

THE BUILDER, THE FATHER AND THE SON

Steve McClain

The Builder sat sobbing in the turret attic window overlooking the river. The tin pig's head which he had built from tourist gadgets, gutters and chicken wire was fitted firm over his chin and wrapped tight around his ears. He had punched holes for his eyes and none for his nose. He'd cut a stern slit through which he ate and drank infrequently and most times messily, leaving a wetness on his naked lap.

At the pig's chin he'd punched a hole through which he had looped the coarse twine he had discovered months previous in the pants pocket of the pants he'd found in the closet at the attic's corner. The twine dangled downward over his uncovered chest and was tied hurriedly to the belt he had built round his waist from belt leather, tourist gadgets, gutters and chicken wire. It was his chastity belt. At the crotch, he'd cut a toothed mouth from the junk tin through which he had roughly drawn his penis weeks before. He had left his scrotum hidden and he thought protected behind the apparatus' face.

From the wicker rocking chair (a chair he had discovered during his first hours in the attic room) the Builder watched the road and river below him. It was Christmas or New Year's. It was snowing in Stockholm and cold. A blond woman walked floors beneath him by the chimney boats at the river's edge before the Statues' Bridge. Her white hair, escaping beneath her hat, bounced against her coat's back as she walked. She wore a black leotard above her boots, and what the Builder could not see of her thighs' shape swinging beneath her chest, he imagined frowning from his chair. Beneath the Builder's room, the Father sat reading to his Son.