

Guramachimachi

by Erica Hoskins Mullenix

The carnival passed through this hotel one time only, its boarded guests pretending to ignore the smell of outdoor whore in their bedding. Confident in the improbability of chemical extermination, the hotel insect food chain ended with a tribe of arrogant American cockroaches, their leader nicknamed Guramachimachi: that which laughs and survives.

Guramachimachi had been seized once by the peechies, the little ones who tortured the tribe with fire and inquisition. Tricked into a glass jar and shut away in the freezer, 'Machi prayed to his ancestors for strength and stamina for three days. For three days, the peechies would visit and defrost him. *Squeak squawk squeak squawking* their amazement whenever 'Machi would come back to life. Though trying desperately to kibosh this experimental nonsense, his frenetics were admittedly soothed by the fading scent of Del Monte dill pickles.

Broken free by the more excitable peechie, Guramachimachi returned to his tribe, dorsal tube pulsating with pride. Coming from a long line of generals from the Proterozoic Era, death during his ordeal had never been considered. Gathering his army, he wasted no time dictating a new chapter for his bestselling field guide as the wind echoed his victory.

