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December Dreams

Paul Rondema
Concordia University - Portland

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baboon. And with a heaviness the lioness landed upon the boy. In hysteries, Sunday crumpled to the ground underneath her weight. Blood spilled out, staining the steps on which he and the lion lay. He screamed in horror as the lion’s body lay on top of him.

Their eyes closed to the horror, Sunday, the bartender and the brothers did not see the warden lower his gun from across the courtyard and begin to run.

Okwi looked down at his brother. Yomi’s eyes were barely slits and his fists were clenched as he tried to hold back his anger and his tears. He ended up ok? Yomi asked, angry at having cared so much. He began to run, to reach his father but Okwi caught his arm. Don’t go yet, there’s more. And though he could have whispered still, Okwi spoke aloud once again.

Sunday still cried out when the warden slid him from underneath the fallen lion. He fought with all he had when the bartender wiped the lion’s blood from his arms, his body, his face. When his mother and father arrived he resisted their touch. He would not allow their embrace. He spent the night in a frenzy. For in his mind, the lion lay above him. Its weight pressing against him. Its heat scorching his body. Its blood mixing with his own, spilling onto the ground. And every touch and every sound and every sight took him back to that moment.

This is the story Okwi told his brother. And like his brother, Yomi felt little peace when the story ended. Okwi, being the older of the two, felt an obligation to bravery, though even he was shaken by the tale. And though the story ended somewhat well, neither boy was content.

Far behind their father now, the boys reached the top of the hill. The bar was on their left as they exited the trees. Lost in their thoughts, encompassed by their fears, with the sun setting quickly, the boys walked on, unaware of the stillness in the air.

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December dreams:
Snow upon the branches;
Shoveled walks;
Three bedroom houses.

A two car garage
and a job in the city.
A hearing next week;
in the meantime no presents to buy.

And a son you don’t know
who’s growing without you;
ex-wife who really can’t care.

A mailbox of millions you’ve already won;
Thousands you’ve already lost.

A hearty man’s dinner,
and a hearty man’s drink,
and falling to sleep with the TV still on.

Whatever happened when December would dream of a year so full of promise?

Wherever went the smile you wore
when at midnight the clock would chime?

Whenever left the twinkling eye,
the sparkling smile
the hop in step
and love for life?

Whatever happened when December would dream of a year so full of promise?

Whatever happened to December dreams?