

## **The Green Violinist**

for Marc Chagall

Gurgle gurgle, trickle trickle, swish swish swish, everything is music. The bubbling fountain sings a heart shattering song while the wind hums a chilling melody. Rain jolts in, dancing on its stony stage. He stares into the shame of another day, where bold shapes of towering buildings blot out the rising sun. Glass windows taunt the morning dew. The dense noise of honking horns and blaring radios submerge as the day grows old, life in the city. It's all a blur--work, school, play, eat, sleep--never ending cycle. Those who can't keep up are thrown to the side. There are no second chances in the city. Money is what matters, money money money. Without money you can't survive, no need for creativity in the city. So he has no purpose, The man, his music, and a violin.

In his mind the conductor walks onto the stage, lifts a baton, and readies the orchestra. His instrument is always tuned and ready. Bow lifted defiantly in the air to hear his concerto, he cuts patterns out of the empty space they call sky, throws his head back and laughs. Icy water trickles down his face and sneaks through his mismatched clothes like a thief. He plucks the violin at first to release the soprano, and then draws his bow, up and down, until the notes take a legato shape. Confetti is sent fluttering in the wind, then a swan gliding across a glistening lake.

He opens his eyes, peeks for a moment and there he is, on a bench just a man under his blankets listening to the rain. He has no fountain, just a rusty cup, dripping muddied water. He's trapped in an endless cage of smog and storm clouds. He gets up, knee's screaming, bones aching, back crackling. The crazed instrument is weather worn, but keeps him going. Sure it has lost its shine and has a worthless bow, is Junk, but as soon as the cage is opened, music springs out like a tiger with a clear shot at its prey. Priceless junk, that's what. Again, he picks up the bow, a plain old stick, and waves it around in the air. People stare in disgust, turn a

blind eye, no one bothers to believe, "Must be something he's done wrong, that's why he's like this, that's why he waves his stick in the air." That's what they all say. Yet he throws his head back and smiles in the face of their repulsion, then closes his eyes again, ignoring the chill of the harsh stares, he dreams, first violinist in the orchestra. A man with a radiant bow, picks up his polished instrument, and plays. Beethoven, then Bach, he plays them all. But His eyelids jump with the gathering crowd's cacophony.

And there he is, in the center of it all, this laughing stock of civilized people, the people who call him the green violinist. So he sits as still as possible, the man and his violin, closes his eyes, and imagines until the sun begins to peek out so he might open his eyes. A group of children mock and jeer. His shoulders slump, his head hangs low. Then a tiny, happy voice breaks through his gloom, "I believe in you."

The man sits up and looks around. Nobody is there but his imagination. He closes his eyes and starts to play his music. Emerald grass blades bend their limp backs. Dancing, spinning singing, the green violinist plays. Then the little voice clasps the Green Violinist by the hand and they fly over the indigo night that's drowning the city in imagination.