

#VSS Anthology
A TWITTER ANTHOLOGY OF VERY SHORT STORIES # VOL.1

Smashwords Edition
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FROM THE EDITOR

is a hashtag - an identifying marker - allowing users on social networking services to separate out and/or convey certain messages to other users utilizing the same markers. 'VSS' stands for 'very short story'.

The #VSS Anthology contains over 150 stories by 37 authors, and yet, is but a smidgeon of SMS fiction utilizing the #vss tag on Twitter.

Made in DNA

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She told everyone who would listen that it didn't matter, that it didn't bother her. Nobody was fooled. I sent roses. Anonymously.

We saw the light streak across the sky. It seemed odd that such a bright light would be seen before nightfall. Probably nothing.

He felt the tripwire pressed against his shin. A moment later he heard the click. He knew what would come next.

Michael thought about it for 3 full days. When the time came to act, he knew he'd be ready. He turned and walked away. It was over.

The front door slammed shut. Through the curtains, she watched him walk to his car. She knew where he would go. It didn't bother her.

STEVEN SAUS

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The villain shot the superspy dead, THEN explained the scheme, THEN the deathtrap with lasers and sharks. He'd finally got it right.

The Jabberwock held a smoking .45 over the sword-wielding (and very dead) man. "Snicker-snack, indeed!" it said.

Bob laughed: "Since you tweet, does that make you a twit?" Sally wished, not for the first time, for the failwhale to fall on him.

He handed her the sun and moon. She looked up at the unnaturally dark sky. "You promised me the stars, too," she said, and walked away.

"Is it selfish to seek pleasure, if it hurts another?" he asked, sharpening the blade. She tugged at the ropes. "You decide," he said.

BRYCE ANDERSON

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Zyzzx told his parents that he wouldn't eat plorchk, because it was made of human. They laughed. It was just one of his cute phases.

Scrabble! She threw down "gesticulate". He challenged it, saying it was fake. He threw down "get". She threw down "divorce".

"My life! Sweet nourishment! You have taken all from me, left me without hope! Fiend!" she wailed. Beaten, I handed back the sippy cup.

As agreed, Dave and his now-deceased brother wore matching "I'm stoked for this funeral" t-shirts under their suits. It helped a bit.

Whiskers, having opted to use all nine of his lives concurrently, had the mouse surrounded.

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The Judge stifled a chuckle as he banged the gavel for the prisoner's death sentence.

They prophesied the end of the world and he popped boner pills to populate the space station.

"Everything I get home is not yours!" she hollered and the 5 year old put the finger back in the gunny bag.

She scratched her butt and the entire sugar worm convention suffered displacement.

Say it is Racial Profiling and I will part my buttcheeks to show there ain't no AK-47 there.

ANTHONY ABELAYE

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On the Isle of Lazy Hermaphrodites they flounce their skirts and smile at the love they feel beneath a languid sun.

The platinum-haired girl sucking my dick paused long enough to tell me I had a pleasant sense of humor. Then she smiled and went down.

When at last the wildflowers bloomed in the yard in autumn, there was no one to see. The cozy home, foreclosed, was now just a house.

The zombie boys only liked her for her brains.

Her wedding ring slipped off her finger as easily as the skirt from around her hips. The monkey in the banyan tree watched and smiled.

He wrote his stories, and women began appearing at his door. Beautiful women. But they wanted money and time, and he only had words.

He spent years trying to swallow his own head, and when he finally succeeded, he could neither see nor say a damn thing.

Degenerate hobos hide beneath freeway underpasses and share their pints of stolen whiskey and kidnapped children.

She rode Harleys. He preferred Ford station wagons. Together they roamed the countryside looking for a good mechanic.

Magdalena Magongong loved papayas so much she would wait for the monkey to squeeze one outta his ass. Magdalena, those weren't papayas.

JACOB KLUCKER

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Ashamed of not being able to grow a beard, Eric found himself in Africa and down to his last option. Rubbing cheetah meat on his face.

Having just read that Twitter is more dangerous while driving than drinking, Mary looked up just in time to see the oncoming semi truck.

Tom's obsession with 8-bit games led to his loss of reality. Jill knew this as he angrily blew into her vagina like so many game cartridges.

Jason danced from tile to tile as the room clapped. He smiled, knowing at least his OCD brought entertainment the people at the laundry mat.

Having told her fiance that she used to be a man, Josie held her head high knowing that, true or not, it took real balls to say it.

