



A DRAGON SWALLOWED THE BEAR

SIX STORIES

Jeremy Campbell

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REVELATORPRESS

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In the Cold of Alaska

In the cold of Alaska there was blood inside of me and it began to move. It was some time before it found warmth, and when it did it was under the blankets with the bear in the corner. The bear and I had been living together two weeks now. We had both escaped from sharp-toothed traps, but neither of us said much to the other. She was gone much of the day, going wherever it is bears go. At night I would fall asleep knowing she was watching my chest. Sometimes I was a cartoon. Sometimes she was as real as the nails in the floor.

One day she flung me against the wall and tore my arm off.

If I had been a tiger I would have launched myself at her. If I had been a giant python I would have squeezed her bones to dust. If I had been a bull I would have gored her. A stallion, kicked a dent in her skull. A dragon, swallowed the bear. A man, fled. But I was a dummy, meant for scaring birds from fields, so I picked up my arm and swung at the bear with it. Her claws raked across my back, shoulder to hip, and I staggered and faced her and grinned as I could and opened my mouth wide. All the flies and bees that had come to live in me—they were meant to erupt and ravage that huge face. But that didn't happen. The flies and hornets and scarab beetles had disappeared, and so I stood there stupidly, mouth gaping, my arm in hand. The bear paused. Perhaps startled by my own confusion. I raised my arm and jammed it at her face. One of the fingers caught her eye. There was a tearing sound and I looked down to see she had unzipped my belly.

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I walked outside and collapsed in the snow and after a long while the snow recognized me and melted to let the soil come up. Snakes ran through me. While I was laughing, the bear with her ruined eye came and lay by me and we dreamed. When we woke we agreed that I would need stitches. I kissed her swollen nose and she said there was a good chance we might kill each other. I said to her you're mistaken, I'm not as strong as all that. She thought about that, and coughed, and wandered off.

The Fire Marshal's Cat

A cat sat on the front porch watching the rain.

On the other side of the house a fire was starting. The spark in the bathroom, born of a faulty outlet and a hairdryer cord jerked too hard—or a match lit and dropped in a half-mistake. Clumps of tissue and, perhaps, some spilled alcohol for kindling. The fire marshal, a big man, would question the woman about the alcohol and she would tell him a story and he would listen. Her name was Joanna. He would have suspicions about her.

A cat sat on the front porch watching the rain. A kitten, colored snow and cinnamon, tired from chasing robins. It watched the weather a little longer, and sneezed, and rose and pattered back into the house. The front door had been left open. In a few months it would have a pet door—not meant for the cat, but for a dog Joanna thought would come to live there but then someone would have a change of heart and the door would be only for the cat. The kitten found the woman talking on the telephone, sitting in a recliner near the window, making plans for later. The kitten jumped on her lap and said, “I’m bored. I want to play but I’m too tired to play. I don’t like the rain. I like taking baths in the tub but out there that’s too much water for me, it makes me sneeze.”



The fire marshal, a big man, would scoop up the young cat and say, “So you saw it all, huh?” The cat would look him in the eyes and the marshal would have a sudden realization: the cat could read his thoughts. And it could talk. If he asked those slit-pupils another question, the cat’s mouth would open and answer. “Tell me what happened. Is she telling me everything or do I gotta dig? You know I don’t want to. I know things have happened to her, I don’t know what but. . . . She’s yours, so it’s your call.” He and the cat would stare at each other as he waited. The cat would sneeze. The marshal would purse his lips, set the cat down, and scratch the back of his neck. The marshal would tell himself that he had overreacted, but then he would ask himself if the smoldering behind him was not justification for having overreacted. He would wish he could just walk away.

