farm
From now until the day I depart.

This land belongs to me and mine for generations to come.
So, may your ill-cast spell remind you of who's the boss.

Listen ... as then, as I do now,
I can feel her prowl the vicinity of this farm.
She knows my death is at hand,
So you must refill the talisman
With your urine and hair to keep our legacy intact.

Do as I say and don't delay.
For the old crone is outside waiting.
I can feel her approach; she'll soon be at the door
My chest is heavy from panic - nay, horror!
She's listening for my last gasp and then she'll....

Thomas Coston

Rage Against The Republic

Oh, calamity! When beliefs refuted by ungentle slight
Hearts soaked in hatred; enflamed by righteous might
Listen to the howls upon the night air
As entitled children scream for what is theirs

Through cities they march with open mouths and hands
Demanding rights that exists in fairylands
Sisters Greed, Envy and Paranoia sing melodies of discontent
Nasty and gratuitous, petitioners rave against their fellowman

RAGE for monies ill-gotten gain
RAGE for death of innocent babes
RAGE for power over disfavored dissent
RAGE for death of the republic and all for which it stands

Call to arms! Call to arms! Puppet masters scream with delight
Special interests gather and sew quilts of progressive rights
Evolution lives and breathes amongst the enlightened
Socialist revolution is the answer to their plight

RAGE against science; consensus is all we need
RAGE against Christians and that superstitious breed
RAGE against the Founders with all their sins

RAGE for death of the republic and all for which it stands

Thomas Coston

Ridden By A Boo Hag

I saw her. God help me, I saw her.
At first, I thought it was some terrible dream,
Paralysis prevented me from screaming,
As my chest heaved from the weight of this hag
Who fed upon my breath

To describe this horror
At the expense of not sounding sober
Defies reason if not sanity.
For how can one convey this monstrosity
With any hope of being taken seriously?

For weeks, each morning I awoke
I felt dead tired, almost broken,
From want of a good night's rest
That defied all logic at best,
Since, I lie down at a quarter to ten.

The other night, as I labored in sleep,
I awoke to find this fiend
Whose lidless eyes stared into mine
Bulging from a skinless mien,
Exposed muscles, sinews, and pulsating veins.

She puckered and sucked each breath
As she rode my chest
Her grey hair undulating in a most unnatural state.
It was then that I began to understand
That it wasn't my breath, but my skin she might take.

But night had waned; it was almost daybreak
The Boo Hag must return to her old skin
Or perish from within
Being exposed to the sun, she will explode;
So this vampiric legend goes.

It is up to you to stay up and wait.
I will be used as bait
For when she comes to feed,

Her shedded skin, you must seek,
For this vessel is how she deceives.

Salt and pepper is the weapon of lore.
A seasoned skin will reject its host.
The Boo Hag can no longer hide,
Day or night, without her guise.
She'll be vulnerable in her natural state.

It is almost a quarter to ten
'Tis time for me to go to bed
Try and stay awake
For if we fail, and the Boo Hag escapes,
It'll be my skin, she eventually takes.

Thomas Coston

Terror By The Gaslight Post

By T.L. Coston

Oh, I do know the grasping fingers of fright
When venturing into darkness
Alone without friend and scarcity of light
For the imagination can overwhelm a weakened heart
In my advanced age, that night I almost departed

In the old harbor when the first cold air bites
A fog rolled in and the buoy bell chimed
I clasped my coat to silence the chill
And listened to my footfalls on the cobblestone road
And listened - and listened for footfalls on the cobblestone road

Opaque was the night on this sojourn
Where even shadows hid from their dark overlord
And every sense tingled with vexation
Indeed, every sound amplified and threatened
Every sound a menace

In the distance about a block away
A gaslight flickered - waxed and waned
I was attracted to this old post as a moth to a flame
For this glow welcomed a wary traveler
Ahh, it assuaged a desperate, wary traveler

It was then I picked up the pace
And began to chuckle at my dismay
For a man of my advanced age
To be scared of spooks and ghouls?
Indeed, to be scared of spooks and ghouls