Still an outlaw and only steps away from LA, Mark was anxious for his camouflage to blend him in again. This time as an ironic hipster.

Jill's excitement of walking the tight rope was short lived as she performed her victory dance a foot early.

With Earth's attention focused on Planet X, it was his time to strike. "Who's not a planet now?!" cried, Pluto as he attacked.

Having fought off the zombies, Amy crawled out of the "beyond" section of Bed Bath & Beyond, still intent on finding a new duvet cover.

Realizing that the call was coming from inside the house, Cindy quickly locked herself out of her own home. Safe at last.

JONATHAN PINNOCK

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21 today, shouted the tyrant, 21 today! After the executions, the Lord Chamberlain sighed as he cleaned up; birthdays were getting messier.

"Get a proper job," said old man Blahnik, "Shoes won't make you rich." Manolo knew better: "Gold!" he said, "Always believe in your sole."

"You're right," he said, when they'd finished with St Sebastian. "Beauty is only skin deep."

"What big teeth you have, Grandma!" said Red Riding Hood. "That's 'cos I'm a vampire, darling. Didn't see that coming, did you?"

CHARLIE CLOSE

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I always knew she resented my matchbook collection.

This madonna and child could go for some ice cream right about now.

They stood side by side, hands almost touching. She did not stop looking at the painting until he did.

He dared her to solve the Rubik's cube. Ten seconds later he was in love.

The bookshelves were empty. She had been the reader, not him.

In Don's opinion Steve's letter jacket had the wrong letter.

Dad gave RJ the bright gumball and he popped it in his mouth. "It's a superball, son." RJ gagged and spat it onto the parking lot.

Mom asked what kind of kitten he had found at the pet store. Dad held up the chihuahua.

He said, "It's 'barbed wire', not 'bob war', and personally I don't see what the problem is."

She had always thought "tit in a wringer" was a metaphor. That is, until that thing with Eugene.

MO ALI

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Their eyes met across a crowded room. The wet sound of contact, ocular blood-geysers, two bodies collapsing like deckchairs. That's Love.

Audience falls silent, spotlights stop, the smoke clears, drums cease. The magician holds his head in his hands. The trick has gone wrong.

Title, parkour, guns, the car chase, dead henchmen, eye candy, backlit sex, vital clue, villain smirks, fistfight, explosion, End credits.

The old witch howls, face and body crumbling like Autumn leaves. Caught suddenly in a black updraught, she egresses into the toxic sunset.

Gunfire in the courtroom, bodies jerking, heads snapping back, blood and bullets hitting the walls. Lawyer: "defence rests, your honour."

BL PAWELEK

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shakey: i leaped into snow blindness and felt the angels sing. you held my hand when i hit and told me the shakes would start soon.

the wind off the crater: God tried to take me, a thousand feet above these dead lakes. i held until the sun fell and he thankfully quit.

north of paris: the metro halts. you ask about this one and that one. i shake my head, and we follow the marks on the other graves.

JIMMIE FISHER

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The young boy stood on the cliff overlooking the mighty sea, its rippling waves hitting the rocks below. Looking down, he admired his shoes.

Bugsy waited with a tommy gun gripped in one hand while watching his timepiece in the other. The forgetful snitch will sleep another night.

I'm soaring through the universe in a starship gazing at the galaxy's wonderment. I traveled so far, I lost my way home. Google Earth Fail.

During an intimate moonlight stroll into the meadows with his girl, they head toward the pine woodline. It's a shame she won't return.

Once upon a time, having experienced all of life's strife, trials, and tribulations, they lived happily ever after.

ED FONSECA

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So, there once was a man from Nantucket, who said Fuck it, I'm gonna move somewhere more exciting! "I know, I'll move to Silicon Valley!"

Obama sabe. Veo que camina mano en mano con Michelle. Nadie sabe lo que hacemos a sus espaldas, el animal de 2 espaldas conmigo. Ay Hillary!

(Translation: Obama knows. I see he walks hand in hand with Michelle. Nobody knows what we do behind their backs, doing the beast with 2 backs. Oh Hillary)

Some dog woke me up with the most annoying and incessant barking ever just outside my window. I stare from my side of the glass. Human. Pet.

JENNIFER HUDOCK

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Huddled under the porch steps, dust and splinter rain down as father rages on like Frankenstein's monster. Mother's screams fade into dawn.