The spark multiplied and became something more, and something more raced through Joanna’s veins and into her fingers and eyes and stomach and lungs. She felt like she was in a small boat battered by tall waves. Her face was hot and cold and she wanted to scream but couldn’t find a voice. She remembered the bottle in the freezer. She’d hidden it there, behind a bag of ice, fooled herself into thinking she was hiding it. The bag was thrown in the sink, ice chips scattering across the counter and onto the floor. The bottle was full. The sound of its seal breaking was so pretty she figured it was the same sound an angel snapping its fingers makes. She wondered why she had thought of the vodka so quickly, then realized she hadn’t thought of it quickly, it had been there all week, since Tuesday night after coming home from the video store. The cashier had had a big mouth. You’d need a big mouth for the words she’d had. The cashier had said it was out of a sense of fairness, “ ’Cos I know what it’s like not to know, to ask a big question and have to wait on an answer. That just kills me, you know? Not that I’d ever ask that question, I’m just more traditional. But for you to have the, the, the wherewithal to ask him like that, to be so confident and for him to be so old-fashioned. I mean, it’s been four months, right? No,

it's been five, it's been five, I remember. Well he just needs to understand that romance is like one of those animals that gets evolution, y'know? Just because something's worked for centuries doesn't mean he can't adapt. God, you just must be burnin' up." Joanna had left with her video without saying anything. She had thought about how long she had lived in this town and why the hell a question like that had to be anyone else's business and what was the point of telling friends something in confidence? At home, she had found her cat draped over the back of the recliner, watching cars pass. On the table had been an envelope and the kind of small dark box that lifetimes come in.

There was a cat on the front porch watching the rain. A kitten. After it pattered into the house and found Joanna on the phone, it played with the scratching post in the laundry room for awhile and then returned to the living room. Joanna was off the phone. She picked the kitten up and said, "Look what I got. Isn't it pretty? I'm going to wait, though. I'm waiting. We need to give it more time. Do you like it?" The kitten said yes and squirmed and raced to the corner to find the catnip toy it had left there earlier. Joanna went into the kitchen and put her surprise in a drawer. She poured herself a glass of water. She walked back to the living room. On her way, her fingers brushed the heavy black coat draped over the kitchen chair.

A cat sat on the balcony watching the rain. Old, blind in one eye, a scar on its back from a scuffle with a Cadillac. It sometimes remembered the other porch, but not today. Soon the can opener would start moaning. The cat did not look forward to hauling itself up, walking inside, walking to the kitchen, eating the food that was never as good as it seemed like it would be. The other can opener, back in the old house, now that machine had made good food, almost as good as robins. But that was a different can opener and the small man who used this inferior device showed no sign of getting a new one. The old cat knew it didn't have much longer to live, so it made a decision: the can opener must be replaced. The last days should hold more flavor. The cat began devising a plan to break the can opener. It would have to look like a mystery.

That made the cat think of other mysteries: why did robins have to hide when it rained? where had the man's old dog gone, the one with whom the cat used to share the balcony? where had the man's comfortable heavy coat gone? what if it wasn't the can opener that made the difference? what had the lady done diff—

The cat sneezed and shook its head.

The fire marshal's name was William but he went by Will and never Bill. He sat on the remains of the porch with the cat. Neither of them said anything for awhile; both were deep in thought. Then the cat, without looking at him, said, "Sometimes during the night she wakes up and walks around and goes back to sleep. She doesn't say anything. She walks to the window, stares outside, then drinks something that she won't even let me smell. I think she's afraid of my whiskers dipping in it. I tell her they won't but she doesn't believe me. Last night she walked all night. She opened an envelope and took a key out of it. She tied it to a string and tried to play with me, but she kept crying. She kept picking up the phone and setting it down. There were bits of fingernail all over the floor this morning. I hate walking on fingernails." Will looked down at the cat. All he could say was: "Yeah." The cat rubbed against Will's heavy black coat. Joanna stood in the driveway, watching the fire engine pull away. "There are traditions," Will said to the cat. "A woman can't put a guy in a spot like that, it's not normal." The cat looked at him. Will said, "Hell . . . I don't know. How does a person know that fast? Five months? I'm just not . . . It's not normal. Should be *me* asking, and I don't know." Will took a deep breath. "You keep an eye on her." The cat purred: Will's fingers massaged its neck. Then Will stood up, put his hands in his pockets and walked over to Joanna, who stood by her mailbox. The cat followed, hoping for another petting.

