

One – A Death in the Beginning

Etrom Itaf looked out the window of the car. Traveling to another collection. She was weary of it all, tired of waiting for the return. "There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. But, let it be." She thinks to herself. "An Traath-sa, [Translation: "Now, at this time"] Tis the turning. We divide our year into a dark half, from Samhain ["Halloween"] To Beltaine ["May eve"] and a light half, from Beltaine back to Samhain. An traath-sa, ["Now, at this time"] Legendary battles, loves, and Revelations are permitted to occur at each of these turnings. Under the anam fhilfidh dli [Under the "soul return law"] the opening between this world and another is always an edge. One such opening occurs on November second." She smiles to herself. "But, you did not hear this from me."

It is night in the season of Halloween. Another car is driving very fast. The Driver is a man. He can only see what the headlights see. As the headlights

search the darkness, he sees the houses with Scarecrows, Jack-o-lanterns, Skeletons and Witches in their windows and on their lawns. To him, they all blur into a kinetic montage of images.

He is not doing a very good job of being safe. He runs over the curb and bounces back into the street, fighting the steering wheel all the way.

The car shoots through the dark streets without slowing down. But he hears no sounds.

Suddenly the headlights find a human form, Aya Dane, jogging along the side of the road. The reflective patches on her shoes are bouncing in the darkness, as the car speeds in that direction. There is still no sound.

She is running towards the Car.

The car swerves and hits her - THUD - The car shoots away into the darkness.

Aya Dane lies in the street struggling to hold onto life. The sounds of the night continue in spite of her struggle.

Silently an otherworldly bright yellow vehicle pulls into the scene, and drives up to her shaking body. The car stops, and both doors open simultaneously. Etrom Itaf appears from the passenger side. She is dressed in a purple uniform that looks like something a bullfighter would wear. From the driver's side, Neeve, an ELFIN LIKE, VERY PALE, 20ish WOMANGIRL, emerges. She is wearing the same kind of uniform, but it is gray.

Etrom and Neeve walk over to Aya who is still alive. Neeve says "We're too early!"

Etrom kneels by Aya and reaches out to touch her heart.

"What are you doing? We're not supposed to touch them until they're ready!" Neeve said. Etrom glares at Neeve and touches Aya's heart again. There it was. She feels the faint but electric current of life.

Neeve cries, "Stop it now!" "Shhh!" Etrom commands her.

Neeve tries to grab her arm and pull it off Aya; but she blocks Neeve, and grabs her with her free arm. Etrom tells her, "I just want to feel it again, what it's like to be human."

Neeve tries to break her grasp, but Etrom is too strong. Etrom's hand is on Aya as her last breaths are taken. Etrom smiles with remembrance and satisfaction. Aya dies.

Etrom removes her hand from Aya and frees Neeve. She rises and walks back to the car. "Call it in!" Etrom orders her yet again. Neeve glares at her, produces a communicator device and speaks into it. "27, 27, the sparrow will drown the wind. The sparrow will drown the wind. 27, 27."

Aya Dane's soul returns to the void.

Two ~ What The Crow Said

"14 OCTOBER - 50 WEEKS LATER"

Two people are sitting in a room. One is Yeats Dane, a man in his mid 50's, fit, still boyishly handsome, but sad and marked by life.

He sits on a couch in front of the window. The other is his Therapist, Dr. Goloub. He sits on a lounge chair opposite Yeats, facing the window. An empty coffee table stands between them.

"I keep having these migraine-like headaches at night. It's only at night when I'm trying to sleep. Nothing helps," Said Yeats. "You're having death anxiety," said Dr. Goloub.

This reply shocks him "Huh?" he asked. "You are at an age now where your mortality is in question," said Goloub.

Yeats thinks about this. He can't figure it out, "Why would I be worried about death?" They sit in silence.

"Yeats, how do you see your future, after your wife's passing?"

This question troubles him too. He is trying to figure it out, but he's in a deep fog. "My future?"

He starts to speak, but then stops, as the wheels turn round and round in his head. "It's unclear . . . I feel like I'm waiting ...for something . . ."

Dr. Goloub studies him. "Waiting for what?" Yeats responds, "I don't know . . . something . . ."

They sit in silence. Dr. Goloub glances at the ticking clock on the wall. "Yeats, it's been almost a year now, your insurance benefits are about used up. Don't you think you'd like to accomplish something from our sessions?"

Yeats glares at his therapist. “Is that all I am to you? A ledger card, with an account balance?”