It was then He stepped out from the dark
Cloaked in a top hat and inverness cape
The gaslight did not reveal his face
There we stood staring at each other for sometime
Nay, we stared at each other for a long-long time

Terror - if it can be named - suspended time and space

This specter's eyes burned with immense hate
Oh, how my body ached to escape back into the dark
To run - to run with all my strength
To fly - to fly away from this fiend

It was then the fog crept in
Then darkness joined them
These two coquettes embraced this fiend
This menace with hateful eyes
Who preyed upon a frightened mind

As the three danced around the gaslight post
I ducked and ran with my head bowed low
Their laughter shrill and hollow cut to the bone
Echoed down the cobblestone road
Mocking an old man, who ran and ran, down the cobblestone road

Thomas Coston

The Drip

A plague, I say, this tormentor of mind and thought
This darkness whispers transgressions; inconsequential rot
He caresses my brow; evoking distant slights
Exhuming memories entombed, forgotten ... cast-off.

Thief!Raider of sepulchres! Ghoul feeding off misery and discontent!
You prey upon my conscience with soulless intent
This drip, drip, drip laced with a Chinaman's laugh
Provokes self-recriminations; embarrassing gaffes

Alone, in restaurants, in public places
Your touch - your evil doesn't discriminate
A flash, a cry, then a subtle glance
Hoping and praying no one heard my penitence

Pedestrians startled by this damnable quirk
Pick up pace and disappear with furtive concern
Oh, you enjoy making me look the fool
A madman one step from the rubber room.

Drip, you're a monster, be thy named
I firmly declare, you will not win at this game
Though you may haunt taped corridors,

My sanity firmly bars that cursed door

Thomas Coston

The Ghost Ship Of New Bern

Calm - eerily calm was the Neuse on that September night
Barely a wave rippled the first, full moon's light
Alone, I stood watching and waiting for what? I didn't know
Listening - anticipating on New Bern's shore

Minutes seemed like hours, and yet I tarried;
Anchored was I, waiting and waiting
Till the night's dew wetted my feet and cold began to bite
Finally, a whispered scent stilled my shivers, and bumps turned into fright

A distant flicker grew with each wave slapping - slapping New Bern's shore.
Closer it came, this flaming shadow, odorous of burnt wood and flesh.
Silently, the pulsating orb approached, casting a hellish hue
It was then, the full moon revealed the ghost ship of yore

On deck, shadows of Palatine emigrants writhed in flames
Yet, neither ship nor soul was consumed
Nor a crackle of fire or piteous plea were heard as they sailed by
Wave upon wave slapping - slapping New Bern's shore.

Thomas Coston

The Highwayman Rides Tonight

Sit young man, and listen to this tale
For the time is short and fate prevails
You ask why you are here
I too wondered that many years ago,
As I sat in your spot and listened to an old fellow's woe

I see you're confused, as I once was too
You were compelled, and as for that I pity you
For your purpose is intertwined with mine
It'll be a ghastly play we're destined to make tonight

Notice we sit in the Highwayman's Pub with fireplace aglow
Look around, no patrons, only shadows move to and fro
Listen - nary a whisper or a sound
Only the crackle and pop that emits from that infernal mouth

How I dread the hour, for the time is near
So I'll make haste and explain as to why you are here
A witness to my death; that is your role
You'll watch as the dreaded Highwayman takes my soul

Ah, your eyes widen, and a shiver runs down your back
You want to run, but you can't
No, you'll sit and listen, as I once did
As did my predecessor and all the unfortunates before him

You wonder why I came here, knowing my doom
I tried to stay away, but fate knows no ruse
So, with a heavy heart and a shaky hand
I'll relate as to how this infamy shall end

Many years ago, I followed my predecessor out that very door
A distance kept as I was forewarned
I remember there was no wind with a full moon bright
Leaves sparsely fell on that autumn night

The old man's gait was cautious, yet sprite
His eyes darted from left and to the right
His aged hand clasped a weathered coat at the throat

His breath quick and palpable from the cold

I dashed across the churchyard and through the cemetery gate
Tripping and falling onto a freshly laid grave
I can still remember the smell of dried leaves and moist earth
And the sweat that saturated my shirt

