

# EVE OF THE EVE OF DESTRUCTION—Version 1

By Howie Good

**WHY WE LIKE IT:** *Word perfect.*

## **Eve of the Eve of Destruction**

The big road map on the wall at the highway rest stop is just a frustrating tangle of lines for the man standing there studying it. I try to remember what state is south of Nebraska in case he asks. The only laws regularly enforced are the laws of chance. Self-driving Mercedes will sacrifice pedestrians to save the driver.

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A city inspector declared the building's crumbling façade unsafe. The very next morning, a Park Avenue socialite was crushed to death by a falling piece of masonry. I've written some thoughts on the bedroom wall. Sometimes I forget they're even there. My gas mask hangs on the back of the door. Once when I was visiting Los Angeles, I saw people digging up a grave with their bare hands.

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The day to come is just a rerun of the day before. So I board a train with the idea of appearing that night *in flagrante delicto*. The old rattling train sways alarmingly. When I arrive, the station is crowded with soldiers, though of whose army I can't say. The situation that awaits me across town doesn't allow any time to find out. I climb in a taxi, give the address. The taxi lurches into motion. By now it's red dusk, fire clinging to the clothes and hair of a laughing toddler splashing in a puddle of what looks suspiciously like blood.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** *"Eve of the Eve of Destruction" came together, as most of my writing does, in an unplanned way. I originally wrote each section as separates over a couple of weeks, only belatedly realizing the possibility of synergistic effect if I put them together in a single sequence. Even after the sequencing, I continued to revise each section. It wasn't so much the wording that was causing me anxiety as the order of the sentences. The middle section in particular felt off until I kind of turned it upside down. These artistic choices only seem rational in retrospect. The truth is, I proceed in my writing by intuition, improvisation, and guesswork.*

**BIO:** *Howie Good is the author most recently of [Stick Figure Opera: 99 100-word Prose Poems](#) from Cajun Mutt Press. He co-edits the online journals [Unbroken](#) and [UnLost](#).*