

3-15-1995

Gepetto's Flaw

Richard King Perkins II

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Recommended Citation

Perkins, Richard King II (1995) "*Gepetto's Flaw*," *The Mythic Circle*: Vol. 1995 : Iss. 18 , Article 6.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mcircle/vol1995/iss18/6>

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

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



Additional Keywords

Poetry; Geppetto; Richard King Perkins II

Old gnarled Grizzlebat was an ogre. He was huge and tall. He had scaly hands and warty feet, and a long thick tail that he dragged around behind him on the ground. He wore a sackcloth robe, the hood pulled down low. People didn't like Grizzlebat, but Grizzlebat liked people even less. All the folk for miles around told horrible stories about him and the things he did. Most of them were true.

GEPPELTO'S FLAW

by Richard King Perkins II



I Love You
Hardens and splinters
On his lips
Like dried mustard
Flecking
With smiles and
Grimaces
Never truly part
of himself.

The hinge of his jaw traps

I Love You
I Love You
I Love You

Mimes on and again
still another
Eight hundred ninety-six grating
Times or so.

His mouth, layer caked
With tangy
Yellow condiment
Grows like the
Face of Pinocchio—
Who is,
To the unloving eye,
Simply
A wooden boy
Marionette
Fashioned and enlivened
By a hollow enigma
And an appointed
Conscience
That chirps without end
In the dangling night.