A giant oak stood over the hill, and to the right
The old man hesitated when it came into sight
I remember the urgency and the fright in his eyes
It was then he picked up his stride

Suddenly, I heard a snort and a neigh
It was he, the Highwayman, silhouetted on his bay
He drew his sword, then spurred his steed
At that, the old man screamed

The ground shook as hooves pounded the road
Sparks flew as shoes struck stone
The spectral animal flared a heavy breath
As horse and rider bore down on that poor, old man

Run, Old Man! Run! That's what I screamed
My legs frozen from this horrifying scene
I clasped my mouth and prayed to God
Please Lord set this unfortunate free

I watched the old man run with all his might
His wisp of gray hair flailing in the moonlight
Askance he looked over his shoulder
Only to find the Highwayman coming closer

To the tree! To the tree! I yelled not knowing why
And indeed the old man seemed to have it insight
For with purpose he bowed his balding head
And strained his arms and legs with all he had

To the Tree! To the Tree! I waved to the goal
Fifty yards and your home!
To the Tree! To the Tree! You're almost there!
He's going to make it! He's going to make it! I declared

It was then, horse and rider picked up the pace
And just like that, the distance weren't so great
Closing, the Highwayman's sword glinted; prepared
I cringed, as the demon's laughter filled the air

The old man looked back measuring his fate
It was then he stumbled and fell on his face
I gasped in cannot be real
Get up! Get up!The demon is on your heels!

My predecessor picked himself up and ran
Blood streamed down his forehead and hands
Twenty yards and then ten
Yes!Yes!You're going to make it old man!

And just then as he made it to the tree
He turned around inexplicably
Holding out his arms and exposing his breast
Surely this can't be a taunt, or a jest.

The Highwayman's steed slid to a halt
Gravel sprayed the old man's dirty clothes
There predator and prey stood under a large bough
Not a word either one did spout

The spectral thief pointed his sword to the branch
At this the old man did glance
Down came the weapon with full force
Cleaving the old man gut to throat

The Highwayman dismounted his steed
As my predecessor fell to his knees
The demon stood over his prey
While watching his victim's entrails splay

Hot tears stung my cheeks
Get away from him!You demon thief!
My anger turned to wrath
For a weapon, I picked up a branch

Running through the cemetery, I gave a banshee scream

The Highwayman then turned towards me
He pointed his sword at my branch
And then gave an awful laugh

A mist poured from a hollow in the tree
Engulfing all three
And as I neared the scene of the crime
They disappeared into the night

I looked around in disbelief
Evidence is what I need
And to reaffirm this grisly act
Blood saturated the grass

Why did you stop? I cried out in vain
You had him won the game.
And at that instance I looked up at the bough
Only to see where a rope had burnt its bark

So, now it's time for us to play our part
Finish your beer for we must get a start
Remember to keep your distance, don't fall behind
For tonight is the night the Highwayman rides.

Thomas Coston

The Ides Of March

Here we are, on an auspicious day
When friend and foe alike,
Ponder the ambitions of men and to what depths they will descend,
And the sins they brush aside.

'Tis a day, unlike any day when tyrants should reflect on kind
For on the Ides of March, a soothsayer bade
As Caesar brushed him aside.
But it was only mid-day and the Senate awaits
And the prophecy will abide.

Thomas Coston

The Mexican Beast

Yonder, over valley and streams, a faint billow can be seen
Unnatural is this gait, slithering through nature's embrace
Songs from fauna and flora whisper on the breeze
Undeterred - unsuspected, nature's grace

Vibrations, a distant bellow quickens the air
Wildlife notices, run, BEWARE!
Faint at first and then distinct
It is a roar. A roar of The Beast.

On it comes, louder and louder
Till all is shaking and calling its name
The Beast, The Beast, The Beast,
Creatures great and small cower and hide
Except those who desperately want to ride
The Beast, The Beast, The Beast...

Clinging to the monster's back and side
Predator and prey hold on and ride
The Beast, The Beast, The Beast...
Through Mexico to northern way
The best and brightest gaze on; don't delay
The Beast, The Beast, The Beast...

