

# Trinkets

## Contents:

Little Brother	2
David Dunn	4
The Lifeguard	6
The Bricklayer	8
Sushi Chef	10
The Florist	12
The Hotel	14
Last Words	15
Heroes	16
Richard Corban	17
Lady Fingers	18

# Trinkets

## Little Brother

Chris Conely was 9 years old and Catholic and almost always in that order. He went to mass on Sunday at 7, and every Wednesday at 11. He knew the words, and he would pretend to sing along—while he secretly wished for it to be over.

Until one Tuesday morning, he climbed on the maple sapling in the yard, bending it over in slow motion. He held the trembling tree taught, peering into a bird's nest. He saw two mouths reaching and tweeting to the tune of Jingle Bells, while the mother bird circled angrily—until she dove and struck Chris in the head.

He released the sapling and like a sling shot it flung both baby birds up onto the roof. They rolled down into the rain-gutter like little lint-covered soggy-rotten pink and blue potatoes. Chris went home and told his sister, and she was horrified.

## Trinkets

She told him they were dead birds. They were dead birds with bird-ghosts that would haunt him—and from then on, he prayed in church for real! And when he went to bed, he clutched his bible and wore his rosary around his neck.

# Trinkets

David Dunn

David Dunn was a moody man, with his plunger and bucket exclaiming dammit and fuckit!

Who would flush a sock? It just don't make sense!

And what little change he had would jingle as he made his way from here to there, pushing his yellow cart with one squeaky wheel.

David worked the men's rooms during parades and games at Rungrado May Day Stadium in Pyongyang. He plunged and pulled all manner of things from the toilets—and by the end of the day, his bucket was filled with the strange objects he called —toilet trophies.

He pulled out army men and toy cars and yo yos from the gift shop. He found a silver silk tie and a fuchsia flop flop, and a mood ring—it was brown. He often remarked that he could find anything in the world if Kim Il-sung's parade would arrive on Burrrito Saturday.

## Trinkets

As it was though, the Arirang gymnastic extravaganza was taking place, and David was especially busy.

Until he jingled into stall 92—and gasped at what he saw.

The head of a Pomeranian puppy protruded from the toilet, its nose just above the water. The dog's nostrils were flaring desperately and David exclaimed,  
—Dear Lord no!!

His skillful hands quickly scooped out the water and he gently pulled the puppy—harder and harder until at last, it popped out.  
—I saved you!  
He cried, holding the puppy above his head smiling—  
—Stupendous!

David held the puppy close to his chest as he jingled out to his car. Now, I have seen everything, he thought.

He looked at the puppy's little jelly bean eyes and said, —You my friend are very lucky, and if I'm right, delicious.

# Trinkets

## The Lifeguard

Byron Mellen was a father of two,  
and a lifeguard. He saw his little boys  
every other weekend, and the rest  
of his days were spent watching  
the deep-end of the pool.

He watched the pregnant mommies, a sight  
for the fellas, with their bulging bellies  
nearly bursting through their bathing suits,  
while they sat under the umbrellas.

He watched the teenie boppers  
and wanna-be rappers walking this way  
and that way, and the blue hair ladies  
sleeping in the chairs.

**“No running! – No Jumping!”**

he said like a machine–  
like some mantra he repeated  
so often that it had no meaning.

Byron sat upon his perch wearing designer  
sun glasses and zinc oxide on his nose,  
spying the line to the diving board and the  
lemmings as they fell off, one by one–until  
David Sprout climbed the steps.

## Trinkets

David walked carefully to the edge of the board, and called to the girls below, —Look at me, look at me! -and then he slipped.

David hung by his bathing suit, now wrapped around his ankles, upside-down—dangling.

Some girls blushed, and others laughed. The mothers gasped, covering the eyes of the little ones while he just hung there, wiggling. For a long minute, there was jiggling and giggling, till he finally fell into the water below, and surfaced to a round of applause.

Byron didn't think there was much to cheer about, and the next time David Sprout came to swim, he stayed in the shallow end— and wore a belt to keep his shorts up.

**“No running! — No Jumping!  
— No dangling!”**

# Trinkets

## The Bricklayer

Gianne Perugino brushed his daughters tangled hair so roughly her eyes welled up with tears. Then he kissed her and pushed her out the door to play.

Gianne laid bricks that day, the way he had for years, with cracked clay-hands moving automatically, almost magically, and he slung the bricks with perfect rhythm – until he was called home.

Gianne saw a crowd gathering as he arrived - and he saw the pieces of his life scattered in the intersection, just past the stop sign. His little girl lay in the street, here and there – She was struck by a Venice Brand Milk Truck that sucked her into the wheel well and then spit her out.

Gianne gathered his daughter into a little red pile, In the way only a brick layer could – and she filled his clay-arms like cord-wood. He sat in the street rocking and singing a broken song no one could understand while the police drank coffee and looked on.



## Trinkets

A man from the milk factory scowled, How long will we allow this trouler to rock? My truck is covered in blood and the milk will clot!

And the police said, we're paid by the hour – and when the sun went down they turned on their headlights and took turns keeping the curious crowd quite.

Until Gianne eventually stopped singing, and the firemen, with their red hoses, rinsed the street, and a pale procession piled flowers by his mailbox.

After that day, nobody asked whose fault it was, or what song he sang, or whether the milk spoiled - and when people saw Gianne they stepped away from the curb.

