

## The Window

By M.J. Cleghorn

It was an undistinguished brown wooden house, not unlike others of its kind.

Square and squat it sat at the edge of a forest. A dead forest bare twisted with trees grasping boney fingered branches at the open sky in cold, tiny hoar frosted breaths.

Some remembered it as ugly, if they remembered it at all.

Like a strange birthmark, the house boasted one unique feature.

A huge octagonal window erected by forgotten tenants' .They had scavenged the crystal monolith from the wreck of a lighthouse. A pale and ghostly lighthouse that once towered over the town's port.

The window cast its eye out upon the world searchingly. In certain light, said some the light under morning or evening star or said others when cloaked in whips of sea mists the window took the shape of a giant fish eye. It shone like the eyes of doomed captains and the eyes of their lost crews. The great prisms of fiery light burning through the window could blind the curious. Beams of foggy cold light were spied at odd hours. Day or night, the unbroken rays came in waves. Waves washed in on the gales of autumn waves washed out with the tides of winter.

The time came to lay the house to rest.

Blight," said the living. Let the Dead bury the dead.

The creak of hard steel echoed for miles and miles as the wrecking crew with wrecking balls and sticks of dynamite surrounded the house.

The wrecking men came and went whispering through the empty rooms and passageways whispering as if they feared waking the dead.

Each in his turn agreed it was a terrible waste to raze the old house

A pity such a pity; and not even the old fish-eyed window could be saved. Gone forever the the monolith with its searing light, light that fished sailors from the sea gave ships full of

silver and men safe harbor .

The saved and unsaved, all the same. They would stand watch as the the great beacon fell, falling shattering into hundreds- thousands of shards of nothingness.

The noble lookout would be no more.

The day of the demolition dawned stormy. The sky Serpentine. The wrecking crew arrived with the morning. They went about their grim tasks in silence, speaking to one another only by simple hand signals while occasionally gazing up mournfully at the crumbling mausoleum. A sense of impending execution settled in. They had been chosen for the firing squad.

Silence settled over the site as the last wire was attached- a wire running across the grounds down the path to the front pouch door where the first explosion would blow. Huddled, half hidden by the shadows cast from the over grown wild roses treadled against the far house gate near the edge of the kitchen garden; the men caught sight of a lone figure.

It was the figure of a man. He was dressed in torn wool trousers and he wore a shabby pea coat with shiny brass buttons. On his head sat a fine white cap. The men turned and tipped their hats to the man.

They watched as he slowly turned toward them pulling the pipe from his mouth  
Exhaling a cloud of smoke.

The strange man resumed his position standing erect beneath the ancient beacon. Stoic. Unblinking.

The captain of the wrecking crew held up his hand. He began counting down using his ten fingers.

Ten...nine...eight....

A hard gale came up as the last finger came down.

A giant grey wave washed over them. Drowned. They were drowned to the last man, their bodies crashing, splintered against the ruins of the old house.

A white light beamed cutting a path through the black waters. The house tossed on its

# Writing Raw

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side. Another wave hit. The house righted itself.

The sea receded. The storm passed. Ropes of seaweed wrapped themselves round the wrecking balls and trees. Stranded jellyfish scared the lawn.

Even today, some say, a smell of the sea, a taste of salt on the tongue comes and goes on the street where an undistinguished house brown and wooden once sat square and squat on the edge of a forgotten forest. It had but one unique mark, a great octagonal window round with light, a fiery light, a light that that once proved the salvation of many a lost Captain and crew. Ships they say, ships full of men and and silver. All to safe harbor. Saved and unsaved.

The End

**M.J. Cleghorn bio:** M.J. Cleghorn was born in anchorage Alaska. Her Athabaskan and Eyak heritage gave her a love of poetry. M.J. now lives and writes near the banks of the Matanuska river in the Palmer Butte, Alaska, where the moose, wild dog, roses and salmonberries.