The gate is door is wide
Paradise is on the other side
The Beast, The Beast, The Beast...

Traitors and Priest will be their guide
A Democratic constituency will reside
The Beast, The Beast, The Beast...
The land of milk and honey that is what they're told
As the taxpayer teat shrivels and folds

The Beast, The Beast, The Beast...

Thomas Coston

The Old Woman And The Whipping Post

Axles squeak and wheels rumble
As multitudes shuffle and mumble
Heading to ole Winston town
On down the old plank road.

It's an affair for families to beware
For a wretch is about to be scourged.
That before these courthouse steps
Justice projects, shadowing the end of the old plank road.

'Tis a carnival of the pious
Where the merry and innocent riot.
A Sabbath of penitence - Nay, probity
As the righteous inflict veracity; unto sinners - goad.

"Bring out the Stranger! " the crowd brayed,
"The sun is at its more delay! "
For this community of Friends shall make amends.
Ah, but only God should punish this poor, old soul.

The courthouse doors opened with a thrust
A disheveled, old woman did Justice lug.
The crowd fell mouths agape.
This aged spinster will not survive the knout!

The bewildered, old woman looked around - aghast.
Her eyes widened when doom cast
A monument that ails the wicked and diseased.
She then cried a piteous scream.
Behold the Whipping Post!

The old woman collapsed on the courthouse steps.
But Justice held tight with ungentle caress.
"Mercy! Mercy! " She spittled upon a dirty, tattered dress;
But pity isn't mete at the Whipping Post

Chains rattled iron rings, hoisting this repentant upon her toes.
The back of her dress ripped open; flesh exposed
From out of the crowd came her torment.

A monstrous silhouette shadowed the Whipping Post.

With a crack came a horrific cry.

The crowd echoed her woe as flesh tore from rawhide.

Blood trickled down a striped, flayed back

Each lash begat a moan; each shook the Whipping Post.

"Enough!Enough! " The crowd cried

As the old woman collapsed and died

What have we done? What did we do?

Bewildered, each took succor in justice not denied.

Across the street from courthouse way

The old woman moulders in a stranger's grave

No stone or plaque records her life

No infamy to blemish ole Winston town.

On the anniversary of the old woman's death

Friends gather at the courthouse steps.

A faint wail can't be denied

When the sun silhouettes a darkened sky

And the iron rings rattle the old Whipping Post.

Thomas Coston

The Pheasant And The Frost

The morning at daybreak
On this year's first frost
I inhale brisk air
And slowly exhaust

Undulating fields glisten a hoary head
Every blade dusted - weighted
Waiting to be awakened
From the Imp's chilly spell

A cackle from a cornrow disturbs the morn
The king of the fall
A clarion call
The season has commenced

His iridescent crown bobs with each stride
As he promenades Jack's carpet with confidence - nay, pride
He cackles again, then proceeds without care
Ah, King Pheasant, if this were opening day

Thomas Coston

The Plight Of The Crissie Wright

From the Chesapeake, on New Year's Eve,
A three mast schooner heads out to sea
Laden with phosphate on a winter's day
The Crissie Wright approached the Atlantic grave

Twenty below, the temperature dropped, gale winds brayed
Snow and sleet battered the ship along with icy waves
Beaufort Inlet, Captain Clark sought
When the main mast brace began to part

Rudderless, the Crissie Wright foundered off Shackelford Banks
There the vessel tossed about with each violent wave
"Lash yourselves men, " the Captain ordered
His voice barely audible above the winds howl

The deck and rigging covered in ice
Treacherous, each footing was a slide
The biting cold, assailed flesh and bone
Wrapped in sails they hid from being exposed

On shore, residents looked on in horror
As the sailors fought at deaths door
Bonfires they built; don't despair
Take heart Crissie Wright, help will soon be there

Whalers and fishermen gathered their boats
Over the dunes they tried to launch
Ten feet high the ocean's waves
Held the rescuers at bay

A loud pop was heard over the wind
The mizzenmast snapped and bent
A sailor was flung overboard

Later found handless, scalped and bound by rope

Merciless was this unrelenting storm
One by one, crew began to succumb
Two fell from their rigging into the boiling morass
Spectators, helpless, could only swear, cry and gasp

