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Trick or Treat

Kids,
 Let's get right to business,
 Since you've apparently been neglecting your end of the bargain,
 Didn't your parents teach you anything about this day of commerce?

You know me,
 I'm the potato-skinned old man down the road,
 The one with the scruffy beard and unkempt grey hair,
 That might as well be of the same brand as those
 Puffy white spider webs you've wasted all over your
 Sunburnt lawns and your drooping willows,
 That probably only cry because you've yet to realize,
 You've been swinging on poison ivy for the last three weeks.

I'm that guy,
 The one who seems to absent-mindedly
 Return your yearly greetings with an oblivious smile and an excited gasp,
 As if you're the only company I've had visit my humble dwelling,
 Since last October when a similar group of children also
 'Selflessly' decided to visit this poor elderly man,
 Requesting candies and goodies in return for their community service,
 As if the older generations cannot delight in such things.

And you know me as the neighbor you abhor,
 The one who acts as though they have forgotten the date,
 Reaching into a cracked, plastic bowl, grabbing
 Fruits that probably had their life sucked dry,
 By the same eight-legged fiends that also must have
 Woven the very foundations of my loose grey hair.

You know me as that provider,
 Who always gives you what you hate most,
 But all you do is grumble amongst yourselves,
 Returning next year precisely on schedule,
 As if the quantity of the treats are more important
 Then the actual offerings we're forced to provide.

But, don't you see?

(No Stanza Break)

I'm never going to alter the products I offer,
Because you've forgotten one key aspect of the holiday.
I'm always going to toss generic granola bars,
Meant to be paperweights for your wrappers,
Nasty vegetable gummies that you'll mistake for actual candy,
At the expense of your over-indulging taste buds.
And I'm always going forget your names,
Or mispronounce them at the very least,
I'm going to do all these things to get you to hate me,
Because that's the only way I can encourage you,
To fulfill your end of the bargain.

There is a bond on this Hallow's Eve,
A contract that the candy industry,
Has somehow bound us to sign our dignity upon.
It's meant to increase sales and revenue each year,
But as far as I can tell, and partially why I complain to you now,
It also serves to teach you about reality,
And how you need to approach the world in order to survive.
You've managed the first component of the contract,
To journey throughout your world and collect taxes,
But you've failed at the latter, which is
The art of delivering punishment,
Not getting what you wholeheartedly deserve,
But obtaining what you are entitled,
Because that is how survival works.

So don't just walk away,
When I mock and insult you each year,
Giving you leftovers from my fridge,
While subtly slandering your costumes.
Because according to our contract,
I have failed to pay my dues,
It's your responsibility to conduct
The revenge, the execution,
The trick.

It's been a while since a group of Trick-Or-Treaters
Has challenged my authority and corrected my indecencies.
Here's hoping on this upcoming October night,
That you'll amend this misunderstanding in our laws.

It's been a while since I've had the delight
Of bellowing at the neighborhood kids,
Chasing them away with a splinter-afflicted broom

(No Stanza Break)

Or a damp, stringy mop that all
Crazy men should have in their arsenal.

And by God,
It's been a while since I've had that much fun,
Participated in the art of war, the defense of the homeland
That is the sport of combating a night sky filled with
Soaring toilet paper rolls and aerial droppings
Of uncooked eggs and splattered pumpkins.

So please,
On the request of this elderly man,
Your neighbor from down the road,
Bring it on.