The dead feast on, dismantling carcass after carcass like the homeless might do a Thanksgiving turkey.

Children litter the street, scattered and bruised as autumn leaves while school bus hazard lights blink like silent, vacant eyes.

SMALL STORIES

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'You think you are so clever,' my reflection said to me. 'Not as clever as you,' I replied.

As I sank into the murky water I remembered her sweet smile. 'I promise I'll return,' she'd lied. Bach played me into unconsciousness.

'And what's behind there?' She pointed to the curtain. 'Ah,' I replied. 'A piano of stupidity that plays to the tunes of the damned.'

Lolita light of my - *knock knock* Police, open up!

It was a dream. Then I smelt the coffee. Now there's a lot of water under the bridge. At the end of the day, there's always tomorrow.

This was to be a tale of two cities. But the budget didn't stretch. Now it's a tale of two housemates and a cheese sandwich.

Rain drips from trees. Thunder in the distance. A cuckoo calls. I see you sitting on the bench but you are not there.

She wore spikes and a French maid outfit. I was enchanted. Cool it sweetie, she said, at French Maid Cleaning we only do your house.

I woke in hell. Why am I here? The devil walked past in high heels and fishnet stockings. "Because you're no angel," she said.

As she levelled the gun to my head I knew I had run out of excuses. I grinned. "Do you remember that holiday in Mexico?"

RIMONE

<http://written-by-a-nobody.blogspot.com/>

<http://slum-goddess.blogspot.com>

<http://rimone.org>

born in a slum; lived on the streets where she taught herself to drug, how to drink & how to think. crashed & burnt at 25—pity her not.

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The overwrought file clerk saw a romance in passing from consumption. She took to carrying embroidered handkerchiefs and coughing roses.

Eleanora Palmer's golden years: jaundiced, rickety, wealthy, pursued, wooed, dying, betrothed, married, jealous, widowed.

The new guy was a real devil at poker. Cleared the table in a dozen hands. He wore an air of arrogance about him, and brimstone.

The diet coke carcinogens flawlessly petrified her body. She had the stiff joints and glamorously ashy skin. Then the Mentos ruined her.

Peering into the crone's eyes, he knew the time and nature of his death. And he lived accordingly, for the day indeed was that day.

It was the robot who insisted on the backrub. Master was so tense. A neck-snap later? The quest for world domination had begun.

He awakes from a nap exactly 24 hours long. His family hordes their adventures of the last day. He won't sleep again, not until they talk.

My coworker stretched up her arms, revealing five-day stubble. I was reminded of life's fragility...and to pick up grated cheese.

The shaving mirror in the shower was beyond useless. Fogged too easily. Worse, the five second delay meant he was seeing two strokes behind.

He excused himself to the bathroom. Alone, he tweezed from the tenderest meat of his nostril. He was now ready to eulogize his father.

ANDREW FREUDENBERG

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With a primal shriek she awoke, ending dormant centuries in icy repose The nurse's beak suggested that perhaps she had overslept.

Aeons of evolution created this dark mass of muscle and teeth, this thing with the stench of carrion on it's breath. Joe called it Fido.

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Warner's first attempt at time travel created a second, unnecessary set of silverware. His second attempt created another 30 thousand.

"If there's one thing I should have learned from Shakespeare," he thought as he collapsed, "it's 'don't hide behind the curtains'."

The candle, though dim, kept the light-fearing monsters at bay. Sid knew it wouldn't last forever. So he set fire to the trees.

Though the machine they nicknamed Roark had never read Ayn Rand, when asked, "What do you think?", it responded, "I don't."

The sandworm threatening to devour him was a hallucination, he knew—a product of reading science fiction. But the desert was not.

Born without sight, Tom had taught himself to use echolocation. He could ogle a woman just by talking to her. He talked a lot.

Nobody believed in time travel when I began working on it. Several hundred years later, not much has changed.

She, like all the other girls he had gone steady with, had given him a piece of her heart. His freezer was getting full.

We suspected the Boss hadn't actually ordered the hit on himself, but we knew better than to question an order from the Boss.

I found the Minotaur sleeping, shivering. I draped my jacket over its shoulders. It awoke, stared me in the eye, and slept again.

HELENE KWONG

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He sneezed; she said "bless you" to him and then disappeared into the fog.

Cat got her tongue and her index finger. She felt like there was a hot pepper in her mouth for a few days there.

