THE WINNING STREAK

By Lee Blessing

You invented nothing, that’s what you invented. You invented a fable about what you didn’t have the guts to do in real life. You invented a woman’s face you haven’t looked at since you screwed her, because you are nothing and nobody and have no honor and will not be remembered, by me or anyone else. It is fitting and proper that you crawl off to die now. It is a good thing. Because you are not fit for human companionship. No one in the world should have to seek you out, for *anything.* Because you have nothing to give. No, it's worse than that. People who come close to you end up giving *you* things-until they have no life, no life at all. My mother wouldn't even mention you. She didn't have to tell me why. I knew. It's because some people are toxic, Omar. Some peo­ple, the closer you get to them, the closer you are to not existing. She was with you one night and she knew that instinctively. Or maybe it was obvious? When you slide that many times in one life, you bet there's a reason. And you're the only one who will never know what it is. I gave you a chance. I gave you every damn chance I could think of, and you have failed me exactly like you failed Mom. Like you failed Steve the umpire, and Frank Patterson, and every other human being you ran out on in your brilliant, imi­tation life! And it's not good enough - you hear me? - it's not good enough to say you had the Gobi Desert for a childhood! You're an adult now. It's your duty to grow up! It's not an elective, Omar; it's required. And I am ashamed - I hope you hear me - I am ashamed that I have spent this time with you. Three weeks of what could have been progress in my life have been sacrificed on the altar of your selfishness. Three weeks of trying to please an unpleasable human being. Trying to satisfy a hunger that's so nebu­lous and unformed and ... *universal* that nothing can fill it! The longest winning streak in the world can't fill it. All the victories by all the teams on all the diamonds in Creation can never fill you up, Omar Carlyle, or Hawkins, or whatever you are at your core, assum­ing you even have one! Is that it, Omar? Is that the problem? In the infinite pile of wreckage you call your insides, have you ever found anything resembling a human being? *(Unable to stop himself)* I'm sorry I let you exist for me. I'm sorry I came. I'm sorry I saw you, the essence of you, ever in my life. I'm sorry I had to have a father at all. I'm sorry it's even possible to have a baby the way you had it. And I'm sorry, when I look at you, that she didn't get rid of me. I'm sorry - and I know you are, too - that you didn't call her up and offer to pay for it! I'm sorry she didn't - !