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The Story

Ed Cates

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Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico • Postponed to: July 30 – August 2, 2021



THE STORY

by

Ed Cates

--for Robert Callahan

Now I understand it; how the story begins.
With a knapsack, a hat and a horn
Like those straight out of a Corot.
With a nail, a riddle, and seven ravens.
How three brothers will go out as if they were one,
To the well, to the wall, to find the blue light;
How six men got on in the world,
And who returned by night.

I understand how the story starts off,
To see its fortune among strange musicians, good strangers,
I know the story of the Boy Who Went Forth
To Learn what Fear Is, and as soon as he set off
Learned the language of animals.

And there will be
A Woman Without Hands, Godfather Death, or a White Snake
Someone ill searching for the waters of life,
A toad singing beside a well, waiting for a golden ball
To rise. Now I understand the story, now I sleep
With eyes open to recognize the dream when it arrives,
And shudder to think about all those who shudder to think.

In this history of once-upon-a time
Set in the future, there will be a wishing table,
A valiant little tailor, a singing bone.
In the story, and in the story of the story.
And in the story's end. Amen.