Evan Schipellite
18 Clearwater Drive
Plymouth, MA 02360
(774) – 283 – 3272
Eschipellite@gmail.com

I Don't Believe in Badgers

It took me by surprise,
But that's what the child said,
As he and his ocean blue dungarees stared at me,
Crumpling his face up in disgust as if he were aging sixty years,
And tossing his agitated face up towards me,
As if it were somehow my fault,
That everything he thought was true,
Was currently sailing toward the nearest disposal bin.

I didn't really have time to respond,
As his rage manifested in the form of a small third grader,
Soaring across the school's pavement roundabout.
And his disappointment in the world,
Appeared when he reached his destination,
A brick wall marked with white chalk,
The artwork of inspiring graffiti artists.
He slouched against the coarse barrier between
Recess and education, and finally
His disbelief,
His sadness,
Surfaced in the form of tears,
Steadily raining down upon those prominent dungarees.

My duty,
It would dictate that I should speak with the child,
And alleviate his situation, because I had already been instructed,
That this was the time in their life,
Where everything began crashing into the ground, and all those
Beliefs that held up their childhood,
Would be absorbed into their past, forcing them to somehow confront,
Overcome what we commonly refer to as reality.

My directive,
It would have me speak to him, to reiterate all of the things we no longer believed in.
I would have to proclaim, that the Easter Bunny is a mere myth,
And Halloween was just a time for the candy industry to boon,
And Saint Nicholas, was just his parents trying to salvage the scattered bits of magic,

(No Stanza Break)
Found only in the eyes of young children on December 25th.
And badgers, despite what our imagination may have allowed us to freely believe,
Were just ordinary animals that were neither heroic nor magical.

My orders,
Would have me speak to the child,
The one with the ocean blue dungarees
Who no longer believed in badgers.
Because now it became my burden,
To destroy what little magic and creativity remained,
To talk to the kid who must have somehow realized,
Perhaps by informative texts or adult intervention,
That his previous upholding of badgers,
One that may have been filled with valor and fantasy,
Was now incorrect by the world's standards.
And it now became my undertaking,
To execute what remained of those beliefs.

So kid,
It's my duty to tell you all that,
But, honestly,
Screw that.

Because,
Badger's will always be the coolest creatures of the animal kingdom.
Since, even dating back to the Great Squirrel War,
Year 5, middle of winter at the Battle of the PawCrest,
It was only the badgers that managed to ward off the squirrel invasion,
Sending them retreating back to their pinecone forts and turning their
Acorn bombs against them by taking advantage of the simple fact that
Squirrels have a severe military weakness against simple distractions.
So, by anchoring a set of nut-catapults above the battlefield,
The badgers were able to break the squirrel formation by using aerial
Projectiles to send their enemies into disarray.

So kid,
I don't give a damn what the Eyewitness books might say,
Nor do I care what your parents might have told you at the zoo.
I'm telling you right now,
I do believe in badgers,
And I believe in their gallantry in battle,
And I believe in their military strategies,
And I believe in their position as leaders of the animal kingdom.

Because,

(No Stanza Break)
Without them, without everything they stand for nowadays,
You and I wouldn't be the people we are today,
We wouldn't have the supports that define our personalities,
We wouldn't have the magic, the hope, that continues to lift us onward,
So, kid, whenever someone tells you to get rid of that belief,
To discard everything that you know is good, to detach your past, to ignore your childhood,
Just make sure you tell them clearly that you don't believe that's how the world should work.
Because neither do I.