

From **The Shed** by Dawson Moore

BUFORD: Ancient, and enjoying the view from the top of life's mountain

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I was on a quest for knowledge. I had begun to fear my mortality. Death weighed on me, and every day, it got heavier, and closer. I tried to find meaning in it... I let the rest of my life go. All my waking hours, and most of my dreams, were consumed. Philosophy. Religion. I looked so far up my own ass, I could look out my eyes twice. I was fighting against the net of life... And in the end, all I could see was the past, staring back at me, defining me before I ever could define myself. There is nothing I can think... that hasn't been disagreed with... by someone much smarter than me. There was no mark I could make... that would keep me in this world... once life drained from me. Late one afternoon, my father came to visit me. We didn't see each other much... he was just a few blocks down, but I don't like walking, and I didn't like him. He never spoke that night. We just sat down across from each other, and stared... it was hours. I felt the sun setting, the room darkening. He said one word... Disappointment. I rose to confront him, relieved to be standing, and out of our staring match. He was dead. The coroner said he had been dead for hours. A year later my son was born, and I couldn't get his eyes to focus on me. And on his first birthday, and every birthday after... I stared him down 'til he looked away. On his twenty-fifth birthday, as I stared into Edgar's resentment-filled eyes, I developed a cramp in my thigh. It quickly spread over my body... as I doubled over in pain, Edgar stood above me. "I am going to join the Marines. I am tough like you never were, old man!" I mostly died that day.