

# Looking Upwards

*by* Brian Michael Barbeito

Steel beams. Welds painted over green. Yellow numbers of some sort. Old phone booths. Tags on the walls. I looked up and saw where bits of water fall down from the overpass. Pigeon up there. Washing his wings or something like that. Greyness. I was in a truck. Down a hill a stop light. People there with sunken faces. Frowns in the late afternoon and early evening. Not a place that you want to walk through. Not if you didn't have to. Not outright dangerous, but near those parts. A difficult area. Then a curious movement. A figure steps out from the crowd near the corner. She stretches her arm out and cups a hand. To the sky. Black suit red hair. The head looks upwards. The person is testing for rain. It's a natural act. Something of humanity still lives. No actual apocalypse had occurred- just the juice of things had sizzled out of the people, the area, the earth. The earth is the earth but also a corner of an inner city street. Crowd does not notice. They are in Plato's new cave. Pigeon does not notice. Territory tags recede for a moment. As does greyness. A millisecond there. Just a human movement. Tags. Broken phones. The overpass and the pigeon. Steel beams. The stop light switches to the affirmative. Everything changes. The world is always like that. Please proceed.

