

Why?

by Larry Strattnner

In a paroxysm of momentary joy he clasped himself to his bosom. Turning his face to the rising sun his eyebrows began to smoke as his fanatic smile of supposition exposed his teeth to the ultraviolet and they began to erode in a bath of purity.

His clothes ignited and he ran about in smaller and smaller concentric circles as the yellow flames of J. Crew changed to the blue conflagration of hair products and anti-wrinkle cream and he began to melt in earnest.

Various boring, symbiotic and parasitic beings fled him as he burned. Ticks, bedbugs and pubic lice took flight. He did not know Spanish and his cries to the woman in the ad with huge breasts went unanswered. He would have bought a chance on Mega millions to fund his escape but the window of opportunity spun past quickly and he was left with a dollar still in hand, trying to recall the birthdays of his last six children.

“God!” he cried, why didn't I buy chains for the mountain passes? And why does my car not attain its published mileage? I have wandered in the desert for so long and my feet are worn and bleeding. Who will wash them? Who will comfort me in this my hour of need?

In the infinite depth of blue sky, no answer came from a single gossamer cloud floating above. A figure crouched behind the cloud, sniggering, the answer known to him, but as he squatted behind the puff of white and moved with it across the sky, he kept this information to himself, never to be revealed to the insignificant man on fire.

