

Highschool

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To whom it may concern (ie. You, the reader): This is a collection of work from my grade 12 writing class. It includes short stories, essays, poems, songs, etc. There is absolutely no reason why you should enjoy reading these, and with this in mind I highly recommend that you do not. However, since we both know that you will anyway, I pray that you enjoy what you find and that it does not cause haemorrhaging. After all, this is highschool.



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Term One

City Life

The rain pelted down with a fury uncommon to even the west coast. It bounced off the grey pavement, gathering everywhere in puddles, several centimeters deep. My watch beeped; one o'clock pm. I hurried down the street, ducking as a hover van rushed by, its fans blowing a gust of water in my face. At that speed he should have had his fans turned in so they do not blow on the sidewalk. He could hurt someone. But who cared? No one cared. I guess that's city life. I was still trying frantically to get used to the flow of it. So far it wasn't working.

I stepped up to the crosswalk and waited for the light to change. It did, moments later, the pressure pad under my feet registering my existence and changing the traffic pattern to give me a clear pass across the street. As I stepped onto the sidewalk on the other side, it registered crosswalk clear, and the traffic began to flow again. Everyone had somewhere to go, something to do. City life.

I broke into a light run, anxious to keep my schedule. At this rate I was going to be late, and we could not have that. It was bad business, and in a city like this bad business did not last long. I tilted my head forward so that the wide brim on my hat sheltered my eyes from the rain and turned the collar of my trench coat up to keep my neck warm before plunging my frigid hands back into my pockets. It was June, and already the thermometer was sitting just above the freezing point. A few degrees less and it would be snowing. It hadn't gotten cold this soon last year. It made me wonder if the rampant predictions



about global cooling could be true. Probably not. Probably it was just an anomaly in the weather patterns. Those happened. Even with the new smart processors for weather watching, mistakes could be made. Besides, the whole 'global cooling' thing was just a big government scam to keep rich lawyers on salaries and tax dollars in government hands.

Now I was definitely late for my appointment. I should have taken a cab. I should have pushed aside my premonitions about leaving my id address in a taxi databank. Millions of people used the taxi service every day. How would they single me out amongst the millions? I had no history with them, and until now I had worked very hard to be a ghost under their surveillance. A young entrepreneur in hydrostat was no more likely to raise the alarm than anyone else in the city, but still I preferred not to leave my name behind. They would narrow the possibility down to a few thousand and then they would have a lead. All it would take was another print in another town - a related incident. They would compare the lists, and my name would come up, leaping out of their databanks like a soar thumb, screaming 'Here I am! I'm the one you've been looking for!' No, I was glad I had walked, even though this deal might go sour because I could not manage to be punctual.

I checked my watch for the third time within the space of five minutes, catching myself only as I registered the numbers in my head. "Put it away," I told myself, "Image is everything. There are cameras on some of these streets. Look normal. Blend in." I shoved my hand back into my pocket, feeling the



reassuring touch of my insurance policy as I did so. I hurried on. Better late than never.

On the corner of 304 and Grephan, I stopped. It was a fairly busy street. That was good. There was enough people there that one man standing alone in the rain did not look too conspicuous. With nothing to do but wait, I did exactly that. In an effort to blend in further and yet not reveal too much of my identity, I materialized a black umbrella and opened it, holding it as low over my head as I could. I glanced across the street at the third story window, three in from the corner of the old hotel where, I knew, a group of men with cameras and computers were trying desperately to identify me as their man. They would have to take several pictures, match them to digital proofs on record, carefully examining my facial features, my body structure and the way I carried myself to insure that I was who I was supposed to be - the man commonly referred to among my circles as 'The Hunter.'

I loved the name. I had chosen it myself and staged several events in order to give myself a reputation fitting of it. Of course, to those who knew nothing, the name sounded powerful, ominous. To those who were informed, I might have called myself Billy Bob for all the good it would do. Names did not fool us business men. To the ones that mattered, a name meant nothing. But the name had a profound effect amongst the lowlife of the city streets, and the reputation which preceded me when I used it had come in handy on several occasions. Not many people cared to cross paths with The Hunter, though no one really seemed to know why. They would



simply repeat the line which, of course, had originated with me. "Rumor has it," they would say, "that every time he pulls the trigger, someone dies." The inferred meaning was, of course that I was an excellent sharp shooter and I never bothered to waste a bullet unless I was sure that it would end the life of the intended target. I had staged several gun fights in order to prove this point. Of course, like every other aspect of the Hunter reputation, this was slightly shaded. In reality, I rarely bothered to waste a bullet outside the shooting range. Guns were for emergencies and emergencies were not my style.

"Ho there!" A man called toward me, pushing through the crowd in my direction as though he had just noticed me. His act did not fool me for a moment. He had been there longer than I had. His acknowledgment of my presence simply meant that his friends in tuxedos over in the old hotel had decided that I was actually the Hunter. "I say, old chap!" he pushed on towards me. "How have you been? I haven't seen you in ages!"

'I've never seen you,' I thought grimly. "Oh," I smiled warmly. "I'm fine. Been on vacation in London with my son."

"Just lovely," he smiled, gripping my hand firmly and giving it a good shake. The tiny black object in my palm transferred itself to his. "Your son, eh? How old is he now, sixteen?"

'Fool, I'm not yet twenty-seven,' I thought. "Seventeen, actually," I replied.

"Seventeen?" he replied. "Almost a man."

‘Joining your ranks,’ I thought. “Indeed.”

“Well, I’d love to stand and chat,” he said, glancing around nervously, his eyes slipping down to his watch once even though he did not even bother to check the time. “But I am afraid I must be on my way. Do stop by for dinner some time. I’m sure my wife would be delighted to see you again.” He shook my hand again, the object slipping back into my possession.

“I’ll be sure to,” I replied. He turned and walked away. He had somewhere to go, something to do - just like everyone else. He disappeared into the crowd, no doubt returning to the safety of a private cab somewhere. I turned and began walking. My hand found its way to my pocket, and my skilled fingers quickly slipped the tiny black databank into my processor. I rummaged around in my back pocket, and came out with one of my ear phones. Slipping it into my ear, I listened.