Joanna said to Will: "I'm sorry. I am. For all this." He said, "It's just a house. Important thing is that no one got hurt. Looks like it was an accident to me." She said, "I don't know why I asked, I fucked up, I don't know what I'm doing. I'm sorry. I was so excited, I . . . I didn't know if you would. I don't know. I don't know what I was thinking. Can we pretend it didn't happen? Please? I

just want . . . I know I made a mess, I made a huge mess, and . . . and I don't know what else to say. I didn't mean to embarrass you."

Will said to Joanna: "Well . . . like I said, looks like an accident. Better contact your insurance agent. Get things rollin'." Joanna tried to hand him a small box but he shook his head, smiling briefly, politely, and turned to go. The cat watched a shudder pass through her. She stood there a long time.

The cat watched her turn and walk into the blackened house and heard her digging and that was the last time the cat saw her.

A DRAGON SWALLOWED THE BEAR: SIX STORIES

Tiny Stories Kept in a Locked Chest

A woman in Pennsylvania receives a letter from a former lover. In the letter he confesses, with roundabout words, that she is still in his heart. She knows this is what the letter says but her stomach does not know what to do with it. If she was the only one sleeping in her bed, it might be easier.

The man who writes stories that spring to life with flesh and bone and clamor will be persecuted. He will be murdered. There's a large green bottle sitting on the desk and he suspects it is in his best interest not to look out the window.

The man who builds furniture in his basement grows stronger from using the hammer. His job eats ten hours a day, sometimes twelve, but even after this the man finds time to use the hammer and saw. On the days when he is too exhausted, he lies with nails under his pillow and thinks about frames and cabinets. It is consuming him, he knows, but he does nothing to stop it. One day he has an idea, for a chair, a chair made of glass. How will he use his hammer to build that? He ponders this, then smiles because now he has a reason to use fire. He laughs because he realizes he never needed a reason.

A kangaroo is spotted in an office building. The police are called, as well as the fire department, though none of the firemen can recall a time when a kanga-

roo set a fire or was found to be combustible. The police search the building but find nothing. A few days later the kangaroo is again spotted, this time on the 2nd floor. Again the police and fire department are called, as well as a zoologist; but again nothing is found, even though special kangaroo-sniffing bloodhounds are brought to the scene. A few days later the hopping marsupial is spotted on the 9th floor. This time the police do not respond. The fire department shrugs. The zoologist is stuck in a traffic jam; the violent storm that manifested only an hour ago has caused several accidents. Unfortunately, the kangaroo explodes and much of the building, and a few lives, are lost.

A young man who works at a store decides to rob the safe and drive to Alaska. He drives all night and sleeps in a Canadian motel and then drives farther. When he is sixteen miles outside of Juno, he realizes that he left his apartment door unlocked and this worries him for a moment, but then he realizes the police will be searching his apartment anyway. They will find the dirty dishes in the sink and his porn videos and all the books that he still hasn't read. They will find the box on the bottom shelf of his bookcase and all the relics that are inside. When the young man remembers this box he also remembers he forgot to grab the one thing that matters most to him, that's draped over a chair in his apartment, that someone once made for him, that he would grab before anything else if there was a fire. But then he thinks, Shit, if this isn't a fire, what is? It is several minutes before he realizes he has pulled over to the side of the road.

A girl overhears a woman at the other table say to someone: "She lived in a house down the street. She loved a guy named Michael." The girl wants to go over and tell her that the man's name was not Michael, but then she thinks the woman might say something more offensive if she has the right name. The girl will not give her that ammunition. Besides, the girl thinks, there probably was, somewhere, a guy named Michael.



