

Awen

Issue 123 February 2024

Free for SAE (\$2 overseas) or as PDF download:

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aliens invade
unnoticed by defenders
tiny conquerors

By DS Davidson

Stalactites and Satellites

By Mark Hudson

Planets formed by fractures,
scientific images capture.
Caves have open stalactites;
they are seen by satellites.

The creatures hide in their caves,
the warriors coming from graves.
If you are an astronaut,
you better not get caught.

Robots versus the centipedes,
fighting for captives to be freed.
Trapped in a nightmare of science,
with centipedes resembling giants.

Where no mortal dares to go,
the robots will venture below.
Battling centipedes from Mars,
robots flying into the stars.

Suddenly they see a comet,
and they decide to bomb it.
The centipedes no longer wiggle,
the robots begin to giggle.

Mission over, heading back home,
out in space we like to roam.

The Rejuvenation

By Kanwalpreet Baidwan

The trees lifted their heads,
The shower from the skies had blessed,
They were ready for the winters.

The Geese of St. Ann

By Howard F. Stein

for Father Gerard MacAulay

Freezing rain, sleet,
Then finally snow; come
Nightfall, all turned to ice.
Some geese, whose residence
Is Lake Hefner, two miles away,
Took up temporary
Quarters on the wide grounds
At St. Ann, a Catholic
Retirement center, where I live.

Near nightfall, ten or so geese
Began to gather in a line,
Constantly changing positions,
Until a final queue formed –
Only to rearrange
Themselves once more – bringing
Back in vivid memory the chaos
At Chicago's O'Hare Airport,
As airplanes converged from
Everywhere into the taxi
Lane, in preparation for
Eventual takeoff.

Suddenly, as if following commands
From an invisible squadron chief,
The geese began to take off, turned
As they reached some agreed-
Upon altitude, to join into
Formation, as though
They knew exactly what position
To take – for all the world
It resembled a bombing run of B-29s
In World War II.
How did they know to space
Themselves? For that
Matter, how did they know
To take off so well timed,
One after the other?

I am equally certain they all
Knew precisely where to land
And gather at Lake Hefner,
Then, for the night, band close
To each other to withstand
The cold...

Sometimes it is good enough
To be left to wonder.

The Mummy's Ashes

By Matthew Wilson

The antique shop wasn't on the high street, the owner had made sure it was as far out of the way as possible for his buyers and sellers were never respectable types.

"Michael – welcome."

The day was almost dead when the doorbell tingled once and a wide eyed disheveled man dumped a small bag of white powder on the counter.

"I ain't got all evening."

As if he had, slowly and professionally, the old man sniffed the bag and detecting no cigarette ash inside, nodded his head.

"Mummy ash, you said on the phone?"

Michael Tanner dropped his hand from the pistol in his pocket – the old man seemed interested in a sale after all – "Yeah, you heard about the museum job last week?"

The old man moved behind the counter and slid the blind down against the window. "Oh, yes – luckily, you only killed ONE guard in that robbery."

"Spare me," Michael sighed. It was late and his nerves needed their fix. "The display case said these ashes belong to one of Cleopatra's lovers, so you must be able to sell it to one of your weird collector friends. As an aphrodisiac or something, I don't care."

The old man scratched his white beard, "Such disrespect, you philistines burning up these mummy's just because you can't carry them on a truck. I could have given you its weight in gold if you bought me the original carcass."

Michael slammed a fist down on the counter. "I can hardly sneak it out in my pocket, now do we have a deal?"

The old man didn't ring this transaction on his till. He slapped three one hundred dollar bills on the counter and couldn't blink before they were gone.

"You know, there's always a curse with these things," The old man said. "Maybe you should stay with friends tonight."

"Don't scare me into a discount," Michael snarled and headed for the door.

"Enjoy your drugs," the old man said.

The doorbell tingled once, and he was alone.

Michael did *not* enjoy the drugs.

It was a bad batch mixed with cheap chemicals to enhance the fix but the come down was too quick and all screaming.

It was scum pushers like that that gave thieving a bad name. Michael would steal anything for drug money – anything for a fix. The poorly-paid night museum guard had been brave but worth the kill.

Until the bad hit.

Michael bawled when the drugs burned his veins and he knew he had to get away now the walls were moving

– hallucinations were never pleasant but a frequent companion with bad drugs. Sometimes, he imagined he was being pursued by ghosts, sometimes frogs.

But when he saw the mummy's hand reaching through the window, he had to admit it was a first.

The thing with bandages for eyes howled through the glass and Michael struggled to his feet from the stained mattress on the floor. He knew the horrid thing wasn't real – just another hallucination that he had to let run its course.

Somehow, his legs managed to stagger him to the abandoned building's back door.

He had hardly fallen outside before he saw the lurching, lumbering shape coming at him.

"No, get away," Michael sobbed as the thing's cold hands went around his throat.

It's just a hallucination, he thought.

But none had hurt before, not so bad. The choking only took a moment, and then Michael realised it didn't hurt at all.

Detective Shane Fall hated Saturday nights, it was always up to him to clean up the crud that killed themselves on the street.

"Drugs?" he asked the coroner, snooping over the body in the abandoned building. Even here, the smell had been bad enough for someone to complain about.

"Overdose?" Shane licked his lips, imagining his wife's burned dinner he was missing for this.

First that crooked antique shop owner had hanged himself tonight and now this.

"No, poor guy choked himself to death – I've seen it happen enough times to druggies. The needle marks in his arms, I've seen too. Some fellow desperate for a fix puts God knows what in their veins and then goes nuts – biting themselves and ripping their hair out because they think it's on fire. I can't imagine what he saw to do that to himself."

"Fingernails look clean," Shane supposed. "Are you sure he did it to himself?"