“Hello, Hunter,” the electronic voice said calmly. “Your target name is Joseph Cole. Current location, Bard street. Direction, north, leisurely pace. Intersect on 296. Instruction, code three.”

I knew what code three meant. It meant that someone on Bard street knew something that they should not. I started walking faster. 296, the processor had determined, based on its estimation of my stamina and current rate. I would make it 295.



I hit 295 and turned west, breaking into a run. I crossed Whydow, barely waiting for the traffic to halt before I made my dash. I ran another block and crossed Kingdom, slowing my pace only half way between kingdom and Bard. No sense in drawing extra attention to myself. I was merely a young entrepreneur in hydrostat hurrying to something important. Everyone had somewhere to go - including me.

Still no sign of Cole. I was a matter of steps away from intersecting Bard. My pulse quickened ever so slightly. My timing had better be correct. I could not afford to wait around. A standing man who suddenly starts walking is suspicious. I hit Bard, and there was Cole. Perfect timing. I ran strait into him. In my pocket, there was a sharp his as the databank shorted, its memory melting into a solid slice of metalics, taking with it all its evidence. I muttered my apologies to the man without breaking stride. The traffic stopped and I stepped into the street, crossing on my west. The traffic flowed again behind me, and Cole was lost to view. I walked on, leaving the scene of the crime without looking back. About a hundred paces down the street, he would suddenly stop, and look around, scratching his head and looking puzzled. Then he would ask the people around him for help, but they would not help him. Why? Because they would not care. Nobody cares. I guess that's city life.

By the time I hit Juniper and turn South, I knew something about him that he did not know himself. I knew that his name was Joseph Cole and he was standing on the corner of 296 and Bard. Neither of us now knew what event in his past



history merited the sabotage of his memory, but I guess that was the point. I guess that's city life.



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It has come to my attention that there are a select few among my which have allowed themselves to descend into a state of intense degradation in which greed and dishonesty coax them into a belief that yet another 'get rich quick scheme' might work to their extreme fortune. The dastardly deed I speak of is copyright infringement. No, not against the New York times, nor even against a grade nine English teacher who enthalls youngsters with her imaginative tales. Nay, the matter is far graver than that. The said crime has been contemplated against yours truly.

It probably seemed to good to be true, when the shady character in question discovered this domain, stuffed with the ingenious work of a nobody like a suckling pig awaiting a pagan banquet. But, my half-assed friend, there is a slight matter which you have overlooked. In a word, nay not even; in a symbol, it is this: ©

A nifty little thing, it is. I'm sure you have seen it before, punched into the cover of various other lameties of all forms. It is an abbreviated way in which to say something to the effect of, "every letter appearing before you once corresponded to one of my ten fingers pecking a button on a keyboard with a duplicate symbol. Every thought, every genius with which you are entertained, is available to you only because an uncounted number of my neurons fired in the correct order, in a strenuous and arduous endeavor to bring you pleasure. Everything



appearing before you is under my ownership, and should you abuse it or its owner, I have the right, the duty, and the privilege to prosecute you, seeking justice in any and every manner necessary." That is the meaning of the copyright symbol. But somehow the public domain is a license for narcissism and an all around disrespect for the laws of civilization and humanity. The petty copyright infringement laws beset upon the population of North America no longer seem to have quite the effect they used to. Therefore, my scumbly friend, I have instilled into the tiny symbol demonstrated above a new meaning. In layman's terms, the copyright packs a new punch.

"So what does it mean?" you ask. Well... I'm gonna tell you. Close your eyes with me for a moment and imagine about sixteen lawyers, dressed in the precarious colors of justice and security chosen by this modern age, all crowding around you, providing fraudulent, yet court-accepted, evidence convicting you of various heinous crimes, a selection of which might include blowing up mail boxes on streets of various towns across America, and plastering of the local livestock in poly-urithane and eagle feathers, to name a few. If I am extremely unhappy on said day of the occurrence, I might include filming of the first lady while in the act of taking out the trash (though a law against the deed may have to be implanted into the American constitution beforehand). Undoubtedly, my ingenuity will work over time to create many more varied and despicable crimes for laying upon you. That is the beginning. However, despite what you might think, this is not your punishment. It is, in fact, merely a ploy to get you out of the way so I can begin my real business.



Have you ever heard mention of the phrase, "I'm coming for you?" Well, you have nothing to worry from me as far as that phrase is concerned. As the saying goes, "I've got far bigger fish to fry." Instead of wasting my time on your sorry little existence, I'll come for your wife and/or girlfriend (excuse the sexism; I haven't time to please everyone). But not just her. I will come also for your dog, your cat, your budgie, and your coffee maker. For reasons which I will explain in a moment, I'll come for the coffee maker first. I'll wrap it in newspapers and pack it in a box with the fragile symbol, preferably with the goblet unbroken, and "this side up" printed in large, upside-down letters on the side. Having done thus, I will remove it to my kitchen where it will sit on my counter, a monument to my greatness, providing me with coffee while I carry out the rest of my work; thus the reason I begin with it. The budgie is the least consequential of the remainder. Therefore I offer it little consequence. Let me put this as plainly as I can without infringing on narcissism. Have you ever seen a naked bird? How about one spray painted green with duct tape on its beak? Enough said. But speaking of nakedness, perhaps that will be the ultimate fate of the cat as well. I think I will utilize my wide collection of disposable razor blades to systematically shave every hair off your decrepit feline's bodice. Having accomplished that objective, I will inflict upon your poor pudgy tat the entire population of my parent's very large kennel. In the event that 'very large' has not sunken in perfectly, I will go into detail enough to say that 'very large' indicates an approximation of fifty cat-hating dogs. You do the math. When the mouser has gone hoarse from screaming in terror, all within your earshot, of course, I will turn my attention to your dog. I will forcibly



convince him to sit beside me on an available couch and systematically rap on his skull until it quite hits home and he takes to barking at absolutely nothing, staring at even less, and devoting entire hours of attention to his populated food dish as he starves to death, bent upon stopping, at all costs, its untimely escape.

