“The Gangsta of Love” (intro)

The soil along the edges of the sidewalk was moist from the morning dew. A beautiful orange and purple hue was slowly giving way to a powdery pastel; at an hour when there were more pigeons and squirrels than people. Buzzards and bottom feeders, feasting in a plentiful valley of blue steel trash dumpsters and miscellaneous waste. Litter flapping in a light breeze, leaping off the cool pavement, to and fro, like flying fish over an asphalt ocean.

As night recedes, a war-torn taxicab intrudes upon the slumbering landscape. Soon thereafter, fleets of sordid motor vehicles bridge a never-ending chorus of detestable transports. As morn approaches, metal contraptions surface in all directions, far and wide, signaling the start of *new beginnings* (like ground hogs after the rains). African and Haitian cabbies (nappy-haired navigators) whizzing-bye the vacant horizon (40 to 50 miles over the speed limit): unaffected by the uneasy hush of Western daybreak. Ebony complexion and bountiful lips emanate the untainted fullness of The Motherland. Untamed ancestors foreshadow an earthy marrow; empirical blackness running as deep as the fertile taproots of Eden.

All as a tiny Asian lady plods down an adjacent side street (towards Chinatown): wearing a straw tee pee hat (shading her face) - draped in layers of haggard linens. Balancing a long bamboo pole across her miniature-dollhouse frame (with two, humongous trash bags knotted to each end of the stick). Bulging collectibles bending the branch downward. Each strenuous step wavering the rod- until gravity eventually forms a tedious semi-circle. The slightest motion triggering a peculiar imbalance (immolating the playful rock of a child’s see-saw). Every couple of blocks, the shrewd woman abandons her belongings (a shopping carriage chock full of decrepit beer bottles and dented aluminum cans); just long enough to scurry in-and-out of murky alley ways and enclaves (cat-like); scouring garbage cans and litter baskets for hidden treasures beneath a smoldering milieu of temple-like, smoke stacks. Phallic citadels burning milky incense skyward- disintegrating smog cascading shades of green over a slum vastness. Pressing onward with her unenviable cargo, head slightly bowed, beyond a dreary panorama of buoyant nothingness. Trudging the smooth cement with her mule-like sleigh: in the same anonymous manner as the ancients wading through the muck & mire of Babylon 6000 years ago.

To the left, a newspaper truck comes to a screeching halt, as a burly blue collar tosses a heavy stack out to the thirsting street corner like red meat bait to a hungry carnivore. Periodically, other large vessels pass through, dashing silence with grinding diesel engines (like giant whales parting sonic waves). Intermittently, an unobservant cop car crawls through at a snail’s pace- waiting for the shift to end. High above, the towering rooftops of tenement buildings pose concrete and mortar edges- embroidering the distant skyline like gothic pillars in a pop-up storybook. All as visceral imagination bears witness to an ominous mist steadily rising from the sewer depths… fearful thoughts dissipating one after another into the *gloomy forgotten*. Yet and still, not until uncertainty has hearkened the worst sort of *dungeons and dragons*.

Indeed, to the inhabitants of this bustling metropolis, one million strong, these short-lived glimpses of solitude can be quite foreboding. The placid air of morn, frightening as the gnashing growl of a Rottweiler terrier. The eerie blare of silence, unsettling as the hiss of a rattlesnake. Otherwise, stirring quite a commotion, to those who have not made its acquaintance… to those who have not *had the pleasure*. To the depraved masses living in the underbelly of a postmodern, industrial capital: peacefulness is often more alarming than guns shot blasts or ambulance sirens. In the fast lane of the wayward rat race: tranquility is as disturbing and out of place as a speckled giraffe hoofing down Massachusetts Ave. Most regrettably, unto the hub of Boston, serenity is but a strange and exotic animal. A skittish and splendid creature. Truly, the urban jungle’s most endangered species.