He never went back to laying bricks.  
He never drank milk again, or sang again,  
or cried again.

Gianne spent the rest of his life as a horse groomer, gently stroking their tangled hair.

# Trinkets

## Sushi Chef

### I

Kazuya Yamamoto worked  
at the sushi bar, cutting perfect  
sashimi for the society elites  
with their fat wallets and  
ultra-gold credit cards.  
They filed in and out, for 10 years  
while he served them with a smile.  
He seasoned perfect sticky-rice,  
and trained others to roll it thrice  
into little circles of perfect form  
almost too pretty to eat.

### II

Sally brought her little girl to  
eat at the sushi bar. She taught her  
to hold the chopsticks—just so  
and to spit in her napkin  
when she didn't like  
the edamame  
and kanikama.  
They came every Tuesday and  
Thursday like clockwork toys,  
the mother and the girl—smiling  
with a barely recognizable konichiwa  
before spitting out the nijimasu  
in a tiny paper napkin for two.

## Trinkets

### III

Kazuya saved the napkins,  
in a leaking yellow ball  
that sat quietly  
on the window ledge.  
He worked it with his hands  
kneading it just so, before gently  
slicing it into perfect circles,  
and wrapping it tightly  
in a nicely seasoned nori.  
He served it with a smile,  
saying SAJI WO NAGERU  
and while bowing very low.

# Trinkets

## The Florist

Mimi Flor and David floor married for love  
and owned the Cut Above Flower Shop.

Each morning Mimi swept the floor—  
green stems and cuttings of every color.  
She was the town florist and town gossip.  
Early morning blue-hair ladies filed in  
each day—buying lilies and black eyed  
susans, and marigolds while gasping as  
Mimi told about the whoreist on the  
corner—  
and the many men she had coming and  
going.

Mary Vickers was 34—a mother of two,  
a widow and a seamstress on steroids.  
She was curvy and beautiful—and self  
employed, sewing a new dress every day.  
She wore each one herself, once, before  
selling it. She sold them for bread and  
wine—

sometimes traded them for toys, once even  
for flowers.

## Trinkets

Since her husband died, she had  
made her own way, living on the corner.

Every evening, when it was too dark to tell  
one man from another, David Flor took  
the flower money and bought a dress  
from Mary, removing it personally, from her  
ample form—before wearing it himself.

# Trinkets

## The Hotel

717, 719, 721, Ice machine,

723, 725, food tray.

Half eaten lobster,  
strawberries,  
oyster shells.

A woman screams behind the plain door -

*It's comforting.*

(At least someone is screaming).

# Trinkets

## Last words

I treated a man in the E.R. today, He lay there, bleeding out- I was helpless to stop the blood. He was covered in wounds - crisscrossed like a crimsoned map. He wasn't going to make it.

The police asked, "*Who did this to you?*" He had this bit of unfinished business.

Every breath he suffered could be his last - and by now the room was full of people, drawing close, struggling to hear his last words.

He said, "*Past the garden behind my home, you will find a path - rounded and steep. Take it to the top - to a crooked shack with holes in the floorboards and a broken window. There will be a red tub and a tire swing that looks like it swings by itself. Knock on the door and a man will answer,*

*He'll ask you "Slashy or no slashy?"  
--- For the love of God  
- be sure you say "no slashy."*

*Inspired by: ZACH SCHOMBURG—Scarry  
No Scarry*

# Trinkets

## Heroes

They met at a rave, where she just said it,  
—do my poems and my lips! - And that's  
how it was, on rainy Tuesdays and snowy  
Thurs-days, The senior and the freshman -  
heroes to each other.

Until the last Tuesday - he graduated. He  
found her on the bench by the library, and  
showed her the leather book with his  
diploma. She looked sad, brushing her  
fingers over the raised letters.

Then he whispered in her ear, —I have to  
know! - He touched her ear, and looked into  
her eyes. He kissed her chapped lips, and  
felt her hand pressing his chest. She closed  
the book.



# Trinkets

Richard Corban

And then he heard it again, the protesting gate  
opening to the graveyard.

Police lined up for a mile with black badges  
and news crews. Richard Corban was a high  
school bully -  
turned bully-with-a-badge

like the others, eventually the cars left

and the diggers quickly  
finished the sunny task.

And later he retold the story,  
to the guys at the bar who knew Dick.

—That moron broke down the door and got  
shot in the head which is what happens when  
you break down enough doors.

Something is wrong with the surprise and the  
fanfare - and with jailing the frightened  
shooter who —"had a gun"  
too.

## Trinkets

### Lady Fingers

She had fingers when I met her. They were long and covered in rings, But that was then. She left with that guy. He had a red pocket And green shoes – he had short hair. What else? He was white and he drove a white van. It was a Ford and it had —Happy New Year! written on one side and —Merry Christmas! on the other. I think it was a stick shift on the column. She liked art – I remember seeing yellow paint under her nails and diamonds glued to them in geometric patterns – Her hands were like 4th of July sparklers in October.

All they found were her fingers in the mailbox – wrapped in a brown Halloween napkin. It read —Trick or treat.

# Trinkets

Trinkets (Chapbook)  
by Glenn Lyvers  
Mishawaka, IN  
Design and editing by Glenn Lyvers.  
Printed in the U.S.A.  
Trinkets  
All rights reserved.