Having accomplished thus, I might turn to your house, defiling it with paintings of monkeys making obscene gestures to give your offspring nightmares for several consecutive decades and costing the government several thousand dollars' worth of collateral damage in the form of therapeutic bills. However, I am a writer and not an artist, so I will probably simply turn my attention to your wife and/or girlfriend. My first move will be to tell her the truth about her cooking – an act which unvariably will, I'm sure – crush her thoroughly. As despair sinks in, I will continue my campaign by poking fun at every hobby she has ever taken on in each and every way that pops into my head. When she no longer has the strength to get out of bed in the morning, I will instruct her on the horrendousness of her hair and dress, making a very convincing show at regurgitating with horror at the quality of her mascara. And as she sobs with sorrow and rage, with you looking on helplessly all the while from a video console in your far away cell, serving time for your mailbox antics, I will feed her a strict diet of McDonalds for a day short of a year. Only then, as the tears subside, I will straighten up and smirkingly accuse her of corpulency.



These listed matters are the inventions of the time frame in which I have devoted to the writing of this document. Rest assures that when words come to action and the gavel falls, I will have improved this plan to a great extent, all for the purpose of your ultimate sorrow. When put to it, my mind can and will become quite productive and creative. And of course, please keep in mind that proper recognition of the copyright symbol concerning my writing can avoid you all the horrendous and excruciating deeds mentioned above.



Thirteen Corinth

Say for instance that I'm fluent in every language

Spoken and unspoken

On and off planet

But I haven't got love figured out...

There's no point

My brilliant articulation is nothing

But so many bells and whistles

If I know what you're thinking

And what's going to happen in five minutes

Or if I were the child protégé who at the age of fourteen

Graduates from college with multiple degrees

But I don't know how to love

I'm just another loser

Another bum

I'm nothing



Or if I've got the power to change the state of existence

Or rewrite reality completely

All this but I still don't know how to love

Then I might as well be a white elephant for all the good it will do.

Even if I give millions to African orphans

Or end up dying for someone else

But still haven't learned to love

I could do a lot of talking about it

But really, it was all a waste of time

Life will take anything you throw at it

It'll endure any pain

You can't piss love off by being with someone else

It's just happy that you're happy

Love won't try to jack itself up

Or be more than it should

It doesn't matter



It just is what it is

Love won't get in your face or try to annoy you

Love isn't a flirt because it cares too deeply

Love can be without feeling love in return

It's not dependant at all

And love won't get ticked off no matter how hard you try

You can't phase it

It won't ask you to do anything that violates your moral code

But it gets psyched when you do what you know to be right

Love doesn't call it quits early

Or quit believing that you can do it

It can always take the best spin on things

And it'll last through anythin

It just doesn't die out

But the guy who can read your mind won't life forever

And the protégé will bite the dust eventually

Everything we praise right now will eventually be gone



But love lasts through it all

In the end there are three things to be valued above all else

The ability to believe in the unbelievable

The ability to hope for the unlikely

And the ability to love

But the best thing of all is the last; love

In the heat of the moment we won't get love or understand it

All we can hope for is a dim reflection

But one day we'll understand the crystal clarity of what we missed

We've only got a fraction of it now

But one day we'll get it

One day we'll know love



I LOVE YOU

Like I LOVE icecream; Kraft Dinner; Popcorn; Pizza

Like I LOVE video games, movies and enternet

Like I LOVE sleep and being lazy

Like I LOVE music

I LOVE you

I LOVE the feeling I get when I'm with you

I LOVE the excitement you bring to my life

I LOVE how you look; how you feel

Definately, I LOVE your body

But do I LOVE you? Really? Actually?

I LOVE that you make me feel so much better

I LOVE that you're hot

I LOVE that you're a good kisser

But what about you?

Can I really say I LOVE you? Honestly?

Of course but it doesn't mean much now does it



I GUESS I DON'T REALLY LOVE YOU

I WISH I DID

Korvault and Siviena on Rhejhant

The wind around Rhejhant rushed in and out, like a tide in a rocky crag, smashing back and forth; like a sucking chest wound, slurping and gasping. Snow billowed everywhere. Some of it had fallen from the almost black clouds, but most of it came off the mountain, stirred up from where it had fallen the night before; still powder because the dry cold had not relented. The wind whipped about him, rushing up and down the slope, back and forth. It bit his face like needles and he ducked under the collar of his coat, pulling his cowl lower over his face to protect his delicate skin.

Emotion was gone. He could no longer feel the cold, no longer complain of the agony of the endless hours of climbing. All that was left was a dumb determination to press on, to keep lifting axe and boot, to continue on, to press forward. He could no longer feel his feet, no longer manipulate his fingers like he should be able to. They might be frozen. He didn't know. He didn't care.

The darkness was consuming what remained of the daylight. Very soon it would be so pervasive that he would not be able to see where he placed his foot. Then he would be in trouble. He would lose his footing and he would fall and die. Even now it was getting more and more dangerous. By the moment his chances of missing his footing were growing. If he missed and placed his foot where the icy snow beneath the powder would not hold him, then he would begin to slide. The mountain would avalanche and he would be buried beneath tons of snow. There

was no one within a week's journey and he would not be missed for at least that long. He would freeze to death and die in an icy grave, only to though out come spring, food for the eagles. He needed a place to spend the night, and he needed it now. He searched, up and down, back and forth, scanning the steep slope for anywhere that might be suitable to dig out enough snow to make a cave to shelter him from the wind. Nothing. He continued climbing.

It might have been two minutes or half an hour. He didn't know. His mind was consumed by the act of the climb; by the process of finding footholds and sinking his axes into the ice and pulling himself onwards and upwards. But suddenly there was not so much upwards. The ice gave way to deep bluffs of snow and the wind at his back pushed him forward as he floundered in the deep powder. His foot hit a vertical wall, and then it was gone. He hit another one further back. Steps. He pushed forward. The snow level dropped, from waste height to knee height, then it was skiffing around his ankles, and then it was gone altogether on the corners of the steps, piling up in the back and smoothing over to make the stairway appear like the mountainside around it. He was there. With new energy, he pushed forward, advancing up the staircase. He could see the top, he thought. Slings his axes, he almost ran now.

The staircase opened onto a courtyard, perhaps some hundred meters across. He came up on the left of it. That was the only direction from which it was approachable. To the right and in front it dropped off at the edge with a steep cliff. Some of it was natural, but much of it had been designed, great block cut out

and filled in to make the face nearly seamless and at the very least difficult to scale. But it had been made this way years before and the harsh condition had seen much damage inflicted upon it. Great chunks were missing. Along the rim of the courtyard the stone fence which once had protected the pedestrian quarter from the abyss was mostly missing, the edge broken away. A few straggled stretches of wall still remained, with a couple of interspersed gargois set there, badly worn.

