

He Don't Know Him

by Michael J. Solender

He didn't reveal himself, not even for his own edification, the mask presented muslin-like cover was for those who thought they knew him. The soldier's camouflage allowed everyone to stay on social script.

Planned developments have garages in the back, hasty retreat and advance protected by the Genie Automatic, come and go and go and come, waving is optional.

Most did indeed find comfort in social conventions and niceties. He was not comforted by the persona he had become, but rather hidden from the glare that inevitably followed those who failed to assimilate and adhere to societies rhythms.

He needed others to bring out who lay there, underneath his growing thick veneer. He needed, demanded actually, foils to help shape his own thinking. Books are great and the net is infinite, but they don't challenge your rational or thinking or make you defend your values or define your humanity.

He couldn't find those courageous enough to make the first move, and he was paralyzed himself; the vapors of what coursed through his mind escaped unchallenged, unseen and unheard, falling like swallows on their final migration.

They had drinks and dinners and went to their kids plays and sang in the church choirs, they lived next door and took in each others mail.

He didn't know any of them any better than he knew himself.

