

Hunter



By Harry Jivenmukta

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The echo of boots

The echo of boots
On floorboards in
An empty bar.
Chink of glasses with
Bottles of whisky.
Screech of chair legs
Violently pushed back.
The click of something.
A gun?
The click of something
The shadow of a hat
Over the eyes
Fixed on the boots
Of someone dangerous.

Empty minds

Empty minds of haunted

Men

Drinking glasses dry and

Watching through the bottom of

Raised drinks.

Snatched glances

And nervous movements

Moments of strained silence.

A lost love

A lost love

Lost because she can't

Cope any more with violence.

Rather, hide love and emotion

Behind skirts and hairstyles,

Lying to the world,

Teaching children to write.

Yearning and dreaming

In secret,

Vying for attention with

A gun that has not fired

For a long time.

Silence in a bar

Silence in a bar
Is not like silence outside.
Outside there are still sounds
Of birds and the clicking
Of nature and bubbling
Of water.
The silence inside
Makes him want to reach
To his side
For weapons,
In case.
Slit eyes.
Eyes slit
In expectation.

The clock ticks

The clock ticks
On and on
Oblivious of the time.
Time to go
To leave
To rest in the desert
Over an open fire and
Warmth, and food.
Inside the clock ticks
And the fingers
Reach for a gun.
A gun
Of assurance and fear.

She wants to see him
But fears the day.
She waits and yearns
But mind takes over.
Young life to protect.
And he is the father
Risking everything to see
A son.
And she, a mother
Risking everything to keep
Him innocent.
Cold eyes finger the trigger.
She is pulling it
For him.

The dust is rising

The dust is rising
In the street
As people mill about
To see the gunfighter.
Too frightened to be
Gunfighters themselves
They reach in their minds
For the gun
That doesn't hang at their
Belt.

Wide shouldered
Swaggering
They make their way home
To a warm bed.

Night

Dusk is red like the
Blood
Of a dying man.
Warm going to cold
Like the evening setting in.
The food on the table,
Delicious like a feast
For the forlorn.
Night creeps upon them
Like a hunter
Creeps in the weeds,
Nearer and nearer,
Bracken cracking under
The weight.

Sleep

Sleep is fraught
When the danger is near.
The night creatures
Go silent.
The hunter is near,
Creeping.
Freezing, moving
Freezing.
The night is strange.
The night is strange.
The babies sleep.
The mothers lie awake
With big round eyes.

Embers

Embers are red.
The fire is dying
But the horizon
Shows nothing of the
Coming dawn.
These hours of silence
And growing cold,
Of bated breath
And dry throats,
Of beautiful babies
Sleeping in ignorance.
The hearts of mothers
Beating faster
Begging for the dawn.

Frozen

The frozen form
Of the hunter
Covered in early morning frost
Eyes piercing
Body prone
Frozen by God.
The breath of the fighter
Betrays his life
Living in the desert
Dead many times by the
Night after night
And the day after day.

The wolf

No milk for the babies
Mothers are nervous
And only trickle life into their
mouths.

Not enough.

The babies reach for more.

The chickens are

Not laying.

The wolf stalks around

The camp.

The silence of the birds.

The wash of the breeze over

The camp.

The giggle of nervous

Towns people.

Shimmering of heat

Shimmering of heat to
The horizon.
The sun promises more
Than anyone can hope for.
Easy breathing.
Mothers put their babies
To their breast,
The trickle of life.
The cry of the desert.
The click of a hammer.
The eyes of a killer.
The silence of a day.
The heat of a silence.

The eyes of a killer

The eyes of a killer
The ears of the hunter
Strain to differentiate
Between a click of a
Cricket
And the click of a hammer.
Innocent lives wash clothes
And fetch water
And cook lunch.
The eyes of a killer.

Perfume of a flower

Smells of a normal life
Spread like the perfume
Of a flower.

The eyes of a loved one
Watching the sucking
Of a baby on her
Mothers breast.

A satisfied gulp of
Coffee

After a meal that
Fills the belly.

A belly that will
Soon be spread out
In the sand.

Neat

Neat.

Clothes should be put out

Neat and without

Creases.

Like the corpse.

No creases.

The hammer clicks

The trigger pulls.

The hammer falls.

The neatness crumples

Into disarray.

Never in a laundry

Would it be allowed,

But in the desert....

Graveyard

Neat clothes
And gravestones.
Clean clergy
And rhyming hymns.
Good words and
A clean gravestone.
Clean babies
And well behaved
Manners.
Starched collars.
Clean glasses.
Chaste women.
And the hunter is
Gone, blowing dust
To the horizon.