Dread and Circuses

by Gary Hardaway

What hope is left is slightly bitter. We sip it, mornings, carefully and without savor-just enough to fortify against the long day's dread and tedium.

It is claimed we choose conditions of our servitude.
What choice exists is narrow and tightens around the neck as the leash-man spits out "Heel!" (in so many words) and pulls us in a random new direction that leaves us breathing just enough to follow.

Home again, we pop a Keystone Light, microwave a frozen pizza, and watch the oversaturated colors of the news, torn between the painted faces and the crawling millipede of text.