

Icarus

by Robert Crisman

Rob slogged down First as November winds tore right on through him that Tuesday at four o'clock in the morning, letting him know that he was the only man left on the face of the whole fucking planet.

Except for an old, broke, bent *stick* of a man there on Yesler, in tatters and rags, with x-es for eyes and three teeth in his head, who croaked and whose hand was a claw, a supplicant's claw begging change as Rob came up on him.

Rob got there, looked closer--into the x-es for eyes of a man that he'd known, a man who two years before could have modeled men's clothing, a *handsome* young man, Kenny somebody, mid-20s, who'd kicked with the fellas all day and all night at the pool hall, another one of the Young Kings who ruled city streets late at night.

Kenny was 80 years old and a scarecrow and cold wind blew out the lights all around him as he and Rob stood on the corner of Yesler and First.

Up at the pool hall, like all of the fellas, he and Rob both *loved* that speed, the cheap cris-cross bennies that shoved you up into the ozone, made you fly like a bird in the sky, and let you believe for a minute too long that you'd never *ever* come down.

Rob flew to the moon and crashlanded; Kenny winged on toward the sun, and Rob never saw him again.

