

Prologue- The Ballad of the Malnourished
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Thus the land was dark and dry
A desert froze in frigid night.
Upon the sands all eons high
Were ten good men aflame with plight.
They walked in path of single line
While each and every man was dressed
In bridge coats, bottoms, boots sublime.
For fifteen nights nary a rest.

Now, these ten men were merchants sly
Whose woes were wholly physical.
In every sense one can imply
Materialism took her toll.
In these such ways these men were dead
Devoid of love and morals just.
In place of sacred values bred
There laid the roots of greed and lust.

From sudden bitter gust arrived
A slender figure made of sky
Whose prints made no such marking true
On haunted sands all soaking dry.
The merchant men shook in the boots
Their slaves so gracefully had sewn.
Their lips were fastened shut and mute
Their feet were all well-nigh to stone.

With no such haste the figure came
As chatter did the merchant's fang
And blood ran cold upon all face
And yet the figure set no pace;
Not forty footsteps from the group
A blue light emanated true
Within the holes in which the eyes
Of mortal men would plainly lie.

And one bold man cut silence short
In manner of panicked retort:
"By what God do you apparate?
From one of truth or one of hate?"
In answering the figure chose
To cast upon the man his gaze
To which the poor man's mind did haze
And then his soul was pulled from bone.

Thus he returned from whence he came
And ten merchants had turned to nine.
The rest displaced all conduct sane
And produced arms far from benign.
But harken! All who hear this tale
For now the figure did decide
To summon language of a male
And hence begin to verbalize:

"Off, away, all ye not wait
For few man tarry 'fore the great
To hear the spoken words of one
Whose time has come for redemption.
I walk this road one lonesome soul
With anger's shadows casting wide,
But let me be not vague to those
Who yearn for mine own darker side.

My journey still is far from nigh
The hardest part is yet to pass
Therefore, you mortals, sheath your brass
For, plainly put, I cannot die.
Come hither to, you bastard youth,
And witness how thy greater force
Hath cast a sentence harsh, uncouth,
Mine own life's passion made remorse."

"But what," then cried the merchants all
"Invited harm of our companion?
What words should fall on our own ears
Shall be received with cold abandon."
"Of this I doubt," the figure spoke
"For truth is what I showed your friend
And all of which my hell was borne
With this advice won't be your end."

And in this way the stranger told
The merchant men his tales of woe
Two paths away from hell were drawn
From men modeled from Satan's spawn.
There passed a zephyr cold and harsh
As this figure began his yarn-
So, listen well, and listen true,
For as he spoke, he spoke to you.