

The Garage

by Jason Rivera

As I stood in my father's garage, the smell of leaves and wet installation stung my nose. The four cement squares, blanketed with dust, only squirrely paw prints trail of through the hole in the back corner. Flickering against the dusty particles, a hologram of cries, splinters, sweat, and shame. My life accelerated by grime in my father's garage.

The workbench always loaded to capacity leans, held together by rusted tendons of L-shaped brackets fastened by rusted Phillips head screws. Only the tips of wax pencils lay beside brown, gray, and orange paint scrapers. Moldy manuals for primitive appliances litter the shelves. A section of the *Switchford Gazette* waiting for its turn in Jerry's birdcage lay next to an empty toolbox. The headline read, '**Son of Disgraced Mayor Leaps from Bridge**':

Switchford, Illinois, April 1—At 6:37 a.m. on March 31st Switchford emergency services received a report that a man had leaped from the eastbound side of the Winslow Bridge. Divers from the Chicago Police Department assisted Switchford Sherriff's deputies in recovering what authorities have identified as the body of a 50 year-old Camden Township resident, James Frederick Winslow.

Winslow, son of disgraced former Switchford Mayor, Frederick Huntington Winslow, had been working as a Facilities Maintenance Engineer for Shelton Truck and Tire in Camden Township. "Jim was a reliable guy. Never complained about hours getting cut, Never complained about taking on new responsibilities, Jim just came to work every day and did his job." said Dale Bates, Winslow's immediate supervisor. "It will be hard to replace him."

According to Winslow's neighbors, he had become somewhat of a recluse this past winter. He had rarely been scene outside the residence other than leaving for work. "I can't remember

the last time he pulled his trash out for Monday pickup," Adolf Mueller, told police.

Police who searched the Winslow residence have yet to uncover a suicide note or any other indication of Mr. Winslow's state of mind prior to his death. Switchford Police did however remove a desktop computer and a mobile laptop, which will be examined by authorities.

Winslow's father, Frederick H. Winslow won the 1960 Mayoral Election after upsetting four term incumbent Gerald Switchford by a margin of eighty-three votes, the narrowest margin of victory in the town history. After winning re-election in 1964 Mayor Winslow was the central figure in appropriating funds for the construction of the I-294 Bridge that connects Camden and Switchford. Allegations of voter fraud and widespread corruption throughout his administration in 1965 forced F.H. Winslow to retire from office for undisclosed health reasons. F.H. Winslow died of heart disease in 1971.

James and I never much got along. I mean us being neighbors and all. Actually, it had to be at least ten years since I could remember seeing him. Maggie threw me out after hacking my e-mail account and I ended up sleeping in my teenage bedroom for a few nights until she moved in to her sister's guesthouse. I didn't even know that he had died, much less calling his shot from a fucking bridge.