He walked across the platform to meet her, only to fall off and sprain his ankle.

RALPH VAN DEN BERG

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It was not so much the color of her hair that made him distrust her- more so that she tried to kill him twice and succeeded both times.

The boys turned pale, some of the older girls blushed. "And that's why," he continued, "the gods demand only virgins."

As a man he was a violent, merciless bastard. As a wolf... at least then he had an excuse.

At first it's like yuck what's that, and then oh I see. Growing up is full of adventures...

He was an artist, a visionary- nobody understood him. At his wedding his tuxedo consisted solely of black body paint.

I'm sorry, but these pants aren't big enough for the both of us- one of us must DIE!

RYAN HARRON

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The scientists had been wrong - the world hadn't ended the night before. Max started a list of the apologies he was going to have to make.

"Two pairs, twelves and Empresses," Carl said as he laid his cards on the table. He'd won. It had been a long night, but the world was his.

Aleph took a deep breath. The dinosaur skeleton was fully buried. It couldn't wait to return to the future and see the humans explain this.

Evan awoke with a bad hangover. It had taken a lifetime, but he'd found the world's greatest Scotch. Now only if he could remember the name.

judy b.

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The star shot across the sky and I wished it was your trajectory to me. I don't need a miracle; I need you to read your email.

The princess spent the better part of the relationship trying to convince the frog he really was a prince.

Two bikes stopped at the corner and when two friends got on, the green bike went left, and the blue bike went straight.

Downhill: a bug hits my eye. I blink and blow but no luck. We both cling - bug to lash, b. to handlebars - each hanging on for dear life.

Out on the roof Noel considers the jump. He knows he shouldn't. He should give it time. No use if the cast is off before starting 3d Grade.

Maxine wanted romantic, so Chase rode in on a hot air balloon. But when he landed in the yard, Maxine realized she just wanted someone else.

Tempe was a dog cowered under the table: wait for scraps, hide from kicks. No he was not a dog but a boy but the rest is true.

Into the still room she disappeared. Sal swiped a final stroke across the canvas, a near-invisible but necessary blue.

Nature Boy saw how to win in love: Like a tree, he pulled her into his arms and then hid the way back down.

Rowing into twilight, Jules watched the sun dapple the ripples the oars made. 'Turn around, Nora; look where we've been.'

TIARA WALKER

Twitter: digitaltempest

He was the serpent in the garden, imploring her to take just one bite of the forbidden fruit, thinly veiled deception behind a liar's smile.

Round, fat tears and soft, helpless mewls hid the true intent of the doll-faced assassin.

Barely clothed, unbridled and primitive, on her knees, her movements simulating the well-known act, this was no gentlewoman's waltz.

For her, life's toughest lessons were served hot and ready with a side order of balled fists and black eyes.

Their love was like a supernova—highly volatile, intense in energy, a rare celestial event, but most of all fleeting.

Dove-like bones shift under his firm grasp reminding him that she is fragile and easily broken.

Cooking was a domesticated act that warred with her feminist sensibilities, but her stomach was not a liberated being.

Living in a digital age had its perks she decided, as she pressed the delete key to terminate her soul.

She had a birthday once, a day that proved she existed, but now, she had nothing but the dark and her memories.

SEEKERSINCE1980

Twitter: willgetback

Starts crash diet. Assassin doesn't recognize.

Thugs chase. GPS Specialist takes shortcut.

Colour blindness. Traffic Signal. Total blindness.

Sappy stories. Never published. Angry letters to the editors demanding explanation. Published.

No suitable match found for rich, handsome, witty, sensitive, clean-shaven Sikh boy.

(* Sikhism as a religion forbids shaving one's facial hair.)

City never sleeps. Thief puts himself to sleep.

Suspicious stranger offers lift at midnight. Takes the wrong turn. Drops home safely.

Once upon a time, there were happy endings in movies, at least.

"Rock & Hard Place?"

"You crazy?"

"Devil & Deep Blue Sea?"

"Meh!"

"What then? Fire & Frying Pan?"

Scylla & Charybdis were naming their twins.

On every page, the autograph book said: I donate all I own to Janet Jones.

Every celebrity laughed when signing.

Who is laughing now?

NICK NAME

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Jon escaped from himself to one of those 139 social sites he used. "Where is Jon?" he asked one guy. "They say he pinged himself."

Henryk was famous for doing 128 things at once, but since last month he was just playing spymaster.