Finally, a break from the blizzards assault
The steamer Nellie B. Dey approached
One sailor was found barely alive
Badly frost bitten, he would survive

In Beaufort, they have a common grave
Locals still remember to this day
The plight of sailors and residents alike
The night the Atlantic claimed the Crissie Wright

Thomas Coston

The Sound Of Snowflakes

Hello Snowflake - freedoms nemesis
I hear you whining once again
About perceived injustices
The rising cost of tuition
And the vicissitudes of life

Phantoms of guilt have arrested your head
Punctured by a crown of affluence
Past Generations mock your abilities
While you sit back weeping
Sitting in your safe-space wondering
About the sounds of dissent

Statues mock what you represent
White bread life is not America
How dare we glorify our founding
When others were bound in slavery
Forget those who died believing
Forget those who fulfilled a promise of liberty
Because history is what progressives teach
The sound of dissent

The world is your responsibility
We must put a stop to fingering
The thermostat of climate change
Because God has been replaced
And all that remains is
The sound of Snowflakes

Thomas Coston

The Specter's Gaze

It was a night like this many years ago.
The full moon bright and the wind shuddering my abode.
I was a boy of ten, lying awake in bed, listening to the gust and scratch, scratch,
scratching of the old oak's branches on my window.

It was a small room that my brother and I shared.
He asleep and I most certainly aware.
Our two beds lay just an arm length apart. How I envied him.
He who easily slept, while I lay awake fearing the shadows.

On the far wall, a moonlit macabre play advanced,
as the wind howled and skeletal branches danced.
I tried to ease my mind by praying for sleep;
but was denied by whispers and moans and the scratch, scratch, scratching on
my window.

I remember that night for it is always there.
The night of the specter who had taken me unaware. I was startled ... no, I was
scared.
This stranger who stood at the foot of my bed looked more alive than shadow;
he who was looking out my window.

His mien was not kind. His attire out of date.
This much I could make.
I tried to deny. I tried to reason.
But this specter ... this ghost was beyond all that I could know.

My body became rigid and limbs ached.
Sweat beaded and rolled down my legs.
My breath I tried to measure and control; hoping to become very small.
And all the while I prayed that this ghost not avert his gaze from outside my
window.

Surely, I thought this was my imagination.

That this specter ... this ghost would go as it had come.
I darted my eyes away to the wall. But only skeletal branches did shone.
I glanced back onto him again, this specter... this ghost who was looking out my window.

As I dared to look away, the specter averted his gaze.
And it was upon me he smiled, a most mischievous smile.
My eyes widened and heart pumped in terror, for this specter ... this ghost was most certainly aware that I existed. And all pretence was blown.

I closed my eyes hoping he would go away,
only to find out that he refused and stayed.
And this little game we did play for some time,
me and this specter ... this ghost who no longer stared out my window.

The final time, I opened my eyes he was gone.
It was not relief, but dread I felt for I knew he had knelt beside me.
My heart thumped - thumped as, I slowly turned and there inches from my face
a
malevolent gaze shown.

I cried and leapt onto my brother's bed
And pulled the ceiling light string.
And all was quiet except for me and my sibling's slumbering breath
and the scratch, scratch, scratching on the window.

Thomas Coston

The Wailing Witch Of Weldon Pond

There are no secrets in a village or town
When wagging tongues whisper
As darkness crowds in and sunlight fades out
For Fear has seeded a woeful child
Before it, Courage whimpers away - barren and fallow

Heed my warnings, stranger
The path you have taken, locals have forsaken
From harvest til solstice
This is a dangerous place
Beware of the Wailing Witch for this is her domain

No one knows from whence she came
Nor, can account when the woes began
For this tale is as old as the land
And the pond she's claimed
Bears the family Weldon; a most unfortunate name

The Weldons made this place their home
Began a family, so the legend goes
Daughters, blessed be, were born - three
Oh, how those girls frolicked and danced
Not a care in the world when you're not aged ten

Natives warned the Weldons of this forsaken place
For the witch has wailed for many of their race
Young and old who've made the mistake
Of venturing through the woods down the way
To her haunt - the pond - after harvest til solstice break

