

## Fish Bowl — A Poem of Love and Dirt

By Drew T. Noll



Feast, pastel on paper, DTNoll, Oct. 2012 © all rights reserved

The water did not flow. It was too dry to play. So, we sat in the bowl all that hot and unhappy day. I sat there with Love. We sat there and stewed. And I thought for us both, “How I wish we weren’t on the menu!”

It was too dry to get out and too warm to stay in, so we sat in the bowl doing nothing at all. All we could do was to: float! Float! Float! Float! Love and I did not like it, a tidbit not even.



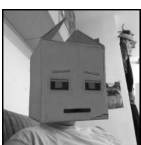
And then something went SQUISH! How that 'squish' made us flip! We looked! Then we saw it; we looked and we saw it step in with us! The upright walker! It stepped into the bowl with us, only to sink.

And, to us it then said, "Why do you float in the bowl there like that? I know it is wetter, but this bowl is not funny—being stuck into this way! It can be bigger outside of this place, and (wink, wink) I know loads of good games we can play!"

"I know a good trick, said the walker, upright, "Actually, a lot of good tricks that I will show you tonight. The world will not mind at all if I do!" So, Love and I had nothing to say, and with nothing to do but to stew, the world, we just knew, was going to be 'out of the bowl' for the day.

But, our wish said, "NO! NO! Make that walker go away! Tell that walker you do NOT want to stay and that there is nothing else to say!" Love and I agreed that that walker should not be here, that walker does not belong. Not about or within, not here or in there, that walker belongs outside in the air!"

"Now! Now! Have no fear, have no fear!" said the walker. "My games are not tricks and not half-bad at that," said the walker as he or she, whatever may be, sat back down into the bowl and began to rant and then spew. "Why... we can have lots of good fun, if you wish, with a game that I call 'UP WITH ONE OF YOU TWO FISH!'"



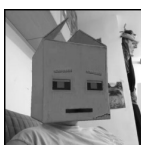
“Put me back down,” said my love up above, as the walker hoisted her up overhead. “This is no fun at all! Put me down,” said my love, “I do NOT care to fall!”

“Have no fear!” said the walker, as my love flew ever higher, “I will not let you fall and will hold you up tall as I stand on the rim of your bowl! Look at me now, with the good-book in one hand! And a cup on my hat to drink tea with my other! But... that is not all I can do!” said the walker teetering above with glee spreading across our world ... gone asunder.

“Look at me, look at me now!” said the walker. “On top of the cup on top of my hat I can place a cake and another book! I can hold up two books in one hand and this fish in another! And look! A ship in the sky above water in your bowl way down under, and milk for a cat waiting with eyes on you both! Now I can jump, up and down with a tumbling ‘not coming,’ that is not ALL, oh no, not ALL at ALL!”

“Look at me! Look at me now! This is so fun to have fun, but in truth one must know how! I can hold up the cup and the milk and the cake! I can hold up these books and your fish... I can take! The ship sails away leading mankind astray, but on top of it all is a fan I can wave to entice and to call! I can fan with the fan as I step off the bowl, but ... that is not all! Oh no, not at all...”

That is what the walker said; then it fell upon its head. It fell down with a bump and my love and I saw the whole world tumble down. She came down with the rest of the land, but into the dirt she was unable to dwell.



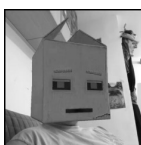
Her parting words emptied my soul as they echoed to heaven, “Do I like this? Oh, no. I do not. This is not a good game,” said she as she lit. “Do I like this? No, I do not, not a bit and not even!”

“Now look and see what you did to us three!” said my love to the walker, “Now look at our home, look at this, look at that! You sank our ship, you stuck it in cake, and you rose up our bowl and stood atop it all! You should not be here just walking about, now LEAVE this house, leave our world!” said Love to the rest.

“But,” said the walker, “I like it a lot; to be here and walk. I will NOT go away, I will not go and I wish not! So ... um ... I will show you another good game that I know!” Then, he ran out.

And then, as fast as a bike, the upright walker ran back in with a box perched atop. The box quivered like a hat, but for only a moment and then split into two. Both halves lit down, poised at each ear lip-flapping to the walker’s head’s view. “Now look at this, look at this game,” said the walker to the two perched aside, “Have a good look at this good and marvelous trick I can do, but watch out, you may just get sick!”

Our stomachs protested as the walker’s meme began, in one ear an angel and in the other a devil sang. Both had hooks which clawed down the walker’s chest, heart-strings glowing as each half was pulled in protest. “I call this game “Fun instead!” said the walker’s head, and then it bowed deeply attempting to engage us all.



“These things you now see will pick up the rest, something new you shall see as I tell you their names with zest: Hara and Hatov!;” upon which time each also took a bow. “These things have some teeth, but they won’t bite you, and only if you feed them will they listen. All they want is to have fun and to get me out of the box in my head, to think things that aren’t true and to then clean up the mess!”