Ana was surrounded by Google servers. "You produced too much data," one of them said. "We have to delete you."

Between his 798,785th and 798,786th tweet, Alan even managed to talk to his family: "I'm hungry, please retweet".

"Is it going to kill me, when I click?", asked Ron, who one day stopped relying on his brain. "Yes", said Yes. "No", said No.

#hashtagstory :: #iremember #inhighschool #crashlove #ashes #IAmAGrownUp

#hashtagstory :: #iremember #clothdiapers #thingsmummysaid
#crapsuperpowers #firstrecord #goodsex #myweakness #cocaine #nothing

#hashtagstory :: #bestweekever #3breakupwords #alltimelow #therapist
#alltimelow #therapist #alltimelow #fail

#hashtagstory :: #liesgirlstell #marriage #liesboystell #divorce

#hashtagstory :: #hello #3hotwords #3drunkwords #3wordsaftersex #bye

THOUGHTSNOT

Twitter: thoughtSnot

I held my breath...the judge spoke: "I sentence you to spend the rest of your life as a taste-bud on a dogs tongue"

The gang of out-of-work Cosmonauts who prowl the streets at night and mug people to feed their addiction to space food.

The war depended on a precious message flown by carrier pigeon. What a shame no one expected the bird might change the message...

Led through the hallway, she unveiled the pulsing red hole "Oh that? That's the stomach, House is very hungry...now get in!"

Interviewer: Your book is called "How I Time-Travelled & Killed My Grandad" my question is, why do you still exist? Author: Um...*pop*

Was playing Scrabble the other day and accidentally summoned Satan: "You summon me with the ancient word ceremony!". Got triple word score.

His tongue wandered over bloody gum. At long last, after 35 years Jon Crimble was finally teething. His mum would be so happy.

The vultures circled high above, anticipating my death. Seems really premature, I was only diagnosed with cancer yesterday.

The man who bit his own face off trying to get a piece of toast off his chin.

When the world finally came to an end, no one imagined it would be because of Omega-3 Fish Oil...

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2am cold sweat. You drape your arm lazily over my neck. I run my fingers over the tiny hairs on your forearm. I am reassured.

Drove past a car crash today, mangled bodies splattered on the hot asphalt. Jenny cried. Sometimes I hate her for making us girls look weak.

'25 years old today and I've still never walked the Champs Elysees,' Kyle laments as he rinses the senator's semen out of his hair

Dorothy is worried that she'll never make it to Hollywood. Frank is worried about nosy highway patrolmen.

When she hears the hum of neon lights, Miranda can't help but sing along; she used to be afraid, but that was a long time ago

Amy hit send & in an instant told her deepest darkest secrets to anonymous strangers; no one would even believe such things, anyways

Sensing the end was near, Veronica did the only thing a reasonable person could in fairness be expected to in times like this - she danced

He hid the bruises with a thick layer of pancake powder, straightened his wig & stepped over the unconscious assailant. It takes moxie, kid.

Every year I go back to the overpass and listen to the cars zooming by below me; if I listen closely enough, I can hear her name.

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Blood dripped off the remote. "That'll be the last time he leaves fingerprints on the DVD," muttered the video rental clerk.

Zeldar leafed through the classifieds. Experience needed. He's destroyed countless worlds, but people don't want conquerors to wait tables.

"Racist!" "Lady, he can't be here." "How can you say that?" "Fine, you want him so bad? Here!" Karl then shoved the zombie at her.

Victor gnawed on some meat. "Dammit man! That's our last accountant! Do you know how hard those are to come by?" "But, IT guys give me gas."

"Hello, my name is Marv, and it's been 2 months since I ate my wife." "Hello Marv." "Yesterday, there was this delicious lookin' co-ed...."

Milton shrugged. It was gonna take all night to empty out the waste pool, but the last thing they needed was more of 'em crawling around.

Lisa prepared the meal. Everything was ready as she slid the long, curved knife out and held it at his head, "Who wants white meat?"

TONYA R. MOORE

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Emmy won a trip to the moon's first resort. Turns out she got a front row seat to the end of the world. Who knew?

The saint's medium is a purist. A proper greeting ceremony requires blood. It must be spilled artfully, copiously and with much reverence.

HYPERREAL JAPAN

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Kimiko didn't necessarily dislike pandas, quite the opposite, she loved to beat the hell out of them.

It wasn't Reiko's petite breast size that bothered Frank, it was their tendency to explode in his face.

