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*Note: The poem is inspired by H. K. White's "Thanatos," W. C. Bryant's "Thanatopsis," and a rural Japanese graveyard.*

**The Suffering**

***Act 1. Hokku***

the howling wind of

my memory haunts me now

and forevermore

***Act 2. Thanatos***

oh, the fickleness

of this terrible, cruel life

that would cast us in,

that would cast us out

in the twinkling of an eye,

whose cold death-stroke comes

and smothers us all,

heedless to the wails and woes

of the innocent,

of the beautiful,

of the helpless, of the wise;

in and out, in, out

the pendulum swings,

and who the better for it

if we all must die?

oh, this horror, life,

with its serrations and scorns,

so we may suffer

and suffer to die;

awful, brutal, monstrous life,

spreading fast and thin

***Act 3. Epitaph***

here, I finally

lie among the stones, lifeless,

myself as a stone;

faithful friends, now, the

soft grass and the small flowers

that grow 'round this stone

unmoving, and cats

making rest on me, and crows

cawing songs on me