The little old lady wakes up one morning to find her hands have been taken and teapots put in their place. She curses up a storm—she knew she should not have left her hands on the window sill to dry—and the storm brings buckets of rain and a lot of people have to have their windshields replaced because of the buckets that crash on them. The little old lady, never an optimist but staunchly opposed to pessimism, decides to try the teapots. She asks the man who delivers her mail if he'll help her make tea but he says he must keep a tight schedule, the bosses notice such things and besides he has to be home no later than 3:30 or else his kangaroo starts getting anxious. The lady pleads and offers to show him a thing or two and by three he's got the kettle on and he asks what exactly it was she had him pour in there. It had been in a large green bottle with no label, and it definitely had not been water. The little old lady waves his question away. She says she's been saving it for some time and isn't sure what it will be like boiled. Finally it is ready and he pours the liquid into the two teapots. It is clear like water but he sees ribbons of silver in it, and that reminds him of something. The little old lady has him lay on his back. She holds up one of her new hands and tells him to open his mouth. It's hot, she says, and you might choke, but let it fill your belly; only when the belly is full will there be enough silver to lure out the dragons.

The chair is made of glass and Michael sits in it without thinking. If it were a diamond chair he would not have sat in it. If it were a gold chair he might have sat in it, but probably not. Regardless, it is not a comfortable chair even though it seems to Michael that it should be. He spots a woman with a blue purse and asks her, "You see this glass chair? Sit in it, tell me if you think it's comfortable." She agrees with him that it is not. He spots a man with a big belly and skinny legs; this man also agrees that it is not comfortable. Michael spots a young man who looks like an athlete and can't hear him because his headphones are too loud. "You see this glass chair? Will you sit in it and tell me if it's comfortable?" This young man can't even sit in the chair for five seconds, it's so uncomfortable, and he jumps out of it before it cripples him and his legs forget how to jump. Michael spots a hunchbacked woman and asks her to sit in

it and she does and for a moment she smiles, then confesses she would rather have railroad spikes pounded into her forehead than sit in this horrible glass chair. Michael spots a group of French tourists—and a group of bikers behind them, and a swim team behind the bikers—and is about to ask them, but then he notices something about the chair, mainly that it is not really a chair. It is a large glass hand with something dark at the center that is about the size of his own fist, and, though embedded deep in the glass, looks to be fractured. Once Michael sees this, he gives up and goes outside but turns around because it's raining buckets out there and they're the heavy steel kind.

The mob is getting closer with its noose and gasoline. The man who gives muscle and noise to stories has a sinking feeling in his belly. He's pretty sure now that driving all night to get here was a bad idea.

A woman in Pennsylvania goes to her closet and opens up her chest. That's where she keeps some blankets and faces of people and a small box that she's never told anyone about. She puts the letter in the box and tries to forget about the words in it—words about animals and fire and dragons and glass. She closes her chest, and buttons her shirt back up, and slips quietly into bed.

Strolling Cat and Friend Dog

Daughters were not invited to the ceremony; the business of the kings was for their sons only. Cat strolled through the room panting and friend dog crept in the shadows, slinking along the wall and up the wall and across the ceiling. The kings' bones were the bones of their fathers before them: it was time for the sons to take them out.

When they opened the kings they did not find much royalty. The ichor inside was the color of coffee and smelled as though hauled from a swamp. The sludge spilled out and filled the room up to their waists. The sons' fathers disappeared, mouths gaping, beneath it. Blind reaching could not retrieve them; their bodies could not be felt underfoot. The sons were frightened. Most frightened was the misfit who was not a son but a daughter disguised, whom each king had simply presumed was the progeny of another. She waded through the rising muck to find the doors locked and could see nothing through the keyhole. She turned and the others saw her expression was not a man's expression. Relief and revulsion took turns playing on their faces.

There were no windows.

The secret door in the corner was sealed.

They were up to their necks. The shortest was crouched on the shoulders of the tallest. The thinnest was eating the fattest. The handsomest used his knife to trade faces with the ugliest, so they each might know another life before drowning.