Mimi forgave her boyfriend for his infidelity as she enjoyed penis sushi with a little *wabisabi* wasabi.

Kana's blade flashed viciously, cutting down her opponent with overtweaked efficiency. Resheathing it in her own belly, she died victorious.

Entangling itself in the electrical wires that crisscrossed Tokyo, the giant monster fried itself. The city celebrated with BBQ sauce.

Rin smiled as the sun kissed her skin, the wind swept her hair, the salt air filled her lungs, and the rocks rushed up to crush her skull.

Anxious for her first closeup since becoming a newscaster, Keika bloodied her face headbutting camera three.

Recognizing the pedophile from the police database, the swing set transformed and imprisoned him in the jungle gym.

Setsuko's favorite kind of fish was the pet shop goldfish bought on the cheap, but they were very difficult to fillet and not very filling.

Dirk translated his way into Mimiko's heart, one word at a time.

TRENT MARTIN KIRCHNER

Twitter: trentoria

Pornstar Paul pumped petrol prior to putting his penis into pervy pictures.

'Happy Death Day' she'd learnt to accept but the introduction of 'Happy War Day' saw Carol at complete odds with the world.

Although young Joshua's knowledge of 'emissions' was limited, he knew they were 'bad' and hoped the 'restrictions' applied to his Dad.

The crack smoking, plaid wearing editor, Hawthorn Qwerty Jr, liked microstories because they cut straight to the character.

Since childhood Murray chased UFOs. Hoping they'd visit. Then one day they did. For afternoon tea. Ate all his biscuits then left. Bastards.

Always two tanks forward, two tanks back, always broken bonds and black-mail trails, whiskey, cigars and alpha males.

Howie often felt like a human battery with a positive and a negative charge. The problem was, he wasn't sure which end was which.

TYRONE SLOPHTROP

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Today, I confront my enemy. Tough, yet weak. As we meet in the desert dunes, we wait for the first blow...knowing it will be the final one.

KATE SHERROD

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Every time she went for the mailbox, she had to hold herself down. That was before he bought her some silk scarves.

DOUG ROBERTSON

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Four motley crows saunter up to the birdbath, a gang of schoolboy misfits. The quivering cardinal disappears to avoid the inevitable swirly.

"And if we help, the Nigerian prince gets his billion dollar inheritance." Greg sighed, relieved that the account was in his name, not hers.

The coyote traded in 2 currencies: fear and the U.S. dollar. He used the former to leverage the latter but wasn't afraid to switch them up.

The thrill of letting the tab sit undisturbed crescendoed into awkward silence when they each realized the other wasn't paying.

Smoke hung in the air. He lowered his gun. Now came the inquisition.

"I don't know how Sis got soaked, Mom, I was aiming for the fireworks."

They used to say she was crazy when she talked to fairies and was almost committed. But with the advent of Bluetooth, now she fits right in.

The Final Disconnect Notice still hung on the door. The sky turned dark as the baby cried. No power tonight.

She couldn't figure out why she kept attracting overweight men on the internet. The culprit? Turns out her browser had been hoarding cookies.

Cheapskate's watery pretense for buying plastic plants: "We're going green."

The creaky floor board welcomed him in, just as it had welcomed the tenants before - the tenants whose bodies lay hidden within.

JASON GUSMANN

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1928: hp lovecraft creates cthulhu to prepare the world for tentacle porn - yuggoth watches and waits - the orgy at r'lyeh is ready when u r

1936: crossroads actually an alien landing strip – not a devil deal but a celestial salvage mission - robert johnson creates rock and roll

1935: twins battle in a womb in memphis - loser receives the name jesse & a tiny grave - winner becomes the crowned & conquering king

DEAN CLAYTON EDWARDS

Twitter: deancedwards

Unforgiven: The girls come back. In dreams. In mirrors.

Celeste: Stilletos. Suspenders. Surprise. I give her the money. "I don't want to fight any more."

Private Collection: He takes 30 minutes to die. A long time. My arm aches from holding the camera.

Her Screams: Holding her. Arm. Hair. Throat. It takes me back.

Death of a Daughter: She covers my eyes. "Guess who?" The warrior instinct. I strike.

LUKE JORDAN

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Secretly, her life was a dim procession of missed appointments.

There's nothing to see here, so just pat down your hair and move along.

Not this time, fish-man. I'm just here for the assignment.

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