“Yeats, you know that’s not what I meant.” They sit in silence again. Yeats struggles with the silence.

“Just once. Just once, I’d like to know I’m loved and love. I mean like ga-ga goo-goo crazy love. Just one time!”

BANG! A CROW FLYIES INTO AND BOUNCES OFF THE PLATE GLASS WINDOW!

Dr. Goloub jumps back in his seat. Yeats turns to look behind him at the Crow who hit the window.

BANG! The Crow flies into the window and bounces off again. For a second, the Crow and Yeats make eye contact. The Crow hovers there and then flies away. Yeats turns back to Dr. Goloub.

“That’s never happened before . . . it scared me.

But you, you were so calm and composed . . .” “Crows, those rascal shape shifters . . . Now something may change,” thought Yeats.

He looks at Dr. Goloub, suddenly a grin is on his face. “Yeats, you're smiling, why?”

“I just had an idea that's all.”

“Tell me about it?”

Yeats thinks about this. “No. I don't think I'm going to tell you.”

It's night, Yeats is at a modest house. He knocks on the front door. There is noise within, steps approaching the door. The front door opens. RICHARD BRADFORD, a world-weary 60-year-old, whose dinner has been interrupted, faces Yeats. He wears a detective badge clipped to his belt. His expression is a cross between fear and concern. This is not the first time this has happened.

Yeats notices some crumbs and BBQ sauce around Bradford's mouth. "You're eating... I'm sorry... I just was wondering..."

"It's OK... It's OK..."

"Did you ever get any new leads about my wife?"

Bradford studies Yeats before answering. He sees the soul of a man looking for closure. "Yeats, you still in counseling?"

Yeats looks down, he is ashamed that he has interrupted the Bradfords' dinner. "Yeah, I am."

"You OK?"

Yeats nods yes. Bradford is not convinced.

"Honey? Who is it?" A woman says from inside the house.

“Nobody,” Bradford called back, “. . . . Yeats, what do you want?”

Yeats studies him. Looking into Bradford’s searching eyes, he suddenly wanted to cry. He wouldn’t let that happen.

“I want to know what happened to my wife. I want the shit who hit her to pay! I want my life back.”

“You know we’ve looked at all the evidence. There just isn’t enough to go on. I’m sorry Yeats, there’s nothing more I can do.”

Yeats kicks the door mat.

“I need to get back to my dinner. Yeats, you take care of yourself, OK?”

Yeats nods and walks away. Bradford watches him helplessly. Yeats got to him for some reason. He felt

sad.

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Yeats lies in a bed in a cheap motel room. This motel is where Yeats has chosen to live, rather than the home he shared with his wife. There are very few personal effects. Everything is standard motel. There is a pile of clothes on one of the beds.

The sheets and blankets are all twisted. He is still dressed in his street clothes.

He tries to sleep but is useless. He tosses and turns trying to find comfort. Then, he grabs his calf and starts screaming in pain. He massages his calf, then his head, then his temples. He lies back and is still, but the pain in his head still torments him.

HE MOANS.

He changes position, and puts the pillows under his legs. It's no use. He thrusts his hands to his head trying

to block out the pain.

HE MOANS AND MOANS. His sleeplessness is reflected in a mirror. From the other side of the mirror, Etrom is watching Yeats toss and turn. She touches her side of the mirror as if to touch him.

14 October turns to 15 October as the world turns.

The sun is up and bright.

Cigar butts overflow in a large ash tray. A newspaper article is taped to the mirror over the cheap imitation wood cabinet, it reads:

"Aya Dane Killed in Hit and Run"

It wasn't front page news. Wedged into the corner of the mirror frame is a well worn 3x5 inch snapshot of a woman. She is smiling and looking at us. She was the runner, Yeats' wife.

An open vodka bottle sweats next to a tall shot glass. The room is empty, lit by a single lamp which casts a smoky purplish pall on the scene. It is challenged by the neon that burns in the bathroom.

Yeats is seated on the toilet, his boxers around his ankles.

THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. Silence.

THERE IS ANOTHER KNOCK.

"It's open..." calls Yeats.

The door opens slowly.

ARCHIBALD STANTON, a pudgy 66-year-old man enters.

"Yeats?"

“Yeah.”

THE TOILET FLUSHES.

Yeats enters from the bathroom, wiping his hands on his boxers. He sees Stanton and smiles with scorn, then grabs the vodka bottle and pours a shot, ignoring Stanton.

Stanton studies Yeats intently.

Yeats slides down the wall into a sitting position without looking at Stanton. He sips the vodka, which burns and revives him.

