



DAVID
TOP

The City

by Tom Kennedy

Many people around the world see the cities they live in in different ways. Many people see only part of the city. They live their lives looking through a keyhole, when, by a simple turn of the wrist and nudge of the shoulder, the whole door could be opened up. When I look at the city, I see it all as pieces of a larger reality. That is the way I believe it should be seen.

It was a dark, winter night on the west side of the city. The air was crisp. The sky was a dull grey, without shine. The sidewalks were dirty and appeared forgotten or lost. The streetlights illuminated the darkness around me.

From my place in the center of the street, I could observe every detail of life in this city. From the houses lined up along the sidewalks, I could feel a warm glow of happiness. In the alleys, I could see poverty stricken travelers trying to stay warm by the open barrel fires. Mice ran to and from the storm drains. Tiny pieces of the city left their trace in these alleys, and seemed to be holding a town meeting there. Bottles, cans, and garbage containers lined up like soldiers, hidden, awaiting orders.

In some cities, a large "Big Ben" type of clock stands in the city square. This city also had a clock. It appeared to be of superb construction. As every hour passed, it gave a gentle reminder of its purpose, as if it possessed the urge not to be forgotten. The clock

now gave its beckoning call for life to begin. The chimes rang five times, echoing through the streets as the pale sun rose above the grey cloud which enveloped the city. Doors began to open, and signs of life became present. Men and women began leaving their homes for work. Children woke up for a day of learning. Cars slowly pulled into the streets, and the travelers left their meeting places to hide and sleep with the creatures of the night.

This day had begun, just like any other day, in any other city. People began to mingle on the sidewalks. The sounds of women's heels clicking and the change in men's pocket's jingling mingled with business talk in the air. The sweet smell of money and commerce danced in and out of the revolving doors of banks and department stores. Everything happened just as if it was planned. It was all as routine as walking; a process of putting one foot in front of the other; putting the day in front of the night.

As the day wore on, the murmur of voices and the shuffling of feet slowed. Doors closed for the last time of the day. People returned to their homes with their children to eat their dinner and go to bed. The sun vanished beneath the cloud of humanity.

The creatures of the night appeared once more, just like every other night, in every other city. The city again faded to a dull grey, without shine.