The courtyard was laid with meter square blocks of granite delved out of the mountain with the temple's creation. Beyond the fence and two slightly larger gargois guarding the one stiarcase at the entry, one of which was broken away at the knees, it was unadorned and empty except for a basin at its center. One might have expected trees but no tree, no matter how hearty, would ahve survived at altitude. The makers seemingly cared to furnish it with nothing further of stone creation and indeed it had been made so solely to serve as temporary storage for materials moving in and out of the temple which might need a place to sit for a time.

The basin was circular, four meters in diameter and a meter above the paving stones at its lip. It stood, at its base, a mere centimeter off the ground. Remarkably, the space beneath it was still free of snow, due to the high winds which always raced across the courtyard, clearing it of everything short of the larger stones. The basin itself was held in space by four greater gargois. They appeared to be druids, or perhaps Prophets, cowed in deep cloaks, all facing inwards. They stood three meters high, clutching the lip of the basin and leaning over it



slightly. In true fashion, their hands were the only thing visible. There must have been some spell or charm set upon the basin and its guardians for they were undamaged. No scar or crack appeared anywhere on the heavily stressed stone and the basin sat level and true.

The back wall of the courtyard was lined with great pillars, a meter in diameter and no less than fifteen high. They supported a thick stone roof which did little more than protect the alcove behind them from Ancients knew what beyond the weather. There was a tale that at the time of the temple's creation airships had been so skillfully wrought and operated that they could fly at altitude and the pillars were there to dissuade an attack from air. Perhaps that was why the courtyard was so massive and empty. Beyond the pillars the roofed alcove stretched back to twin black iron doors which stood fast shut and were more than half sealed up with a mound of ice which the wind had blown there and would not remove.

Korvault stood at the top of the steps and surveyed the courtyard. It seemed wholly unremarkable as far as he was concerned. Not that the thousand-year-old architecture did not interest him. Rather that it did not interest him nearly as much as some of his other concerns, namely finding a way into the temple. It had been named after its age-old inhabitant and keeper; Blarg, the red war dragon. She must have been three hundred by now, and nobody knew how massive she had become in her two hundred year period of slumber and feasting. One thing was certain; she would not be out of shape or unprepared. Dragons weren't that way. They didn't get lazy.



The fact that she had not been seen in that long did not mean that she was not doing anything, and certainly did not mean that she was dead. Far from it. She had only found something more interesting to harass than the Armein civilizations.

Approaching the basin, Korvault walked slowly around to the other side, examining the stonework for cracks and finding none. It was perfect. Not even a defect. The basin was almost full of ice. Maybe it had been water once, but now it was frozen solid to the core and black as cobalt. He climbed up onto the ice and moved to the center of the basin to turn a full three sixty, getting a better view of his surroundings. That was when he saw it.

The guardina was standing about half way down the courtyard between the basin and the staircase. It stood without moving, its invisible eyes fixed on him from beneath its grey cowl. He knew it to be a guardina for it looked exactly like the gargoyles which held the basin except for one regard. A long slender sword protruded from the sleeve of one robe.

Cursing his stupidity at touching the basin and surmising that it had alerted the guardin to his presence, Korvault unholstered the axes from his belt and dropped them on the ice. Shrugging off his pack he let it fall on top of them. The corner hit the ice, but it was so thick that a small chip was all the damage it took. Korvault shook his hands, suddenly keenly aware of how numb and cumbersome they were. His right arm flew back to the place just above his right shoulder and seized the hilt of his greatsword. He pulled upwards and the sword came free of its scabbard. It was a composite weapon with a long sturdy handle,

unadorned and slender looking in relation to the wieldy blade which was set in three layers, the fore-edge for cutting, the back for cracking, and the main body designed to be light and fly true. He flourished the weapon, feeling it take flight under his careful management, and fixed his sights on the guardian. There was a moment of hesitation and then they both began to run.

Korvault leapt down from the rim of the basin. His feet skidded on the icy stone, but he kept his grip and charged forward, sword held straight out to the side; not a particularly great place to attack from, but advantageous for running when the floaters caught the wind. The distance between them closed at a frightening pace and the countdown began. His eyes were fixed on his adversary and its blade. His mind raced, trying to predict his opponent's first move. If he flourished and struck first would it merely dodge the blow and strike him from the side, or perhaps take it full on and sacrifice itself in the act of slashing him in two. He pulsed forward, held on indecision. The suddenly he knew.

At the last possible moment, Korvault shifted his grip around the handle and twisted his body around in a clockwise rotation. His boots caught the stonework and he spun in a quick circle. The gravity floaters caught the motion, and the sword spun extended at the limit of his reach. The guardina dropped to one knee, driving its thin blade into the stonework and holding it hilt upward before it. The two lines of steel colided, soundlessly. There was no rebound, no sparks. The alignment was so perfect that the entire impact of the blow was absorbed perfectly as he had intended. The guardina did not even flinch. It gave no



muscle spasm to display the damage inflicted upon it, but he knew it was there nevertheless. A moment after the impact, Korvaul's feet hit the ground.

Time seemed to hang for a moment as he stared deep into the dark cowl, trying to detect something; anything. There was nothing. Nothing but a slight flinch. He caught it in one instant and reacted in the next. The arm jerked upwards and the thin blade slipped free of the stonework. It spun upwards, the hand rotating at the wrist, and spun around in the middle of the swing. He watched it out of the corner of his eye, bending back as far as he could without throwing himself off balance and throwing his head back. He felt the distinct rush of wind past his jaw as the blade narrowly missed. Then he released the energy he had built up in his legs, and spun a back flip, landing several meters back from his position of a moment before, only to find his enemy on him again. The guardian had followed suit. The thin blade slashed through time and space and came into contact with his steel-lined gauntlet. It was the only thing which saved him from being cut to ribbons, but the blow was jarring. He stumbled several paces to the right. This time the guardina had followed. It had proved its point and it was ready to fight.

