

Lock Out

A friar was he who sat on the porch,
A man with brown hair like wicker,
He looked out the lane the locksmith would come,
And there only wished it be quicker,

He had no keys to crack his door,
So could not enter his dwelling,
Alone in the winds of a winter night,
His impatience now was telling,

At last came a man from out the dark,
A smith in trade and provision,
A smith who was poor to work a night,
When poor men don't get a decision,

The friar took stand and welcomed his hand,
They talked, though the talk was tainted,
To get inside and part in ways,
Was better than getting acquainted,

The locksmith turned to the friar's lock,
Put steel inside the cheek,
For one minute spurned the unlock returned,
The insides outed a peek,

The friar was quick to enter his home,
But he had not settled his owing,
He passed from seen to out of sight,
And he left the smith not knowing,

And he did not return the minute past,
Nor the minute after too,
The locksmith tried to call him out,
For he knew his dues were due

And naught came out, so the smith went in,
He would leave once fees were meted,
Poor was he to work this night,
But he would not end it cheated,

A cobbled lair of kitchenware,
A room of charm and cradle,
A shoal of fish swam up the wall
A candle adorned the table,

A knock to intrude politely here,
A cap to mark his claim,
A glance next room to an unsealed tomb,
Alight in candle flame,

Gossamer flick to flicker wax,
Jackal eyes prowled the fire,
A rumination room to room,
From whence once held the friar,

Candles betwixt electric keys,
Beside Dionysian sculpture,
Candles by frame of renaissance,

And toasting ports of culture,
Each chunk of wax was flush and fresh,
And revealed a logic forsaken,
That each new found was part the route,
The friar who lit them had taken,

They brought the smith upon a crate,
That brimmed in wealth to thief,
That could pay all dues now overdue,
And let him take his leave,

But something wrong was going on,
Worth more than a toll's accord,
The friar was here, and should be near,
So why was he being ignored?

He reembarked the path afoot,
To the final room of station,
The only one that had no lights,
Left on for invitation,

And there a woman lay at rest,
And here broke down the fiction,
He saw the mess, the bed and the dress,
But mostly the contradiction,

A woman can't live in a friar's home,
By charge of carnal collusion,
So either she was out of place,
Or the friar an intrusion,

Fingers danced the dial along,
The locksmith called the law,
Reported to them a trespassing,
From all that he had saw,

Footsteps trickled down the stairs,
From whence the keyboard lay,
But though the stand was still at hand,
The keys had gone away,

He could not face the music now,
For the music had departed,
And in the mute and dark and chill,
He realised what had started,

Gone was the frame of renaissance,
The Dionysian sculpture vanished,
Washed away the cultured ports,
All light and wealth now banished,

The candle wicks were black and cold,
Their purpose had been achieved,
They were only set to mark the things,
This stranger intended to thief,

But the locksmith was still in the house,
And he still had trade in hand,
There was one thing left that he could do,

The one he could understand,
This plan would work two different ways,
But either worked for him,
The rooms locked out of all their goods,
Or the thief would be locked in,

A liturgy of bolts and teeth,
Of tumbler, pin and spindle,
Each little click an answered prayer
For sins he could not dwindle,

The smith could now divorce the place,
And part ways with the mess,
The front door awaited his return,
The mouth of the address,

But though the smith could clasp the catch,
The open scorned his yield,
All the house he had toiled to lock,
And this the one door sealed,

He thrashed and kicked and ran across,
From the window, what did he see?
A drunken friar within the dark
Readying himself to flee,

His cheap suit now curled up the leg
He wore the locksmith's cap,
All the goods the house had lost,
Were in the blanket's flap,

He did not turn to face the smith,
Or heed his loud calls back,
Alone in the winds of a winter night,
He faded into black,

But the locksmith's calls were not for naught,
As the women upstairs awoke,
Trickled down stairs and traced the hall,
To find the man who'd spoke,

And poor was the smith who tried to explain,
How all this had begun,
The story felt an absurdity,
And his alibi was on the run,

Sirens of law were soon to land,
He knew when he was done,
The smith and stranger in the house,
Were seen now as only one,