

Three featherless, wrinkled, chicks, called desperately after their mother. Her black wings caught the faint light of the warm sun, they shone with a blue glimmer. Their chirping was cut short as the bolder above them fell closer. Silence broke the air. Death wasn't kind. It snatched where it could take people who were far too young, far too good. The hooded veil of Death hung over the rocky shore.

The silence was cut with an eerie melody. A scarlet van wobbled down the winding road. Echoing its common tune, drawing in those who hear it. Children begged at their parent's feet, tugging limbs off their body and wailing for the sweet, sticky, ice-cream to cool their boiling heads. They acted as though they had never eaten before. Parents faces dropped and long sighs were drawn from pursed lips as they rattled through their pockets for any lasting coins.

Entrenched by the song of temptation a little boy was seen desperately climbing up a hill. His chestnut hair was a mop of curly strands, framing his sapphire eyes that shone with a deep happiness. A dimple pierced each champagne pink cheek and a crooked white smile lit up his round face. Coins rattled in his pocket mocking the sound he followed. The sky had been consumed by numerous shades of silver. The sun had given up on trying to break through the iron curtains. Death was moving closer, silent and unnoticed.

There was a crash, destruction, chaos. A soul stirring scream cut through the air like a shard of glass. A black hollow tyre playfully bounced down the golden dunes and settled itself in the warm sand. A still audience gazed in horror. A frail figure clambered up a hill. Her chestnut hair blinded her sapphire eyes. The aching pain behind her desperate screams pierced the hearts of those who listened.

A cool drop of rain fell on a cold, round face. Running down a crimson cheek, it acted as the tears that would never run down his face again. A little boy lay still on the cold road, an ice-cream melting in his scarlet hand. His chestnut hair was stained with a violent red and a river of blood trickled down his doll like, porcelain white skin. Navy lips sealed his mouth, and a heart stopped. A mother fell over his still chest. The life within him was gone, a mind of imagination was blank, all there was, was a cold figure.

On a perfectly imperfectly built blocks of clay curving over the murky water beneath; Death stood, staring. The loss of life had been a choreographed dance of destruction. A mother sobbed, cradling her broken child. Her mourning was comforted by the sound of a wailing ambulance. The carriage of life or death, hope or despair, halted at the scene. Death smirked at the heroic efforts of the fumbling crowd as they bounced against the fragile body's broken chest. Death's burnt, black, bony, fingers wrapped around a cramped scarlet hand. Two sapphire eyes stared at the catastrophe below. Death held him with cold caress. He caused the boy no pain, beyond what life brings. He carried the soul to a cool rest and the humming of mourning faded into the iced background.

*by Edith Mitten*