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Cracks in the Pavement

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something like, I don't know, fanart I'd stolen from the internet or horrible old poetry I'd hidden away and forgotten about.

The point is, cutie, is that you're expecting from me some great revelation, some great surprise, something that would shift your perspective of events and shatter you to your core. And I'd loved to have left something like that behind if I were creative enough or if I'd known that you might find it. Unfortunately, bucko, there is no revelation. There is no surprise. There is only you, left in a darkly lit room, trying to find meaning in the documents of a person you already know everything about. There is only me, typing this as you lie asleep in the bed behind me, knowing that there is future where you exist in a world without me in it. I'm not worried for me, but for you – like I said, you're such a codependent.

There's no twist, so I don't really know how to end this – and you know how I am with "ILU's" and "PDA's," so don't worry, I won't muck up the letter with any of that. Just keep this safe, okay? Save it to a flashdrive or something and keep it in your breast pocket – and you're always in business casual, so I know you've got a breast pocket. No excuses!

There was a muddy picture formatted into the word document after the words had ended, and I hovered over it with the pointer. *"I tried to capture a picture of the night sky, but my finger covered the lens. We're holding hands."*

They follow a specific order as they intertwine and tangle with each other; they

sit glistening in the puddles of the past fallen rain. A bird, a crow actually, looks

on shifting its head left, then right. he wonders where to drop the screw held in his mouth, stolen

from some mechanic changing tires, as he sits on the telephone wire unaware of the meaning

of the cracks in the pavement; Infrastructure unable to keep up with the shifting weight of traffic jams.

Shut the fuck up resounds from the street below – a man yelling at a homeless plea for a quarter –

and so, dejected, the homeless plea shuffles away, wary of the cracks under the puddles, carefully avoiding them worried for the wellbeing of his mother's spine. High-rises sprout, clean shaven,

CRACKS IN THE PAVEMENT

Ben Koval

next to housing complexes
pocked with missing bricks
and broken windows, home to
the man they call the flying
dog man because he promises
*one day I'll sprout wings
and I'll be the one barking
from the sky and shitting
on all of You.*

but the suits don't believe it
so they occasionally throw
dimes or nickels or pennies

at him to shut him up as
they enter glass palaces
to render calculations on a

glowing screen that decides the
fate of some blue collar factory
worker six hundred miles away.

He steps out of the office
looking down at his sparkling
black leather shoes

and feels a wet lump hit
his sleeve.
He looks up for answers

and is greeted back with a
cackle and bark
I told you so

ripples through the air.

LOOKING OUT A WINDOW

Bradley Miller

I hum along to the city streets,
They are deep and impersonal and sudden.
The patterns are predictable.
The cars are varied, but bound up all in a cluster.
They snarl impatiently in heat and stifling air
a hot shower in a room with the door staying shut,
or a tiny room with many people and no open window.
The heat sticks to your skin and you sweat,
like a bad night of drinking in South Beach.

As I stare out, on this lonely Sunday,
I picture that I might know the man in the Volvo.
The grey Volvo, returning from church alone
with his hands gently cradling the wheel,
sensing soft leather and desperate to be forgiven.
He waits for his love to appear, and turns the music louder.
It is an 80's tune he usually knows well.
He caresses the notches in the dial,
distinct, as the music tunes out his existence.

I also thought I might have been the woman,
walking beside what appears to be a husband.
Being 45 and still walking the same streets
Being born and perhaps dying here, as well.
She squeezes her husband's hand, he doesn't squeeze back.
Angst shoots into her mind and simmers in silence.
Her man is checking his stocks on a phone.
The glass he presses his fingers against feels stone-like and stiff.
He pokes near the middle – a transaction is complete.

Some say I have the appetite of a houseplant,
needing only to be watered upon pure necessity.
But to speak truth, my soul is the jazz,
elegant tune, riotous and calm.
I slide my fingers down the window,
the wood is old and it pricks my skin,
A shock, a little splinter interrupting my view.
I begin to lose interest in Angst Woman, Stock Man, and Mr. Volvo.
Their lives are not mine and I have things to do.