

The Prompter

by stephen hastings-king

There is a here and I am in it, stumbling over gullies and gashes past vertical forms made from broken grasses and corkscrews of newly fallen snow spinning in the pressurized hiss of the wind. Here is a not remembering how the journey started over the decay of each footstep into a network of tiny crackling sounds. There, ahead, in the blur, the town periodically folds into itself as if it had been painted on a scrim.

When I reach the fold I walk through to backstage where the sets that enable time are arranged in thick sequences. Over the marsh are rows of spotlights; below center is a small opening. From inside it, a human form looks back at me, The Prompter who remembers what is forgotten, his head giant with alarm.

Then there is a here and I am amongst the gullies and grasses and corkscrews of newly fallen snow and see no spotlights or prompter. When I walk networks of tiny cracking sounds radiate from beneath my feet and dissolve in the suspendedness of a Christmas morning town.

