1.

The air around his ears froze as the cool sound of the world listening to him passed into that alert canal of his mind.

*The rainbow has refused the green and blue, Jack. It’s peeled away the outside and painted us all black and white.*

Slim sounds of crows cawing in the distance crept through a hundred trees and thousands of absorbent leaves to inspire Jack. The cement on the floor held its fine dust a little tighter just to help his grasping hold on *The All.*

*…and they have all left without us.*

The resistance of the cars flowing before him tried to swallow Jack’s strong hold on the air’s attention. Failing and mad.

*But we are still here, refusing and still moving forward.*

Jack’s lips stretched their dehydrated fibers tight into the complex form of an enlivened smile that will express the whole truth but never speak it, from beginning to end. Only the most profound word of the sentence, the verb that grew angry at having to wait to be read, could be uttered; *Progress.* The one word that can concisely describe what the whole vortex of momentous words should be pivoting towards.

*Are we laughing, Jack?*

A tinge of glee shot through Jack, with a scent of blood dashing onto the membranous surface of his nose’s interior.

2.

The microphone stand stood at the center of the room, trying to memorize the words to The Rolling Stones’ *Angie*. While it stood at the end of the pole, waiting for Jack to plug it into a source.

Piles of physics and electrical engineering books sat piled neatly on a small glass desk over unorganized sheets of papers covered with calculations, dried stains of dead coffee droplets scarring their corners, like chicken-pox for work. Sitting on the only chair in the room was a homemade scarecrow made from a mannequin which Jack had dragged out of the junk yard of a neighbor’s yard sale. A now peeling layer of Selena-Brown paint now dried and expired provided the impression of scales on a mermaid, while still managing to hide the obscene graffiti the neighbor’s teenage kids had cursed it with. On the feminine skull Jack had set a brand new mop head, whose strands were feathered like an 80’s punk chick.

The crows sitting on the ledge of the unclosing window, their tiny black eyes, reflecting the scarecrow’s naked body, set themselves on figuring out what Jack’s next move would be. While just then the door flung wide open, letting an excited Jack through it.

“Scarecrow-Mama, I have brought you a coat.” His lips spurted as the trench coat of a retired-soldier-turned-drug-addict landed on her legs. Jack’s left leg swinging out like a flamingo, and offered the young lady scarecrow a curtsy. “Because the time for you to fit in has come.” The lips of the Rolling Stones’ logo without complaint displayed itself on Jack’s shirt as he straightened from the curtsy. “I took this armor from a failed Don Quijote that refused to charge the windmills of his ghosts.”

A strand of spittle escaped from one of the corners of his smile, as he suddenly smiled into the darkest ceiling’s corner, his eyes still and frozen, his face unmoving and as sharp as a newly sharpened pencil that should have been thrown away. Not a slight tremor or speck of traceable movement.

*She’s not one of us, Jack. She’s got to earn her position. Always, always. She’s not one of us.*

The room’s air holds itself with uncertainty.

Suddenly, Jack’s face rips a much more glorious grin on the canvas of his skull and breaks the suspense in the room with: “You are gonna be just fine, Scarecrow-Mama. Just fine.” The crows stirred a bit as their leader spoke. “And you are gonna make us all very proud, *so very proud.*”

The Microphone whispered that she needed a name.

…and Jack spoke. “You will be my little *Fireball.*” And everyone grinned with consent.

3.

The turbulence of the morning sky pulled Jack out of his dreams, blasting a zillion gray bullets of light into the red tendrils expanding with red pulses away from the center of his dry eyes.

*The clouds have risen against the sun in our favor today.*

Jack pulled himself out of bed, his scrawny fifty-year-old legs stretching defiantly while approaching the window. His vision dug into the sky, while he was careful not to get too close to the window, lest he wanted to share the sight of his knobby morning hard-on with everyone.

The clouds aligned with him lined up to salute General Jack, as the crows scrambled and scurried beneath them like jets providing reinforcement.

// His dick is loyal to the holster of the old lady’s pussy.