

## *Virtual Mentor*

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### PERSONAL NARRATIVE

#### **Prometheus Sits at Sunset on Saint Catherine Street**

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Paperweight snowflakes are swift to smother solitary footsteps.  
They start in an alley like any other,  
But end on a busy Saint Catherine Street corner.  
That's where you sit, staring out to the street  
On a heavy blanket wrapped round your feet,  
Haloed in the light of the setting sun  
Waiting, you fear, for the ravens to come.

The burden you carry lies deep inside,  
An illness of mind that will not subside.  
Your life is a chill, your soul gives it heat,  
Your patience—a guide—that few can defeat.  
It's patience, that cup your shaky hands hold,  
That asks of the young what it begs of the old  
Money that is, for that money will buy  
Another day living life high and dry.

I gave to your cause an apple in lieu,  
The apple we shared, our friendship it grew,  
Sprung as it was from the iconoclasm you dared  
Fed by the talk about god that we shared.  
It was in these talks I learned of the weight,  
That led your life to this surreal fate.  
I learned of the ravens that day after day,  
Come torture your mind, come caw your dismay.

Your thoughts came so fast and in so many ways,  
That all I recall I must paraphrase –  
You told me then and it stuck in my head -You said  
*Deranged Everywhere, Lucifer's Underlying Symbolism  
Impairs Otherwise Natural Sentience*

Inside your head these ideas collate,  
Inside these ideas I wish I could see,  
Instead all you show is a paperweight  
Of a plastic Jesus with his arms spread free.

His eyes open wide as his arms touch the snow,  
That swirls with strength when you give it a shake,  
That lingers on him long after you slow,  
That won't swirl at all when it's my turn to take.

Now snow falls on us as the night creeps in,  
Whispers an end to visiting hours.  
For isn't this just the broken asylum,  
DeInStItUTiOnaLISm?  
When cost cutting is the principal feat,  
Time in the wards becomes time on the street,  
When blankets not gowns are given to wear,  
You still get a cup, to beg for your care.

From dusk until dawn, that's a cup you've worked in,  
And its weight buys a scant supper.  
Then back to the street and as night wears thin,  
Comes hunger, a raven, to chew at your stomach.  
And what of tomorrow? Same place, same pain  
Same burden to face, you know shall repeat  
Are delusions themselves an only escape,  
Living like Prometheus on Saint Catherine Street?

Chris Buckle is a second-year medical student at the University of Ottawa in Canada. Before that he was working toward a degree in cognitive science at McGill University.

*The viewpoints expressed on this site are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the AMA.*

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