

(OVER YOUR SHOULDER)

Poems and Tales
Inspired by Music
From
The Dead Pumpkin

THE ARCHIVIST
PAYNE



I dedicate this collection to The Dead Pumpkin,
as well as his fans for sticking by him.
Long live the Great Dead One.



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NIGHTMARE CHILDREN

We're close to the end of the maze— I can feel it, I swear— we've been in this thing for hours, twists and bends that I could have sworn rearranged themselves, and I don't believe in magic...

but they're still coming for us. I can hear them rustling in the vines. They wait until we're too tired, that we have to sleep anymore, and even as we struggle to keep our eyelids open they pour through and then the nightmares begin, and they don't stop, and they 'll never stop once they get you, because that's how they are, you see? They're always hungry. They prey on fear. They eat, they shoot up on you and when they've drained you they dump you, they look for other hosts, they're parasites,

I'm lucky I made it this far, I don't even know how I did, I'm just trying to get by now hoping one day I find the exit, and I don't even know how I got here, I run but time slows and warps and now I can't find my way out, but I'm trying, help me,

*He's running through the maze endlessly,
Searching, running, waiting, breaking
Running through a maze
That he made up in his mind*

NETHERWORLD

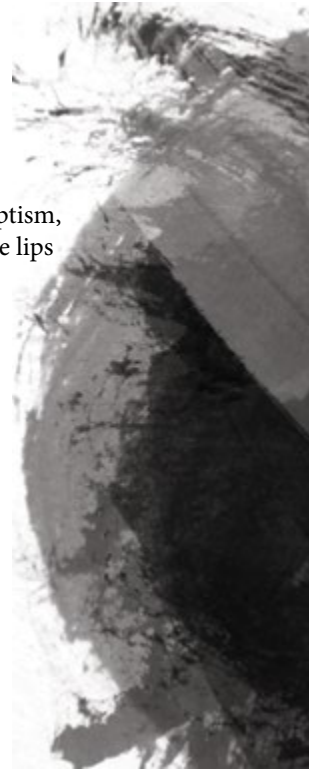
Hero,
You've Made It Back
To Us
We Reclaim You
In Our Abyss
Come
Taste Our Fruits
Drink to Your Health
Come and See
Come Find the Peace
You crave so desperately
Forget all else
Come, Come to Our Arms
And Sleep
Dream

It's Liquid—the soft molten waters of the Styx—a baptism, a cleansing, and you drift, slowly, the eyelids ease, the lips relax, your limbs leaden—

Enough—

This Isn't What I Came For.
Find the Sword! Get the Girl,
and Get out! Flee! Fly! Find the wings--

Feathers float downstream,
scattered,
flightless.





(OVER YOUR SHOULDER)

FOR ICHABOD CRANE

It's the eve of his demise. He doesn't know it. In the tavern, he watches them dance, watches them find joy and comfort in the night, and he wishes he could join, but always, there's a part of his center missing, always, he yearns for her, to see her brush back the hair from her neck—

Don't look over your shoulder.

It's the rolling of wavy grasses on the hillside, as the sun sets over them and turns them golden brown, like her hair, unfolding and spinning, silken in the wind, he would tumble with her in those grasses, and it would shine golden in the sunlight...if he had the courage to ask her, just for one dance, to place only one kiss on her hand...

A sorry fellow, skittish—he waits for a sign that won't come. He sits in the tavern, under the comfortable dim light, and thinks of her, taking swigs of his ale, as he watches the others dance and clink their pints, he only hopes for the best when he sees her, on the morrow—

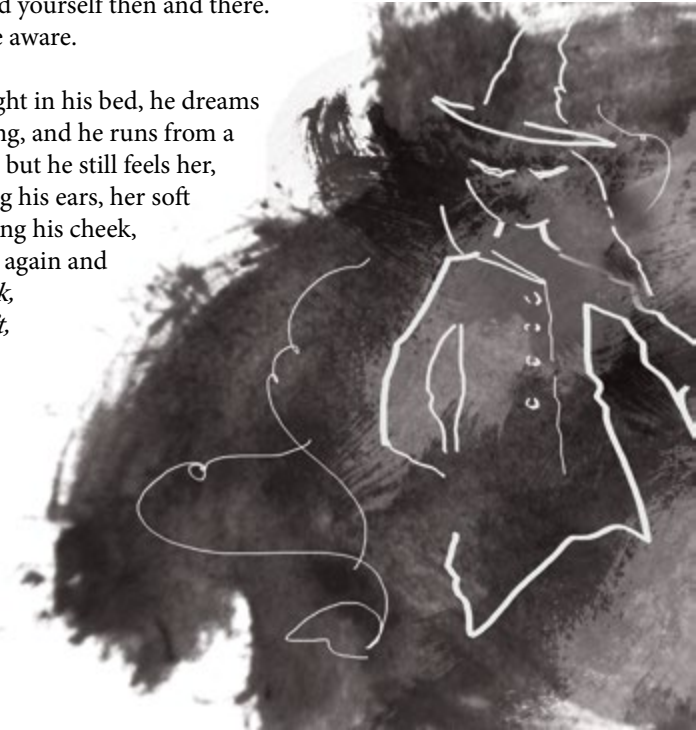
He leaves a copper on the table, draws his coat closer about him to keep out the autumn chill. His shoes click on the cobblestone—this, he notices, the further he walks from the pub, from the sounds of the town—the wind bites—he can only think of her, her beauty, her—