The Weldons dismissed this outlandish tale
For who can believe a barbarous breed
Whose motives are questionable to say the least
God-fearing Christians are not impressed

By heathens and their fables to which there is no end

But then came the night, regret clasped a mournful heart
So cold was the still, flames barely crackled in the hearth
When breath mingles with heat from an uncovered head
Death whispered forebodings that sleeping parents dread
Then came the wail that even the cold couldn't bear

That's when the parents shot up out of bed
The wailing was so loud, it could've wakened the dead
They dashed to their daughters, but only to see
Beds barren and cold from lack of body heat
"Where are the children? ! " the mother looked around and screamed

When the witch wailed thrice, parents gasped in fright
Both ran out the door, unheeded without coat
They followed small footprints embedded in the snow
Through drifts and over ice, both battled wind and night
To the pond, where wails echo, into unearthly flight

As they crested a hill, about thirty yards away
A dark figure, silhouetted in starlight, danced and swayed
It was then they saw her face - a horrible disfigured face
This harpy snarled a toothless grin
Then wailed again and again, clawing at her tattered dress

The Weldon's recoiled from this frightful scene
When the witch's wailing morphed into a sickening glee
For this hag visaged a childish coquette
Mocking all that is holy and innocent
Mocking filial love and all it represents

The witch then pointed to the pond
She giggled, then clasped her putrid mouth
But evil cannot be suppressed; she stamped her feet
Then with an awful laugh, she splayed to mock the Trinity

This blasphemy, perfumed in rot and disease, engulfed the whole valley

Just as the witch mocked our lord
The three emerged from an icy vault
The Weldons screamed then jumped into the cold-cold pond
With shivering bodies and chattering teeth
They retrieved their dead daughters and began to grieve

The witch looked on in bemused satisfaction
For evil cannot commiserate, or compassion show
Only to take pleasure in others misfortune and woes
When the witch had feasted and filled
She walked away basking in parental wails

The Weldon's woes did not abate
For the mother caught pneumonia and died a month later
The father vowed vengeance until his death
He hunted year after year until solstice end
Until, he too, was floating in his namesake's grave

Stranger, I beg you not to go down that path
Oh, I know it's hard to believe
You'll repent soon enough, you'll see
When the Wailing Witch makes her call
And you end up face down in Weldon Pond

Thomas Coston

Thunder Mist

Omnipotent
Drowning out all that can be heard
An unconscious wrath rips through the earth

Roaring through the air into a bubbling abyss
Immortal wings spread a colorful bow

Its faceless victim caught in a tempest
Awful
Sublime
Magnificent

Subdued an eddy of calm
Course steady
Unheeded
Thunder Mist
Flows

Thomas Coston

'Twas The Congress Before Christmas

'Twas the Congress before Christmas and all through the House
Establishment Republicans were stirring along with the louts;
Teat Squawkers gathered in the halls, all fret with care
In the hopes that staffers would grant them taxpayer wares

Citizens were soothed by the midterm elections
As visions of prosperity danced in their direction
Then I and my fellow Americans settled down for a long, holiday cheer
Busying ourselves with family, friends and maybe a beer

When on Fox News there rang such a clatter
I leaped from my couch to see what was the matter
Away to the T.V.I made a dash
Grabbed the remote and gave it a blast

Statuary Hall was full of buzz
As reporters and politicians mugged about
Cameras and lights filled the place
While media whores pan-caked their face

D.C. courtesans rushed around in delight,
"Good news! The federal government has a green light! "
The House passed Cromnibus with the president's help
A whopping \$1.8 trillion will give you a yelp!

And so the D.C. Establishment wins again
As Americans are saddled with \$18 trillion in debt
So enjoy your holidays the best you can
Just remember we're too stupid to understand

File away another fiscal year
Please...please don't shed a tear
Republicans say another election has to be won

And so the campaign must go on

So envision a distant capitol with no care, or class
They are wiping their asses with all of our cash
And from the White House they stand and cheer,
"Screw you, voters! And your Happy New Year! "

Thomas Coston