

Death Pays a Visit But Fucks Up

by Gita M. Smith

Death paid me a visit today. I said, "How do I know you're the real Death and not some second rate punter who will just make me sick?" Death waved a veiny arm out my kitchen window, and a dowager squirrel fell from the crepe myrtle tree into the birdbath.

"She was old when we moved in here ten years ago," I scoffed. "I could have told you myself that this cold snap would finish her off." Death pointed at the rib-eye steaks thawing on my kitchen counter and they shriveled, emitting a rank odor.

"Pretty good, but not yet what I'd call definitive proof," I said.

"A reaper-in-training could have done that."

"Get in your car and drive me over to the Wal-Mart," Death commanded.

"Yes, your Grayness," I replied, quickly heading to the driveway. Traffic was light, and we arrived in no time flat.

"Watch this," Death said. He exited my car without even opening the door, glided over to a robust young man collecting the shopping carts from the cart corral, and Zap! The fellow careened into unconsciousness.

"**Ha!**" I yelled. "You used a taser! I *saw* you! You're not the real deal. You're a fake!"

With that I jerked the wheel and peeled rubber out of there.

I know I can't out run Death. I know He will locate me faster than a scorned ex-wife with GPS. It's just that I expected more finesse than cheesy tricks.

I mean, we all hope for a little dignity at the end, don't we?

We get prepped for the big finale, and we don't want the guy who

turns up with the scythe to be Jo-Jo the dog-faced boy.

We want the Reaper Himself, with the full sweep of history on his resume. Dammit, I want the cold hand that touches me to be the same hand that touched Moses and Jimi Hendrix.