She watched this and other exchanges and wondered where that cat had gone to, and what about that wretched dog?

One son drowned. The others scrambled to form a tottering ladder, and he at the top, his fingertips brushed the ceiling for an escape. A few of them thought about killing some of the others to make a raft, but such a raft seemed unlikely to float. Some of them, like the handsomest, had brought sharp edges hidden in coat pockets. They split themselves open and sank. Someone sputtered that this was all a test, surely, but even he did not seem convinced and soon after unzipped his wrists and disappeared. Another sputtered that the princes were outside keeping the doors barred and they could be bargained with, surely, but even he did not seem convinced. His bobbing head disappeared soon after.

She and three others remained. The muck had stopped rising. It was thick as pudding now and difficult to tread. Their limbs were tired. If they reached up, their fingers nearly brushed the ceiling. An hour passed. One of the sons, the one wearing the dead ugly one's face, grew too tired and was overtaken and the muck rose an inch.

"I have an idea," said the daughter. She told them her idea and they thought it was lunacy. They tried it anyway. They discovered they still could not walk on ceilings. An hour passed. One of the sons, the one who was not so thin now, grew too tired and was overtaken and the muck rose an inch.

"I have a better idea," said the daughter. She told the remaining son her scheme. He was mad by then, and nodded vigorously until it seemed his head might come off. . . .

Later, cat strolled through the room panting and friend dog crept in the shadows, slinking along the wall and up the wall and across the ceiling. Dog stared from the ceiling and cat stared from atop a stool. They stared at the floor. A son was on the floor, unconscious, belly swollen as though pregnant and rising with dream-filled breaths. Dog stared from the ceiling and left through the door up there.

The Tattooed Face

He was my teacher. And now he was ensnared in that porcelain urn sitting on the mantle. When no one was looking I walked up and took it. I took it and I ran as fast as my legs would take me.

Eight days later a woman with silver hair and an accent not like mine found me on the lake; I was sitting in a rowboat. Many could have come looking, and those whom he had trusted would have found me. But it was only her that came. She stood on the shore. She was different than I had imagined and just as he had described. I didn't know what color the woman's hair used to be; if he'd kept photographs, he never shared them.

Back in her room we tested one another.

We talked about first meetings. His voice. His candidness. His impeccable manners. The inadequate goodbyes of youth. This last thing, she said, was just one more thing that rarely improves with age. I was unsure of what to say to that, so I stared out the window at the new moon. We talked about the way he read. We wondered how it was that a colossus was made to accommodate this porcelain bottle.

The urn was poured out. Half the ashes were mixed with flour. We found an oven and she baked a small, rum-soaked orange peel cake. A recipe learned from him. I was offered a slice but I didn't have one. The silver-haired woman ate the entire thing that night. The rum danced in her head and made her

laugh and talk in a language I couldn't understand and she tried to drag me out to get our cheeks tattooed. The rest of the ashes, those went in a bag and the bag locked in a metal box. It was nearly morning by then. She asked me what my plans were. . . .

She disappeared a couple days later. It is my assumption that a plane returned her to Paris. Had I been sleeping? I thought so at first, but there was a box hanging around my neck.

That metal box is empty now and as for clemency, I've given up on that. I was late. I wasn't there to hear him or ask questions or tell him secrets, and now each day I stand outside myself looking.

You don't need a mirror to see the hieroglyphs on your face, or remember what else is in the ink. Everyone can see. Everyone is going to see, so you should be prepared to answer them.

Go to the lake where he swam in the summer, though you never saw him do so. Write everything you can remember, but bring only one notebook:

He was young like this, and was in love in another country. When his body quit him, he was not there.

The Statue of Benjamin Howard

I.

Honor demanded she chase the boy. She did and after a long chase, almost a chase, she overtook him. He fell over onto the white ground and she followed him down, cutting and ripping at him. When his face was gone she forced herself to cry. Better to do it now, she knew, else the tears would come stalking her. She would rather meet her own in this long moment than later fight the dead boy's salt.