“I went by the house today . . .” Stanton says.

He searches Yeats for some response. Yeats ignores him still. There is silence. Stanton waits.

“And?” Yeats finally says...

“And I was wondering about you, Yeats.”

Yeats swirls the vodka in his glass and then sips.

“How are you doing?” asked Stanton.

“I’m doin’ good, real good . . .”

Stanton walks over to him and sits on the corner of the bed above Yeats.

“That’s good, I’m glad to hear that . . .” He could see that this was a fiction. The booze was taking its toll.

He reaches out to touch Yeats’ shoulder. Yeats knocks his hand away and glares at him. A shiver of fear swept through Stanton. “He could hurt me.” Stanton thought to himself.

“What the hell do you want?”

"I'm worried about you; that's all."

"Why? Did I ever come to your church? Did I ever invite you into my home? Did I ever give you a hint that I was a believer? Well did I?"

Stanton shakes his head no.

"You think you can help me?" He asked Stanton.

"No, not me."

"Oh, so you think God can help me?"

"Look, you ought to be in your home, getting on with your life . . . Your work . . . your art"

"You didn't answer my question, did you?"

Stanton is silent. He remembered that last time he talked of God to Yeats. The rage and vitriol was ferocious. He won't take the bait. Yeats finishes his

vodka in a gulp.

“Just because my wife was a believer doesn't mean shit! You hear me?”

Stanton looks down, “Yeats I want to help.” Yeats lunges at him and reaches up to him, grabs him by his collar and pulls him down to his level. Stanton tries to pull away. Yeats' grip does not yield. Instead he pulls Stanton closer so that his ear is right by his mouth.

“Leave me alone!” he whispers into Stanton's ear. Stanton blinks uncontrollably.

“You are a liar. You were born with one face and have painted yourself another, and it rubs me to rage. Get the fuck out of my life. I don't care what you think. I don't care what you have to say. Stay away from me!”

Yeats licks Stanton's ear then curls his legs up into his chest, and pushes Stanton away with the force of his legs. Stanton flies backwards in terror.

“Go fuck yourself!”

Yeats starts LAUGHING. Stanton shoots for the door, as Yeats' eyes well up with tears.

Yeats thought to himself, “Hell calls me. Fuck the world, **FUCK THE WORLD!** I am going to make someone pay. I will create such an opera of malicious butchery, that you will wince at the mention of my name. You hear me, I will have justice!”

Three ~ The One Half World

It is night again. Yeats walks the streets at a driven clip. His head is down and all the life he passes, passes him by.

Occasionally he stops to drink from a plastic pint of vodka in a paper bag that he pulls from his coat, and looks for his direction.

He wonders "Who is it? Who will whisper my name to the moon? Who will see my heart in the darkness? Know my dreams in the light? Who will love me? Who? Who will give me justice?"

As Yeats walks down a street, there are flashing lights traveling past him, and THE SOUND OF SIRENS. Yet he walks on unaware. We SEE there has been a car accident, a SUV flipped over.

On the side door we can read the upside down sign: "CHECK OUT THE NEW HIT SINGLE

FROM THE LOVE SIRENS!"

The sound of power saws shatters the night, and sparks fly as firemen try to cut out the survivors. But it is clear from the blood and shattered glass that there will be none.

Etrom and Neeve's yellow Vehicle drives up to the scene and they get out. Yeats does not notice and walks by the scene as if possessed, thinking to himself "Now in the night, stillness hears my steps. I am the hunter, new born in blood lust. The dead are my fellows as I race to my prey. I don't know your name but I know your heart and it is mine!"

Somewhere in the night a church bell tolls.

Yeats stops walking and listens carefully to the bell.

It tolls again.

"The bell gives voice to my hate and summons me. I

go, and it is done. You will not know this invitation, it is for me alone.” He continues walking with more determination and knocks into someone along his path without turning back.

Yeats’ destination, The Crow’s Nest Club. The door swings open, music plays, as Yeats enters. The ceilings are low and a fluorescent glow emanates from around the stage. There are signs announcing: “ONE NITE ONLY - THE LOVE SIRENS.”

Yeats looks around, gets oriented, and walks over to the bar. The BARTENDER, sees him.

“What can I get ya?”

“Vodka, frozen and neat.”

The Bartender pulls a bottle from the freezer and pours into a glass in front of Yeats. Yeats raises the shot glass in a silent toast and drinks.

"I'm looking for Travis."

"Yeah, and?"

"Are you Travis?"