"Saturday night," the coroner shrugged. "The crazies always come out tonight."

"Yeah, Saturday night," Shane felt some relief when the wail of the ambulance grew louder. The sooner they put this suicide victim under a blanket, the better.

Shane didn't like to say, but he thought he could see bandages in the cold stiff's eyes.

Ends

.....
suicidal gulls
taking aim at the pavement
splat! splat! splat! splat! eurgh!

By DS Davidson

The Verbalist

By Mark Hudson

There once was a lady, who was an herbalist,
but she moonlighted as a verbalist.
She pretended to be an English teacher,
but she really was a cunning creature.

Able to change into many forms,
she deviated from the norms.
She taught English at the college level,
but actually, she was from the devil.

She taught the classes how to spell,
but she was from the depths of hell.
She taught the class how to structure a sentence,
but she was actually beyond repentance.

She had a problem with the principal,
so she made him become invisible.
She had a problem with the football coach,
so she turned him into a tiny roach.

She scratched her fingernails on the board,
and screamed by using her vocal chords.
She put the students into a daze,
so they would all come out with straight A's.

But once, they fired her for witchcraft,
so she went and had a Miller Draft.
A Warlock picked up the tab,
and took her to the science lab.

There they experimented with recipes,
and created creatures and set them free.
The monsters tormented the whole town,
no longer slave to verb and noun.

Now the witch is writing her memoirs,
and they truly are rather bizarre.
She writes her memoirs with great pride,
but it's not as exciting as the TV guide.

.....

Do You Believe in Magic?

By Celine Rose Mariotti

It's that old saying
don't give up praying
when the static clears
there are no fears or tears
wishes come true
take away our blues
the Elves and the Leprechauns
come to the rescue
we have a whole new view
the sun comes out
it's time to shout
dreams are being realized
hopes are being energized
there's no more static
Do You Believe in Magic?

The Gift

By Kanwalpreet Baidwan

The chirping of the birds,
Is a harmonised orchestra of the Gods,
That is played for free.

.....

Baudelaire's 'Elevation':

A Translation

By DJ Tyrer

Over the pond and over the valley
Over mountain, wood, cloud and sea
Past the sun, past ethereality
Past the bounds of the sphere starry

My spirit moves with agility
And like a good swimmer overcome by a wave
You sink far too deep to save
Into an inexpressibly-powerful sensuality

You flee those deadly vapours
Escape into an untainted air
Like a divine draught beyond compare
That the clear flame refills with rarefied ethers

Behind the griefs and sorrows obscene
Which pile their weight upon our lives obscure
They are happy who believe they can soar
Leaping towards fields bright and serene

Lark-like, the mind of the one who thinks
Towards the morning sky freely expands
Gliding with certainty, and without effort comprehends
The language of flowers and that of silent things

Originally published in [Tigershark](#)

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gentle lapping waves
ocean depths never silent
whale-song from afar

By Aeronwy Dafies

.....

Soldier's Wife

By SchiZ

I'll leave the light
And I wait for yr return
I know this is yr duty
But I wish it wasn't so
I am alone at the window
Waiting for you to be here
The kids are saddened to see the news
Wondering if you are coming home
I am tired of explaining to them you are alright
I want you here, having a normal life alone
I pray for this
I'll leave the light on
Until there's no hope at all

Strange

By Aeronwy Dafies

It was strange
The way that
Whenever anybody died
A crow always appeared
In the churchyard
Not for the ceremony
The burial
But, always the day of death
Sometimes on a gravestone
Or, stone marker-cross
Sometimes on the wall
Observing me passing by
Most often on the path
When I came to lay flowers
Or, visit my grandmother's grave
Standing, watching me
Before hopping away
At my sombre approach
Vanishing from sight
And, always, I'd know
The news before it came
And, maybe, it was nothing
Nothing more than coincidence
Yet, I never seemed
To see it
In the churchyard
At other times...

Originally published in **Tigershark**

Books!

By DJ Tyrer

Books!
Books as far as the eye can see
Books of fiction, of poetry
Books!
Books of law and books of crime
Books of prose and books of rhyme
Books!
Books on shelves towering high
Books that reveal how, when, and why
Books!
Books sublime and others uncouth
Books filled with lies, others with truth
Books!
Books gathered in a wordy throng
Books amongst which I belong
Books!

Originally published in **One Vision**

Lesson in Humility

By Kanwalpreet Baidwan

The lofty tree stands tall,
Its gigantic, green, majestic branches spanning yards,
Yet it bends to survive.

Mission to Mars

By Mark Hudson

From Dusk till Dawn,
from Dawn to Dusk,
we are always wronged
by that clown, Elon Musk.

He smokes his pot on stage;
of his company as a CEO.
He listens to "Master of the Moon,"
by Ronnie James Dio.

He plans to colonize Mars,
and defeat the Martians.
But he's creating some wars,
space aliens are going to harshen.

Space X one of his enterprises,
where workers are injured, hurt.
His company is full of surprises,
stoned, he is not alert.

If Martians choose to attack,
we will be totally unaware.
All Earthlings smoke crack,
and do not even care.

Flying saucers not expected,
while the government can not feed.
Will the Martians be suspected?
When we lie on the ground and bleed?

The government has a space force,
to defend the universe from Mars.
But will we have worse remorse?
When nothing is left under the stars?

Mystery

By Aeronwy Dafies

A strange synchronicity
It all works out for the best;
Merely a coming together of events
Or, manipulated in some other way
We cannot understand?
A mystery!

Originally published in **Tigershark**

The Tyrant

By Matthew Wilson

Cthulhu gave us medals
for saving the children;
his favourite meal.

hello Cthulhu
R'lyeh rising at last
we're all mad for it

By DS Davidson