

Harrison's Dream

(A Preamble to "Closing Doors, Retribution, and Sunset")

Amber waves shimmering in the September wind,

Fleeing the rays of sunlight as the day comes to an end.

Peace, tranquility,

A heavy lethargy settles over me.

I and the other suckling pigs who shall yet know another tomorrow.

I hear the ghostly rustling of the leaves,

Though my mind comprehends and seethes.

Gently falling in the orange, browns, and yellows of autumn,

We plunge in a downward rush toward the epitome of the word dumb.

I and the other reapers who shall yet know another tomorrow.

The storm quickly approaches,

As the wall surrounding my small world encroaches.

The distant rumble, a brilliant flash on the horizon,

We are driven before the flood like a herd of bison.

I and the other sheep who yearn for yesterday.

*The chaos, the confusion, the fear,
All foreshadow that our end is near.
But a light, a faint glimmer of hope at the end of the tunnel,
Play us false, a prison – a human kennel.
I and the other dogs who will dread another day.*

*I absorb the pungent smell of freshly mown grass,
Forgotten in our over-processed jar of glass.
Dependability, loyalty, commitment, power,
Your echoing words weigh upon my consciousness in this dark hour.
Tomorrow I shall hold the key.*

*I see a swirling collage of faces both old and young,
Some whose birth song is yet unsung.
I scrutinize their thoughts for an instant,
Though my own I cannot draw to the microscope – so far, so distant.
What shall I do when I hold the key?*

*Do I dare to dream of a world reborn,
Or do we continue through the doldrums lost and forlorn?
Why has it come to me to choose,
Whether all shall win or one shall loose?
Can I bear the burden, the awesome responsibility?*

I must accept the hand of fate,

A loathsome touch that I love and hate.

The resolve of great men caused such devastation,

What shall one such as I do in retaliation?

Shall I fall also from my humanity?

I look upon the ruin, the desolation,

Once there stood a great nation.

Now nothing so much as a barren expanse at our expense,

The dead shall offer no recompense.

The living must pay the wergild for their folly.

I know the cost,

For all of those souls lost.

You have made me lord over the purse strings,

Commander-in-Chief of all things.

Shall I pay the debt for human's folly?

Beneath my feet, the ground – blistered and blasted,

The intent and aspiration of a people wasted.

A myriad of infinite cracks in the landscape

Each representative of a road we may have trod to escape.

The horror that we have visited upon ourselves.

*Above my head, the sky – cloudless and monotone,
The vision and dreams of an entire race gone.
No longer a sight of heavenly orbs by day or night
That could have set the world on a course that was right.
The shame that we have visited upon ourselves.*

*Tomorrow, I must pay the price for our bane.
Half-forgotten memories rule in a world gone insane.*

The blaring overtones of a muted alarm clock sounded through the grogginess of Harrison's sleep-clouded mind. He arose from his small cot to face the day which he had long feared and hoped for in vain...