"Yeah, who are you?"

"We talked on the phone, you told me tonight was the night..."

Yeats studies his eyes.

The Bartender shifts uncomfortably. "I told you to be here early. Now we gotta wait till my break. Sit, enjoy the show."

Yeats sips his drink and studies it as it sweats on the bar.

Behind Yeats is Neeve, walking among the patrons, handing them something, but we can't quite see what it is.

She walks up to Yeats and taps him on the shoulder.
He turns quickly.

“Love?” She asks.

“What?”

“For you.” She hands him a small plush toy bear that is holding a red heart in its hand. Yeats smiles and looks at it. He shakes his head “no” and turns back to where Neeve was standing. She is gone. He looks around and can't find her. He looks back at the Love Bear and its heart and shoves it under his coat into the part where the sleeve meets the shoulder. His focus returns to his drink.

Yeats sips and watches the mirror at the bar; while he does the stage go dark. The room gets quiet.

“Good evening folks . . . welcome to Club Nevermore, here at the Crow's Nest! I'm sorry to say there has been a change on the bill tonight. I know many

of you were here for the Love Sirens, but . . . Ummmm, they can't make it . . .” Travis runs the sound and light board from the corner of the bar, and is the M.C. as well.

RANDOM SHOUTS AND YELPS FROM THE CROWD.

“We're really, really lucky that at the last minute we were able to get the amazing performance artist. . . . Yeah baby, you know who I'm talking about . . .”

ABELL CHIMES THREE TIMES, and the room grows really silent now.

“Here she is, Etrom Itaf!”

A pin spot light on the stage, illuminating a single eye and part of a scar above it.

A FEMALE VOICE - commanding, seductive, wise, nurturing, and represents the most powerful force in the universe begins to speak.

Yeats is compelled to turn around and look with wonder.

"Hail, king that shalt be!" This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee." said Etrom to the room.

Travis nods to Yeats, and walks out from under the bar and towards the back door.

Etrom continues with her performance: "Yet do I fear thy nature; It is too full o' the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way: Thou wouldst be great; but without the illness should attend it: what thou wouldst highly, that wouldst thou holily; Thus thou must do it, if thou Have it; . . ."

Yeats follows Travis, but he looks at Etrom. Their eyes meet as Etrom continues.

"Hie thee hither, that I may pour my spirits in thine ear; And chastise thee with the valour of my tongue. All that impedes thee from the golden round, which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem to have thee crown'd withal."

BLACKOUT ON STAGE. Silence.
Then APPLAUSE AND WHISTLES: As only she can, Etrom has brought down the house, for Club Nevermore night at Crow's Nest.

As the applause travels, Yeats and Travis walk into the alley, and Travis opens a mini-van. They climb in. Travis sits in the back seat and Yeats in the shotgun seat, which swivels around so he can look directly at Travis.

Travis bends down behind his seat and disappears from view. From inside the Club we HEAR the THUMP THUMP of House Music.

Travis sits up and produces a case, and pops it

open. It's full of hand guns.

“All right cowboy, these are all clean, filed down and acid scrubbed. Untraceable. Quality protection - so whatta you lookin' for? Revolver or auto?”

Yeats scans the assortment of weapons.

“Concealment and killing power - I'm only getting one shot...”

“Whoa, hold on there, Texas! Too much Information!”

Yeats stares at him. He wonders if he's blown the deal.

“Maybe it's not what you think!” Yeats offers.

“Me, I'm just a businessman. OK?”

Travis looks at Yeats for approval.

“How much for the Colt Officer?”

“Four bills. You sure you wanna go with that? I mean they jam every few cycles - only 5 rounds in the clip. If you're talking auto, go Glock or Beretta.”

In the background Etrom emerges from the club, sweating. She produces a clay pipe, the kind you might see a Hobbit smoking; strikes a match against the club wall, and puffs away producing clouds of smoke. She cups the smoke with her hand and waves it into her head and hair, just as a Native American might do. She grins as she sees Yeats in the minivan.

“Beretta's too big, how much for the Glock?” said Yeats.

“She's sweet. I can let you have her for 6 bills...”

“The Colt, 100 rounds, that 10 round clip, \$325.”

“You're killing me here!”

Yeats just throws the money in the case and watches Travis' eyes. Travis hesitates, and then grabs the cash. He whips out a brown paper bag, puts the Colt, the clip, and ammo in the bag and rolls it up neat. He hands it to Yeats.

“Happy hunting cowboy.”