Korvaul sucked in his breath and renewed his concentration. He had been up against hard enemies, but this might be something new. For tactic the guardian was more than his match, but its reflexes were unreal. He had seen quick but this was instantaneous. Flourishing his sword once again, he brought it to bear above his head and turned on his opponent. The guardian humored him and did the same. Good at least it knew

rules. He struck down, making his blow heavy and precise. It could have shattered skull and cleaved body, but the razor sword got in the way. The guardian laid his weapon level above his head, held in one extended hand as if to show off his superior muscle power. The swords clashed and this time came to a dead standstill, jarring him severely. He recovered and rose again, this time, swinging down to the right. The razor took the opposing action and they met just off his adversary's flank, his attack again foiled.

Then the counter attack began. The razor rose and fell before he could fully recover. Suddenly his own weapon seemed heavy and cumbersome to his hands. He moved it into position just in time, and it took the blow at an angle, the razor sliding just over his left ear all the way down to the hilt of his own blade. Sparks showered around, lost almost instantly in the wind. But the guardian didn't waste any time. He spun around in a full circle, sword fully extended at the tip of his reach. It whistled, drawing a true line straight toward Korvaul's neck. His own sword was too far away. He ducked down and the blade passed narrowly under his head.

After that the blows came too quickly to think about. All he could do was react as strike after strike came. The two swords flashed together and the dull clangs echoed off the mountain sides despite the wind. With the added circulation Korvaul began to feel life returning to his hands and they began to hurt. Everything he did felt encumbered. His clothes were too thick. His sword was too bulky and his muscles were too slow. He tried to compensate with power, tried to tire his enemy out,

deflecting blows rather than absorbing them. But time moved too quickly. They went back and forth, attacking and defending, working out each other's strengths and weaknesses. As strategy after strategy was foiled, Korvault began to panic. His work became more furious as his ideas began to draw thin. He was going to loose.

And then, just as he was drawing blanks, his opponent suddenly backed off. The guardian leaned back, and he suddenly detected a faint movement as if he were gasping for breath. The creature was actually winded. Despite his own waning draw of energy, he flourished his weapon and redoubled his offense. His attacks were somewhat basic, his swordsmanship set to sustain rather than advance. But as he bided his time, he pushed himself forward, keeping the conflict tight and forcing the Guardian to back away bit by bit. Hit chops grew in power, and as the adrenaline began to rush through him his work became more practiced; his blows more precise.

And then the scales turned. The Guardian threw him an overhead blow and he sidestepped, setting his sword to the paving stones to his left. The razor sword was moving too fast to pull out. The Guardian forced it right down the edge of his sword and right into the ground. The jarring he received was physically evident. Korvault yanked his sword free and went for another attack, this one low and level. The Guardian saw it, but was unable to block it in time. He spilled himself over sideways, into the slash. He cleared the blade and fell flat on the pavement. Korvault followed through on his swing, bringing it around over his shoulder and straight down into the pavement.

This time the Guardian managed to block it just above his face, but that was what Korvault had expected. He raised his sword and pounded his enemy into the stonework again, continuing with blow after blow. With each second the Guardian's strength wore away. He tried to role out from under one of the attacks, but Korvault overcompensated and struck the pavement beside him. The rocks showered up, right where he had intended to role, and his cowl came up against the blade.

In a complex flourish, Korvault drew himself and his sword up to full height. Blade held downward, he prepared for the killing strike, winding his arms up like springs to deliver his most powerful blow. But just as he was about to release his death blow, a single word emitted the dark cowl. It was a curse; natural enough for the moment of death, but not for a Guardian. They did not speak. They could not speak. He hesitated for a split second, stuck on indecision. It was all the time his enemy needed. His blade came down with bone crushing power, but the one for whom it was intended rolled free and his sword cut a deep gash in the pavement. Korvault reeled away, severely jarred, both in mind and body. It had spoken! He knew it had. That could only mean one of two things. Either this was a guardian of a kind he had not encountered already, or it was not a guardian at all. He wasn't sure which one was worse.

His adversary, whatever it was, had recovered sufficiently. He ran forward, fell into a role, and came up, sword extended like a needle point, keen on Korvault's chest. He ducked to the side, all too aware of how close the cold steel was to his vitals. He

continued his duck into a turn around and slashed with his sword. Impossibly, the razor was there, blocking. Feeding on some new vitality, the cowled figure leapt upon him, sword flying, pressing its advantages. Korvault began backing up, trying to buy himself some more room. Now it was he who was exhausted. He was vaguely aware of the basin looming up behind him before the back of his leg came up against it. His enemy came with a low slash, and rather than block it, he rolled backwards over the lip of the basin, somersaulting back onto his feet in a rag fashion and sliding several feet back on the ice. Now he had a momentary advantage as the cowled figure battled against the advantage of elevation. But it was only momentary. The creature which he was feeling more and more sure was not a Guardian slipped over to one of the statues and used it to vault himself onto the ice. He landed without a slide, sword raised high. Korvault panicked and ducked, lost his footing, and raised his sword just in time. The blow was jarring. It devastated his concentration and threw off his orientation. He was only vaguely aware of the razor sword rising. He brought his own sword to block, but rather than the strike he had expected, the cowled figure flourished unexpectedly and swung from the opposite direction. Korvault's thumb screamed in pain as his weapon was wrenched out of his hand. A moment later a knee came crashing into his chest and the razor came up against his neck, sliding just enough to make a scratch.

"Eat steel and die, monster!" the cowled figure hissed. But it didn't fit. It took him a moment just to recover from the shock of hearing the voice. Nothing made sense. He struggled to come to terms with what instinct told him.



“Siviena?” She froze. He could see in her the same battle that had just been fought within him. Then she suddenly rolled back, dropping her sword aside. Her cowl fell away, and the familiar face came into the light.

“Korvault,” it was a barely perceptible whisper. For a full second she knelt there helplessly. Then she extended one hand to help him up.

Writing 12 Take on Korvault's Library Fight

"Sorry I'm late," Korvault said, carelessly slipping his pack from his shoulders and dumping it in the closest chair.

