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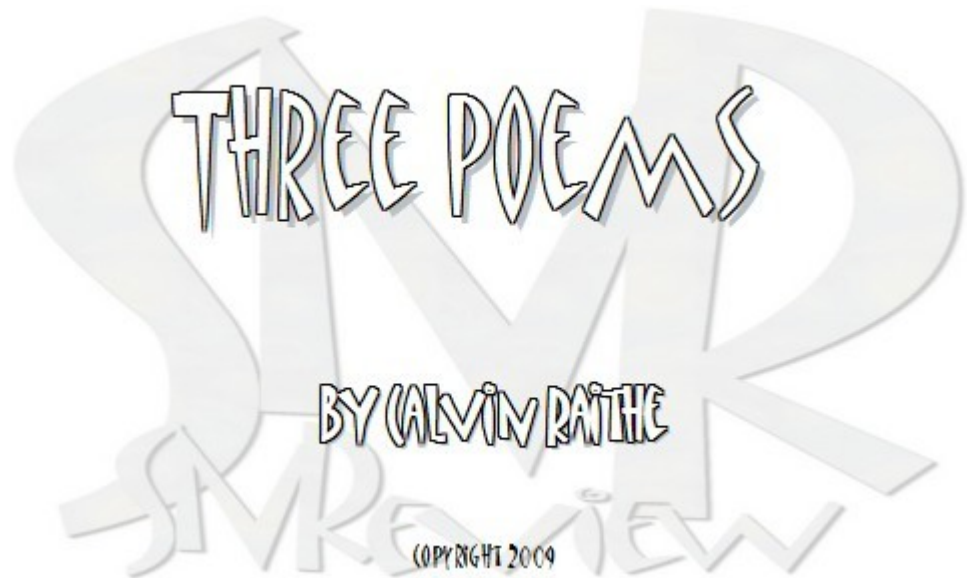
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## Graven

The forgotten stone  
was once chiseled,  
but like a talcum tale  
age whittled  
at the inscriptions  
on its ivory face  
swallowed  
in tattered grass  
despite the keeper's efforts.

A neighboring statue,  
sculpted and finished  
to a linoleum sheen,  
eclipses the sun  
while the keeper,  
with hair cycling  
through a white-scale rainbow,  
fends the foliage,  
ignoring yesterday's  
achievements,  
laboring,  
never noticing  
time's slight smoothing  
of refined cuts.

## Conversation: Poem and I

I hate you  
that leaps from my tongue,  
seeps from my fingertips  
and spills onto the page.

Given a choice,  
I wouldn't create you.

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You, sadist, torment me.

You wouldn't Be without me.

I am your father,  
your God;  
I can abandon you  
or perfect you;  
your fate is mine.

You don't exist.

But I do, and  
from curiosity  
I will fix you.

I will carve you,  
construct you  
as I see fit.

You need me.

*You need me.*

Perhaps  
we are one,  
and we need each other.

Perhaps...  
We are one.

We need each other.

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## Inspiration

The structural welders high above,  
scale steel skeletons,  
shooting sparks of orange and white  
like tigers drowning in stars.

I stare with awe  
for the welders,  
the builders,  
the Crafters,  
know why we must sweat  
and bleed and destroy  
our bodies  
to create something bigger:  
we understand the cathartic contradiction:  
the perfection  
of details to relax our souls.

But as I watch them  
remove wallets  
stuffed green  
like lettuce patches,  
I notice how few

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remain  
on the ground  
manning the blueprints.

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