II.

Crow Killer is the name he adopted.

III.

There was a moon and snow that fell in lazy, swollen flakes. All this, he thought, belongs to me. When I suck my breath in, that cloud up there will stretch down and tickle my nose. . . . There was a park and a stream that cut in lazy, swollen curves. All this, he thought, belongs to me. When I let my breath

out, that marble figure over there will topple to the earth and leave empty rock boots for me. He looked closer through the slow-falling snow and saw that the statue was trying to suck in air. It surprised him, and, not thinking, he let out his own breath.

IV.

Crows perched on his shoulders. Crows left their shit on him. They had picked this land for their own and retreat was a notion they pretended not to understand. Other birds did not approach, even when only the lady was present. She sat at his feet and read him words and ate sandwiches for him and kissed his cool hands each day. She could not hear his vow to kill all these crows, but she could tell from his carved expression that in some decision he was unwavering. She always wiped him before going, and often looked guilty when doing so. He did not know where she went. Gone though, the large birds would return, he knew that. If she had at some point told him her name or the root of her devotion, he could not recall. Many things were forgotten. But he remembered being born. The long growth to limestone, ages passing and he maturing into something unsoft and streaked. Then torn from the mountainside, then shaped by chisels into some countenance still unseen by himself. And before then, before sculpture and sculptor and marble and limestone and the noise of vanished waters and creatures unremembered; before all that, he wore bones and muscles and skin. He was an animal then, running on two legs. One who had over and over prayed that what was inside him was only a sun. It would have been foolish, of course, to pray for something more than a sun; it was already more than that. Stars were clustered inside him. Growing in number with each thing he lost, and sometimes he had known this. Some of those things had been people. Some had been ideas, some feelings. And then the times spent contemplating which end would find him, and knowing that the constellation of giants inside him would not be idle when his heart stopped, but would seize him and set him back on the earth to search for something he had never been able to lose because it had been missed.

Had he been a man or a boy? His memories, more often than not, were muddled. He was fond of the word *muddle*. He did not know why, but it made him think of India and maybe he'd been there in the heat and in the caves and in a courthouse. Or maybe these things were the book the lady read to him when she sat at his heavy feet. She in her dark dress whenever she visited. She kept her back to him when she read, as though he might look over her shoulder and read along.

Night would come and sometimes there would be the moon and noises in the park, and him there alone, pale and standing rigid with one arm raised. He was made of rock, but the noises made him nervous. He wished he had a throat to call the crows back.

V.

Crow Killer is the name the boy adopted. They came to the statue like it called them. Even when winter came they stayed and perched on the statue's raised arm. He threw stones at them when the lady wasn't there. One time after he hurt one of the birds with a stone and they fled into the trees, she came and grabbed him from behind and warned him to never come here again. She had a bloody face. For awhile he was convinced she was the bird he had injured. He remembered hearing stories about Benjamin Howard and the wife he had brought back from across the ocean. But that did not make any sense and Benjamin Howard and his wife had died a long, long time ago and it didn't take long for the idea to fade. Thereafter he'd see her reading aloud in her peculiar way about picnics and echoes and trials. Her voice was a strange noise to him. It made him think of a shattered stained glass window and all that glass on the floor: bright and charming colors, but nonetheless so many pieces and when numbering more than one, too many pieces. The noise made him nervous. He wished he was a statue to call the crows back.

Then one night there was a moon and some clouds and snow and moonlight reflecting in the park's stream and before he saw the statue gasp, a notion befell him:

All this, he thought, belongs to me.

VI.

She came with a basket left on some careless person's porch, taken that past summer. She came with sandwiches of raw meat and the book she'd found forgotten on a bench. Lazy and swollen snowflakes falling around her and her in such a light dress shivering.

That boy on the riverbank surveying the world like a king.