Yeats and Travis emerge from the minivan. Yeats tucks the paper bag under the coat under his arm, next to the Love Bear. Travis walks quickly back into the bar. Yeats follows, but his eye is caught by Etrom, who is puffing away.

“When you drink from the well of sadness, do it quickly or you may never leave.” Etrom challenges him.

Yeats stops.

“Do I know you?”

“Do you?”

“Feck off!”

“Anger? Good. Wear your rage well; you will need it for the journey!”

She is moved by her thought. Yeats senses this and it scares him.

“Good night, lady!”

Etrom smiles. He turns and walks away into the darkness of the night.

She puffs on her pipe and watches him walk away shaking her head she thought: “You look like a sad tiger. A sad tiger indeed, but more right and beautiful than you know.”

Etrom remains at the back door under the neon

signs and puffs away on her clay pipe.

The Yellow Car pulls into the alley and drives up to Etrom. Neeve pops out from the driver's side and opens the passenger door for Etrom. Etrom enters and sits in the passenger seat.

"Back to work." She commands.

She knocks her clay pipe against the Vehicle's frame. The ashes fall out and smolder. The door closes and they drive off into the darkness.

At the same time, Yeats walks the streets alone holding the Love Bear in his hand. Etrom drives off. Stanton is in a Chapel kneeling in prayer. With fear in his heart, he counts his rosary beads over and over.

Neeve and Etrom drive through the streets. Etrom wondered to herself, "Did he remember me?"

"Who was that guy?" Neeve asks.

“Which guy?”

“You know, the one you wanted me to give the Love Bear to? Why is he so special?”

“Oh, him . . .” Etrom replays their recent encounter over in her head.

“Come on, dish.” Neeve pressed.

“He’s an artist of sorts.”

Yeats has returned to his Motel Room. He quickly pulls the contents of the paper bag and places them on one of the beds. The Love Bear is there too. He immediately strips the Colt and starts cleaning it. He reassembles the pistol and loads the bullets into the clip, one at a time, with precision. The Love Bear stares at him as he puts the clip into the handle of the pistol.

Neeve continues “Is he famous? What’s he done?”

What kind of art?"

"No, Yeats is not famous - notorious perhaps, but not famous. He makes films. Not popcorn movies, more like cinematic ko'ans. Transcendent. But they always seem to be missing something, they're not quite complete."

"What's missing?"

"They lack emotion, intimacy. It's almost as if he is afraid. Yeats is missing love, life."

"You said 'Yeats.' Is that his name?"

"Did I? I hadn't noticed."

"Yes you did. Name some of his films."

"I can't."

"Have I seen any of them?"

“Probably not - they're hard to find - you'd have to be a real aficionado.”

“Do you know him?”

“I've known about him for a long time, but, no, I don't know him.”

“Are you sure?”

Etrom ignores her and looks out the window. The Halloween displays flitted by, as she tried to distance herself from the ever chatty Neeve.

“Wait a second, wait-a-second!” said Neeve.

“You've got a crush on him, don't you?”

“Don't be silly. You know it's against the rules, and I've told you what will happen if we break the rules, haven't I?”

Neeve grabs a furtive look at Etrom as she drives through the night, then she looks back at the road.

“Yes, Etrom, you told me. I just felt that . . . You know . . . I'm sorry.”

They drive in silence. Etrom's eyes are focused ahead. As she looks out the window of the moving Vehicle she sees the pulse of humanity, passionless consumption. She thinks “They are drifting through their time on earth without any appreciation for the gift they possess. Will that happen to me when I return? I hope not.”

Yeats is lying on the bed his eyes are focused and looking up at the ceiling. His expression is identical to Etrom's.

He raises his arm, holding the Colt. He draws the slide back and locks it in the open position, then holds it up over his head so he's looking right down the barrel. He stares at the rifling on the barrel as it plays with the

light. He is fascinated with its possibilities. His eyes well up with tears. "What would it be like to have the bullet travel down that barrel into my head?" he wonders.

CLICK/SLAM. He releases the slide brake and the slide springs shut, chambering a round. The Colt is now loaded and cocked, ready to shoot. He brings the Colt down and rests it flat across his forehead.

It is now dawn at the Eternity Bridge, a fairy tale like pedestrian bridge across a stream. Etrom is standing alone. Plumes of smoke rise from her clay pipe. Occasionally she cups the smoke with her hand and sweeps it towards her head. She stops and is still. A single tear slides down her cheek. She crosses her arms across her chest to brace against the cold of the dawn, and waits. And waits as another tear flows, and then another.