Just then they ran into the room, and flew around our bowl singing a tune. They asked us each, Love then me too, “How do you do it” and reached out to shake hands with us too. “Would you like to shake hands with Hara and Hatov?” asked the upright walker clearly wanting them back perched near each of his/her ears.

Love reached down from heaven above and we both shook the hand of the upright walker, then we shook with Hara and Hatov, too. We shook their hands, but our wish said, “NO, NO! Those things should not be in this house, make them go! They should not be here when the real world is out! Put them out, let them out!” That is what our wish said in our heads, but just a bit late.

“Have no fear, you annoying little wish, these things are GREAT things and you are just NOT,” the walker said and then he gave each a thump on the back as Hara and Hatov ran by our bowl. “They will give you some fun on this wet and cold day! They like to play and to fly around in the sky on kites made of clay!” then the walker stumbled, as if drunk and preceded to trip, trip, stumble.

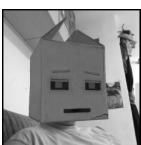


“NO, NO, NO, NO,” said the wish we all thought, “Not in this house, not at all ever and never should be sought! The things they will bump, the things broken will not end, I do not like it and you should all stop!”

Then, Love and I saw it all, as they shrunk down to small; Hara and Hatov perched back near the walker’s head. They spoke each in one ear, then the other, of the things in the night that bumped and confused us. Hatov and Hara! They then flew around us, first pulling my tail and then my love’s, telling tales all along! The mess that they made, and are making still, is a mess in the world not to be proud of, not one little bit! This one’s at fault and then it is that, and each mess they each make echoes out all the while! Seas froth in vain, as each merged in the other, and then the end began at the edge of the land. They did not play well and we could all see, the world would find out this beginning, a beginning which had already begun to crumble and sing!

Then my love said out-loud, “Look, look!” as fear trembled out, “The world has found us... it’s found us out! What will happen to us being caught in this state, and this upright walker wading through our bowl with us, too?! What shall we do?! Get rid of Hara and Hatov!? Get rid of those two!”

So, as fast as I could I listened to Love, I leapt out of the bowl and flipped onto the floor. Hara and Hatov did not move a muscle, glued to the ears on the upright walker’s head, but all three looked down at me flopping around like I was already gone.



The scene went on longer than I'd have liked, but eventually the walker reached down with light. Hara said to do so, I could hear as I flipped, but Hatov whispered that I did it on purpose and was taking a nap. The walker kept bending from inside the bowl, back and forth like a flame, and the wave that was made from the walker's agitations sloshed my love up, again, high into the air!

This was not to be, so I gave up my share, which came down with flare, and as my world came down, I too slipped down ... at last. Those Ones need to stop! Then, from a puddle on the floor, the walker leaned over and we spoke; we made a plan and set it in motion. We'll do what is said, as it is spoken overhead. We'll pack up and leave those two, while away we are taken to the world left behind!

"Oh no, oh dear," said the walker all wet and shaking. "You did not like it, our game we made and then played! Oh dear, with a horn of light now showing, in shame the walker hung down, what a shame, shame, shame, shame. Then those two, Hara and Hatov, the walker took up and covered, down to what's shown, and then put them back into the box, hooked it and away they all went, sadly that day.

"That is so good," said Love to me, "They went away and took the two murmurs." But, all I could think was, "What of the world to come? Such a mess will be found, and such a terrible, horrible find it would be! How can we brush it, how will it clean? There is no way ever we can fix it in time!"

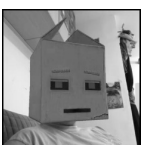


But, then! The walker came back! It came back and said, “Have no fear whatsoever, this mess can be cleaned and this mess will be shined! I have a partner that helps me along, I have a partner that knows about the end! And, we have another good trick to show you, another good thing that we know!”

The walker picked up the bowl, with four fingers and a thumb, it picked up the milk that was waiting, and picked up the ship sailing and flung it aside. With two books and a cake the walker left us all hanging, and tea was dispelled as a remedy, while the walker’s hat fell off with a cup clinking inside. In the end was the beginning as the walker stumbled further, and to our surprise it picked up all the things and was gone, with its entrance unseen, not even delivered.

The walker had melted back to the dirt whence it came, filtering down through the water of our bowl. From dirt it began and from dirt it then went, but Love and I didn’t say goodbye! The walker had come, played, and left, and now all we had was dirt under our fins. So, as the water in our bowl became crystal clear, we realized at once what we would miss.

The water evaporated and the air disappeared; we realized our mistake and knew what to do. With a wish and a prayer we lifted the bowl and sailed onto the wind. The dirt at the bottom began sloshing about and inside the swirls we could almost see them, walkers each one but just like Love and I a male and a female to bring the rest down. We landed on soil and planted our fins. We grew into things we could never have known. Walking onto the





land holding each other's hand, Love and I became known to the creatures we spawned—and then ... with love all around, we were loved for all time.