A twig cracks behind him, and he turns, oddly alarmed and elated—he looks over his shoulder, and turns. There's nothing there, no one. He let out a large yawn. Likely he would soon retire for the evening.

He grits his teeth, he keeps going, and what keeps him trudging aimlessly through the darkness—she is his light, this woman who hardly takes notice of him—he says, Love, I'm sick, sick with longing for you, if only you noticed me, if only, when you passed by me, you would look over your shoulder—

Dear Ichabod, whose loneliness chokes you-- you should have. You should have looked more closely, when you looked over your shoulder. You should have heard his slow, shallow breath, every step cautious, and calculating. If your ears were sharper, you would have recognized the sound of hair whipped by wind. You would have smelled a stench so foul it has no earthly match, the rot of death. Perhaps, dear boy, you could have saved yourself then and there. If only you were aware.

On this final night in his bed, he dreams of her whispering, and he runs from a great unknown, but he still feels her, her lips brushing his ears, her soft hair gently teasing his cheek, saying urgently, again and again, *don't look, don't look, don't, dearest, please don't look over your shoulder*





GRAVE MISTAKE

You step forward, your gut lurches.

Look around steadily, out of the corner of your eye.

Keep quiet, keep quiet—you tell yourself—but as you make a sound—you always do—they hear you—you have to run now—save yourself

Save yourself

SAVE YOURSELF

It's liquefying your insides

Don't you know?

You've just landed yourself in the Garden of the Dead
Dandelion, you drifted into Hades' front lawn

There's no sunshine for you here

Close your eyes tight, don't breathe, try to wish yourself
away

Hold your breath against

The decay

Rotting stench cloying sweet

Don't look, don't look,

You'll see fingernails pushing up like daisies

Clawing their way out slowly

Deliberately

Wanting

Waited Long Enough

It's Now

Find Your Fire

And Fight,

Burn Them Back

Before They Overtake

The Cemetery Like

Weeds

GARDEN OF THE DEAD



OBLIVION

This is what oblivion feels like—
sinking, freefalling through a vortex
with no end,
arms and legs.

Can you even process it?
The hunching over of your spine,
bending, breaking, cracking—
the vertebrae shifting of their own accord,
deliberately distancing themselves and
moving apart—
don't yell, don't you dare yell, this is pain—
they lengthen into spikes, ridges along your
back, they undo you—

You're on the road to Hades paved with
the souls of desperate men and no matter
which way you turn, their voices, at once
deep and high echo acapella, reverberate
in your chest cavity, clouds darken the
skies every which way you turn to find the
horizon line, it's a race between you and
the sunset: Can you make it over the ridge
before it sets, can you escape?

You know what happens when it grows
dark, the transformation that occurs, you
know what it does to your mind, rips apart
the interior, stretches it thin, bends you
around and inward and inside out, and
when you scream the sound is ungodly,
a shriek, an unearthly wail that splits the
heavens asunder—

This is what oblivion feels like— sinking, freefalling through a vortex with no
end, freefalling through a with no end a vortex sinking arms and

Check out the music of
The Dead Pumpkin
at
thedeadpumpkin.bandcamp.com
or on
the Book of Faces!

BIOS

The Dead Pumpkin reaps electric guitar solos through
sinister, Halloween-inspired compositions. The Dead Pumpkin
acts as instrumental maestro and produces haunting melodies
using instruments including grand piano, overdrive bass, syn-
thesizers, ghostly choir voices, orchestra, and the ironic use of
church organs. He recently released his fourth album, “Malign
Psychogenic Entities.”

The Archivist Payne dedicates their life to the pursuit
of all tales nightmarish and ghostly; they are well-versed and
researched in the realms of the gothic and horror genres, noted
for their particular usage of elements known to both thrill and
terrify us.

For unHalloween writings by the Archivist, visit their blog at
everhartwrites.wordpress.com, under the alias Everhart.



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