She stopped and set down the basket. The boy exhaled. She saw his breath. Then a terrible groaning and cracking and the statue tipping over. The boy's eyes found hers. Her husband lay broken, half his face missing.

Honor demanded she chase the boy. She fractured and became fourteen, a murder. After a long chase, it was almost a chase, she overtook him. When his face was gone she bit at herself until she cried.

VII.

His face in the snow and his feet and shins and calves in their high boots still rooted to the marble base. Until now, he had not known his knees were so weak. Or else his boots simply did not care for grass. His face in the snow and a boy's screams not far off, familiar to him. His face had broken apart some. His right eye was in a chunk just a short reach away if he only had muscles and joints for a reach.

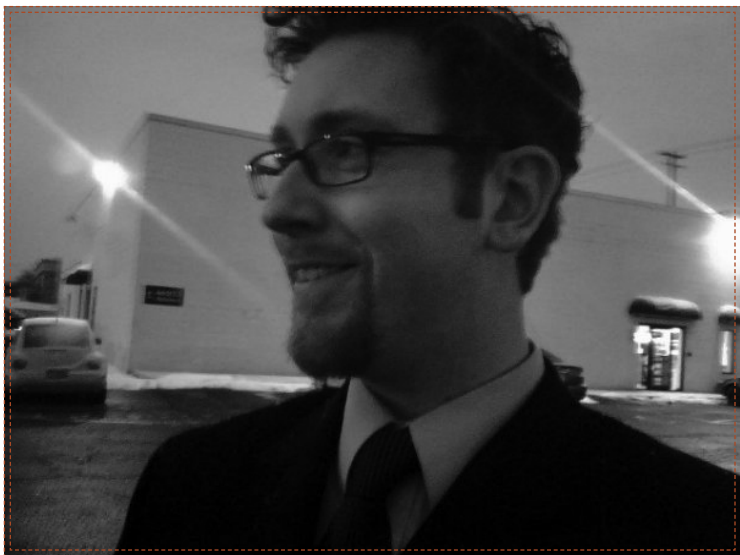
It was quiet now. Even the stream was quiet.

His eye looked at him. He saw his own stiff broken face, still determined in its fashion, a handsome mustached face whose original must have been a loving one. Beyond the face, the moon showed him another sight. He remembered now. Before sculpture and marble and limestone and the noise of water: this is where he'd been. Lying eyeless with the snow turned dark under him, shuddering and the clustered stars inside him dissipating, and it was now and

it was then. And this sight the bright moon was sharing, that he had missed the first time:

Crows, some fourteen of them, wet-beaked and pacing and leaving tracks in the snow. Now that murder weeping, and leaving tracks in the quiet.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jeremy Campbell was born in Michigan. He lived there and probably somewhere else, too. He studied English Literature at Michigan State University and a few years after that someone took this photo of him in a parking lot. The ground was wet. The suit Jeremy was wearing looked like it was his, but it wasn't. The suit was really good at pretending.

FICTION

THERE IS VIOLENCE HERE. THERE ARE MONSTERS AND FIRE, OPEN VEINS AND DESPERATE LOVES, EDGES SHARP AND BLUNT, ANIMALS THAT APPEAR AND FADE LIKE MELTING SNOW. JEREMY CAMPBELL'S STORIES ARE NEITHER FABLES NOR FAIRY TALES, AND TO DESCRIBE THEM IS TO DEAL IN PARADOX. THEY ARE FOCUSED, DISTINCT, BUT THEY BLEED, AND WHEN YOU FINISH READING YOU WILL FIND TRACES OF THEIR WORLDS ALL AROUND YOU. YES, THERE IS VIOLENCE HERE, BOTH REGRETTABLE AND REGENERATIVE. THERE IS COMPASSION. CREATION. DEATH. AND THE SIGH OF RESIGNATION WHICH IS THE BREATH OF LIFE ITSELF.

LOOK DOWN.

YOUR BELLY HAS BEEN UNZIPPED.

