Duel of the Poets ooo

By Brenden PoNtz

WHY I LIKE IT: *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes… If perchance you have a penchant for Robert Service's, 'The Cremation of Sam McGee,' 'Sir Smasham Uppe' by E.V. Rieu or even Lennon and McCartney's 'Rocky Raccoon,' Brenden Pontz is pure gold, with a dream-team-theme. It is profound, lyrical and brutish—what could be better? And the finale is theo-dorably, seu-prisingly b'geiseling. (Couldn't resist the gibberish, hope it doesn't spoil it for you.) No sense quoting from it, you will want to read it over and over. As for me, I just may have it blown-up to poster-size and have Pontz recommend an illustrator...(Spacing is poet's own).*

Duel of the Poets

By Brenden Pontz

It began in a classroom, with two English teachers

Who were discussing writing and poetry for leisure.

When one asked a question, sure the other would know it

"Who do you think was the world's greatest poet?"

Now this question, you'd think, would be forward and straight

But among them it caused the most vicious debate.

The teachers' discussion turned spiteful and sour

And they found themselves arguing for hours!

So to settle for good who was greatest in rhyme,

They built a machine to travel through time.

Plucked from time in a flash of light,

The greatest poets of all were assembled to fight.

From Wordsworth to Wilde, together they stood,

Armed with quills, pens, and pencils; oh this wouldn't be good!

For the poets would soon take some notes from Macbeth,

Like erudite gladiators, they'd fight to the death.

With no hesitation, Shakespeare plunged his pen

Into the chest of Walt Whitman.

Then as Maya Angelou beat T.S. Elliot into the ground,

Langston Hughes slammed a chair into Ezra Pound.

In shock and horror, the teachers looked on

As the classroom morphed into the Octagon.

Around them, the chaos continued to grow

As Robert Frost punched out Edgar Allen Poe.

Frost broke his nose, and Poe cried "Nevermore!"

Then he slumped unconscious onto the floor.

Frost proclaimed his victory, stating he was the best,

Only to be tackled by Homer, jumping off of a desk.

Ralph Waldo Emerson fell, stabbed in the spleen

By a pencil wielded by Shel Silverstein.

Shel's weapon of choice was as sharp as could be,

And carved from a limb of the Giving Tree.

Yet it couldn't save him from being beat

Over the head, with a book by John Keats.

The shouting and punching grew rather loud,

And soon, the commotion drew a large crowd

A gaggle of teachers, who began to fret

And a handful of students, who commenced placing bets.

It was the most epic battle they had ever seen,

Until Chaucer pushed Dante into the time machine.

Dante hit the machine with his shoulder

Causing it to crash and fall over.

The power core ruptured from this forward motion,

And Dante was burned in a fiery explosion.

Soon Dante's inferno consumed the whole room,

Slaying most of the fighters in a fiery plume.

The crowd of spectators had to stop looking on,

For the flash was as blinding as a nuclear bomb.

As the explosion ended, though now apprehensive

The uneasy crowd got ahold of their senses.

And what did their ringing ears happen to hear,

But the last standing poet strangling Shakespeare!

With his victim passed out, and his fury let loose;

The winner faced the crowd, it was Dr Seuss.

He turned to the crowd, wowed by his combat

And gave a dramatic bow, like the Cat in the Hat.

Then Seuss walked away, his triumph complete

They say to this day, he haunts Mulberry Street.

As for the teacher's question; well now, you know it

The answer was found in the Duel of the Poets.

THE POET SPEAKS… *Satirical humor is a large influence of mine when I write poetry. I'm a dedicated fan of sites like The Onion, and TV shows like The Simpsons, and I strive to capture their sense of madcap hilarity that manages to be both weird and smart. I'm a firm believer that*

poetry (like all writing) shouldn't be taken too seriously, and poets should be allowed to have fun with the works that they shape. I've never really subscribed to the idea that true art should be dark, angsty, and excessively deep. Reading a good poem is like listening to your favorite stories; it should make you laugh, cry, and get you to think a little all at once.

To me, poetry is a unique way to entertain readers, and play with the conventional formats of writing. As someone who writes both poems and fiction, I try to give my poems a plot while still adhering to a meter, rhyme scheme, and other poetic elements. Though it can be challenging, it is certainly a fun challenge to bring a poem to life.

AUTHOR BIO: I'm a college student from Connecticut who's a trail runner, science fiction nerd, and aspiring writer. I enjoy writing quirky poetry and all forms of strange fiction. I'm currently a history major and wish one day to teach professionally.