Siviena peered over the edge of her comic. Ancients be damned! She was reading a comic. Korvault was forced to take a second look at her. She looked exactly the same as she had the other night; His whimsical hair style cut at odd angles just strange enough to work perfectly. She was what she would have called ugly. At seventeen she was still mostly unshapely with the body of a twelve year old boy, but Korvault didn't spite her that. Her figure fit her character and they blended together perfectly to create something that he considered beautiful, even having known her only two days.

"That's fine," Siviena said dismissively, even as her eyes betrayed her interest in the matter. "Traffic?"

"Yes, because that slows us pedestrians down," Korvault replied sarcastically. "My runner wouldn't start. Had to walk. Then I had to drop off something for a friend of mine."

"Eldore?"

"Yes... how did you know?"



“Come on, Korvault, everyone knows Eldore. You’re hardly the first to tangle with him.” She laughed sardonically.

“I just don’t want any trouble,” Korvault said defensively. Pulling his pack from the chair where he had just put it, he seated himself and dropped it down between his legs. “So how was your day?” He asked, trying to steer the conversation in a different direction.

“Um... let’s see,” she said, dramatically, “Nothing happened, I didn’t want anything to happen, and nobody tried to make anything happen, so it was about the best day I’ve had all week.”

“Inspiring.”

“Speaking of trouble,” Siviena said suddenly and then broke off.

“What?”

She nodded towards him. He didn’t get the message. She only stared. Suddenly he understood; a moment too late. The chair flew up, thrust from behind. It crushed his pack and spilled him onto the floor before crashing on top of him.

“You think you’re funny do you?” Eldore fairly screamed. His voice was the only indication that it was he. It was all Korvault could hear from his position beneath the chair. “You think you’re something, coming to my house and making friends with my girl. Nobody but nobody makes friends with my girl!”

“As to the accusation of funny,” Korvault groaned, pulling himself out from underneath the chair. “I never once professed, much less aspired to humor.”

“Shut up!” Eldore yelled. Now Korvault could see him. He was wearing the exact same thing he had been wearing the other night. He wondered for a moment if he had changed at all, and then decided that he must have. His girl would have done his laundry for him, knowing the type of person she seemed to be. It only made sense. “You gone too far, Korv!” Eldore said, taking another step forward. “And now you’re gonna pay!”

Korvault glanced over at Siviena. She hadn’t twitched a muscle. She was sitting; her comic closed and held in front of her knees which were brought up. She watched the affair, a quizzical look on her face.

“Before the Ancients,” Korvault said innocently. “I don’t know what you are talking about. You wanted that chip and I dropped it off at your house.”

“Like hell you did!” Korvalut kicked him in the side; not hard, but disgustedly.

“Why are you here, Eldore?” Korvault demanded.

“I told you; you’re gonna pay!”

“Or what? You smash me?”

“The smashing is the payment!”

“Well at least you don’t run at minimum wage,” Korvault said, grinning good naturedly. “Are you sure there’s not an option B? It’s picture day tomorrow and I’d rather not look smashed for my photo.”

“Shut up!” Eldore fairly screamed. “When I’m done with you, you won’t be laughing, funny guy! You’ll be crying like you don’t know!”

“Please,” Korvault replied. “Do you have any idea how many other vicious persons have used that term? If you’re going to pummel people at least do it originally. You’re so cliché! Are you trying to hurt me or just suffocate me in overused literary techniques?”

“I tell you what!” Eldore said, dropping so one knee was on his chest, driving the air out of his lungs. “I’ll cream you first, then we’ll see how original you feel.”

“Young man!” a short middle aged woman who was too eccentric to be anything but a librarian broke in. “that behavior is unacceptable! This is a library!”

“Shut up,” Eldore turned on her furiously. “Keep your mouth shut or I’m gonna leave you and your library in a world of hurt!”

That was enough for her. She disappeared into a row of books.

Eldore turned back on Korvault. He was expecting another word lashing, but the bully surprised him by delivering a slug to the side of his face. His head snapped to the side in a failed attempt to absorb the blow! “Aahhh!” Korvault yelled. “Shit!” His hand



gripped his contorted face in a way that provided far more drama than anything. "Is that all you got? Damn! That was weak! Hit me again!"

Eldore obliged, this time with a little more force. Korvault was ready for it, though, and it didn't hurt nearly as much. "That feel good, does it?" Eldore grinned. "You like that?"

"Hell yeah!" Korvault laughed. "I can never get enough of stupid brutality! See if you can hurt me now!"

"You want it to be that way, do you?" Eldore rolled back and stood up. "Alright then," He bawled up his hands into fists. "Let's see what you got!"

Korvault got up, brushing himself off disconcertedly. "What do you mean?" Eldore delivered a punch to his face. "Shit! I told you! Picture day!"

"Come on, funny boy! Hit me!"

"Ah...." Korvault took a step backwards. "I see. How about not!"

"What? You scared?"

"Not at all. How about you just pummel me and I stand here and take it."

"Funny guy doesn't want to fight?"

"He'd much rather take the beating so you can go and brag to your friends about how you schooled a guy who did absolutely nothing to stop you! I want you to have the macho bragging



rights, Eldore. I wouldn't be the friend I claim to be if I took those away from you."

"Shut up!" Eldore delivered the greatest blow he had yet. It sent Korvault spinning to the floor.

"Alright, Elley." It was Siviena who spoke. She got up from her chair slowly, unfolding her legs, laying aside her comic and rising with a little bounce. "We've all had a long day, and it is picture day tomorrow, so why don't you pack it in before I feel inclined to start telling people about Windsor."

Korvault stopped cold in his tracks. "You wouldn't!"

"Try me!" Siviena smirked.

Korvault struggled, working back and forth. He half wound up to kick Korvault where he lay, then changed his mind. "Later, Korv," he said, spitting on the carpeted floor as he turned and stalked out.

"Are you alright?" Siviena asked, kneeling down beside the downed Korvault.

"Fine," he lied, "What happened in windsor?"

"Picked him up hitchhiking," Siviena replied. "He tried to come on to me and I left him tied up and naked in the middle of a park. He's never forgiven me. To this day his friends think I'm his bitch and I haven't had the heart to tell them otherwise."

"Shit..." Korvault got up, feeling his face. "He's gonna kill me now..."



"Look on the bright side," Siviena replied. "You lasted the first round. That's more than most people can say."

"For what reason? So he can come back later and do me right?"

"Hey," Sivien said, stopping him and turning him so that she had his full attention. "Chill out. He's running scared. You shook him up."

"I shook HIM up!"

"You did," she took his arm, escorting him towards the door. As they passed the row of books where the librarian still cowered, she gave her a quick smile and a "sorry about that..."



The Forty-five Challenge

TIME TO CATCH LIFE IN
PAINT BLACKS AND DULL GREYS
OR LEAN BACK AND WAIL
SMILE AND DIE FOR NAUGHT
LIVE TO LOOK ON JOY
FIGHT TO SEE WHO WINS
FACE DOWN DEAD IN MUD
OR GRIP LIFE IN TIME
DANCE THE NIGHT TO RAIN



To Grunts

Most people talk much

Presenting ideas

Living life for the monument

Not realizing that

Nobody's up for the moment

So welcome to earth where humanity rules

Where nobody loves

Though we all say we do

And we all bite our nails

Though we say it's not true

We believe it with all that

We've got to

So welcome to earth

Where we're dug in with fools

Gems caught in a wave



Diamonds in a hole

Boring water out to save

The lives of those we'll never know

Smiles that can't quite cover holes

Tears that can't quite fill them up

All I've come to know is that

All that I've cried for and died for

Is all that's corrupt

And the school yard teaches that

Butterflies in the wind

Lips of tempered steel

Wounds that never mend

'cause we haven't the health or

The heart to heal

Kites are set ablaze

Stars are frozen o'er

In a bloody haze



Highschool

Hiram Webb

We shrink on the brink of abysses

And dream to soar

But the future can't reach us here

Too hard to live

But too painful to die

Too sarcastic to laugh

But too funny to cry

Chasing gold-anchored rainbows

Awash in a blood-red sky



WE

We run

Like fierce wind we rush

Like calm sea torn up

By day – by night

Through wind and fire

Through ice and sun

We race

We push, we fight

To win; to run

We climb up and up

We will not stop

No pause

We fall and rise once more

To pulse



Highschool

Hiram Webb

To push

Through ice

Through Sun

We leap

To leave black void under

As rocks skiff and flip and drop

We fly

We hang on air; on great wings

To plunge on the loose

And mount on the strain

We stretch and flinch

Draw and drag

Tow and haul

And we rise

To soar on high wings



Highschool

Hiram Webb

To speed through draft and drop

We fly

We land

We pound the dust

Our legs in mid stride

We crouch and spring

And swing

Steel takes flight

We slash

And blood floats

Free in path

From scored neck

Strung to dust

And we crash

We fall and crease



Highschool

Hiram Webb

And mound up

Heap and mass

Fame and loss

We die

And Run



Term Two



Diandra

November 18, 2007

Here is the truncate poetic account
Of an existence ridiculously conventional
Of biographies of historical inaccuracy
And of a plethora of adverbs and adjectives
And mundane nouns of questionable genesis
Which create a cacophony of sounds
And amount to a few lines short of oblivion
Or perhaps the thing we all scrabble with and
Write about and have passion over
But upon striving to express and articulate
Find that no one fancies a listening
To our half-assed attempt at saying
What they feel too and would much rather
Live out and breathe in through clenched fists
Than sit reading your poor assimilation of



Highschool

Hiram Webb

Because the word is much too brief
To wrap around a raw desperate emotion
And so we add more and more words
Foraging un-definition and abstraction
Because any finite noun or imagery
Ends the high and returns us
To bitter reality where winter devours
Far from the benediction where four letters
Are simply not enough to engulf the conception
But with all the originality we can muster
We shove aside wordiness in an endeavor
Through the flattened stratum of parchment
Into the perspective of any who give a damn
And in a fumbling avalanche of cliché metaphors
The clock ticks off the last ebbing heartbeat
The door opens to the dismal promise of day
And in defeat we rob a final fleeting moment
To hang on and utter the word



Highschool

Hiram Webb

Too brief to encompass raw emotion

To describe the cacophony of image

Or the panorama of sound

With souls clasped tight

And eternity un-spoken

We open mouth upon leaving

To whisper "I love you"

-Hiram



Forian Roe

The night was young, the moon querth weren't

The glem tree set a loathsome scent

And through the trees they came and went

The Paden men of Khal de Lent

Their chests were bronze their axes sheen

Their hair was long, their eyesight keen

And all around the eerie scene

They danced about as in a dream

The steel sang songs of victory

To end the humble mortal's plea

And blood soaked earth, the dynasty

Of Paden men, the strong and free

But Khal de Lent set on the stair

And at his side the maiden fair

It was for her the axe did tear



Highschool

Hiram Webb

The flesh of any who would dare

The ring was wide, the matches long

And knightly Paden men were strong

Of them we sing the warriors song

“Till death we ever carry on!”

By hundreds came they drove by drove

There fell the bandit by the rogue

And next to him the knight was clove

And there the bard in fancy clothes

But though the corpses piled high

Still countless more remained to die

And Khal began to wonder why

His men came one and all to die

As bodies fell so did his head

And Khal took neither drink nor bread

As man by man they all fell dead



The ground around turned bloody red

But at the hour of despair

There came a peasant with a spear

A Paden boy who knew no fear

Spake Khal de Lent, "Come hither here!

"You're much too young to give your life

"Amid this bloody field of strife"

But spake the boy, "The hour is right

"The Paden maid shall be my wife!"

And to the ring the youngster sprang

And feet took flight and cold steel sang

And Paden king felt priden pang

And set the royal arrow twang

"Enough!" cried Khal, "Not one more blow!

"The maid has had a worthy show

"I've seen enough and now I know

"The lad shall wed Forian Roe!"



Highschool

Hiram Webb



Here's to Dying

Here's to dying

Whether you want to or not

Here's to living

And wasting the time that you've got

And to giving your will

And your life and your fate

For the things and the ones

That you hold dear and hate

Crawl away from the covers

Drug towards the door

From the warmth of your lovers

To ice shackled shores

To the stage of the morning

To the critics and mobs

To the building and burning



Highschool

Hiram Webb

Of heroes and gods

Plaster a smile

Over bruises and holes

And a plastic façade

Over hobbies and moles

Try to be what you can't

So you act out the part

Turning daydreams to nightmares

You've become what you aren't

Turn reality over

And mold it to fit

A picture much older

Than we want to admit

Play the part act the character

Smile for the eye

Pay your taxes to Caesar



Highschool

Hiram Webb

But never ask why

INCOMPLETE

November Sixteenth

Gawd, she'd better be there! I shake the snow from my boots. Please let her be there. I shove my hands deeper into my pockets and redouble my pace. What is it? I pull my hand back out of my pocket and swivel it around. Too dark. I pull out my other and feel for the button on the edge of my watch. The screen lights up blue and through the scratch I finally see the numbers. After eleven! This is crazy. She'll be asleep. Krystal said she was zonkared when they got back. You'll wake her up and she'll be pissed off. I keep walking. No! Get a grip of yourself. Look around you! She'd want to see this.

The mental debate continues as step by step I drive myself up the hill, onto the street and across, up into the grass. Now it's just this damn building between me and my destination. It's always this building, it seems. Were I God I'd wipe it from the face of the earth in contempt. But I'm not. Is she there? Please, let her be awake! I round the corner. A light! Is that her room or her uncle's? How many are there on this side of the building? The building ends and it's her room. She's up! I go faster, excited now. She'll be tired, you idiot. She won't want to come down. You'll end up sitting up there for a couple of hours while she tries not to sleep... It's not too late to turn around now. You could go home... but oh gawd I don't want to!

I round the back of the building. There's the balcony... there's the door. And what fortune! Her neighbors are there! I can get in! A man, I'd guess age forty-five, stands out in the snow with a



girl, maybe twenty-three. They're headed inside. I cut into step behind them, trying to look like I own the place. He opens the door for his girl and then enters himself. I come up the steps, praying he'll let me in.

"Do you have your key?" the voice startles me. He's grinning at me, holding the door open about six inches. The bastard's not going to let me in!

I mock digging in my pockets. Of course I don't have my key, damnit! What do I look like? I try to step into my persona. "No!" I say, trying to be apologetic and distressed. His grin gets bigger and he pulls the door shut – right in my face.

Shit! Asshole! Mighty neighborly... mighty neighborly. For all he knows, I might live here! Hah, you idiot if you lived here you'd have a key... but what if I forgot mine... Bastard! I stalk backwards. Jeez, he's still there! Up in the stairwell gawking at me! I retrace my steps back from the door to get a better view of the balcony.

"DIANDRA!" I cup my hands around my mouth and shout up into the snow. Please, come. "Diandra!" I call again. Come on, come on. Gawd, please come! "Diandra!" I shake my head, wishing that her other neighbor, the NICE one who lives beneath her, would appear. He at least lets me in. I've never seen this guy before. I guess what they say about first impressions is true. He's a real idiot! "Diandra!" Her neighbor's still there, watching me! I stare up at the balcony, trying to be oblivious to my ogling friends. "Diandra!" Damnit.



My friends up in the stairwell disappear. They're coming back down! They're going to let me in. I want to run to the door, to hide behind it and hold it open and slip in when they come out but I don't. I wait, hoping against hope that they invite me inside. They don't of course. They come back out and stand in the cold where they were before I came. That bastard! Look at him, he's still smirking at me. And Dian's obviously not up.

I abandon my position under the balcony and head back across the grass, half bent over by the lead weights in my chest. I can feel that asshole's eyes boring into the back of my head. Gawd why do people have to be so nasty? I cross the road again. Oh well. I try to lighten my mood. Besides, it's after eleven...

I stare up at the dark sky. The snow's thinning out now, turning to rain. Good riddance. She's not here to enjoy it. It might as well. I take one long last look back up at the window with the light inside. She's in there. I know it. She's probably fallen asleep with the light on. I'm so close, and yet so far. I turn my back on the window, allowing that damn building to cover it up. I start back down the hill, shoving my hands into my pockets again and cursing the rain. Damn bastard... She was there...



Sand

(G C) x4 F# C

You were a tramp with your skirt to high

I was an emo trying not to cry

We were too young to realize

Life shouldn't be enjoyed

You were an angel who hated your wings

I was the devil with a guilty conscience

Oh so young and cut down to size

So life can't be enjoyed

Am G C Am G F#

And they tell us now

That what we did was wrong

Could have mentioned it back then

Been sinning for so long



Highschool

Hiram Webb

G Dm Am C

We walked on frozen shields and sucked lollypops
Sat close on chesterfields and we chewed gumdrops
We crashed the carnival and lived a year at Disneyland

Stashed up on chocolate chip cookies;

A castle in every grain of sand

Em D/F# G

You the girl with the hidden horns
And I the boy with the crown of thorns
Lost in love and hell knows what it means
But I'd die if it'd make you happy
And heaven stared but I don't have a clue
'Cuz I'm way too busy looking at you
Caught on your cord and swung away
In the dark to a land of magic



Sonnet α

A toy sits in a corner unaware
That Christmas day will never come for him
And he will never know a child's care
Or be subjected to a youngster's whim
A bride stands in a chapel's aisle drear
With none but ghosts to watch her finger bare
And naught but roses breaking sobs to hear
And tears to fall upon her silken hair
A graveyard desolate is set with weeds
With dogs and crows as visitors therein
And none that come to ponder tombs or grave
Or feel the lack or loss of next of kin
And shadows cover all in gloomy fate
Releasing beauty to the hands of hate



The killing of Saint Nicholas

I prepped my house for war tonight

The night of Christmas eve

I locked the windows oh so tight

And I vowed not to leave

I bricked the chimney in so well

And brought in all my guns

And greased the flu, yeah right to hell

This year he will not run

I stuffed the stockings full of bombs

And set the grate with spikes

I hope he breaks all of his bones

And then does what he likes

I've been a good boy all the year



Highschool

Hiram Webb

To trick him into this
I've prepped my house for war tonight
To kill Saint Nicholas



Today to Dark

I went to see the sky today

And found that it was gone

The blue expanse had passed away

But living lingered on

And there below the world was bright

The trees and flowers grew

Without the sky block my sight

I finally noticed you

Without the sun to light your face

The shadow took no hold

And set beneath the endless space

The palest skin turned gold

Where once the voice of wisdom spoke

The shadow proves the sun

Into the darkness I awoke

And there my life began