

# Their Days Are Numbered XXVII

written by Barrett Warner | July 7, 2015



*Their Days Are Numbered* is a new year-long project authored by the collective *Entropy* community. It is a collaborative online novel written by the *Entropy* community on a weekly basis. A different author will write the next “chapter” each week, to be posted every Tuesday, following the previous post from the previous week, and following a very limited set of guidelines (that each author has one week to write the next piece after the previous week’s installment goes up, that installments should range between 150-1500 words, and that pieces should somehow incorporate a real-life occurrence, current event, news item, or other happening from that week).

Follow the entire “novel” here: [Their Days Are Numbered](#).

The twenty-seventh installment is presented this week by Barrett Warner.

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## XXVII.

Suns rise and burn for miles and days on the violet edge outside most people’s corpses. I fold my eyelids into minus signs. The bright side engulfs. My happiness is impenetrable. Try—you couldn’t pry this grin off my head with a crow bar. There is so much sand on this sneering lip of beach. Everyone—everyone!—gets an hourglass. Each 60 minutes the reverse of the last.

Beaten down igneous rock, and augur shells crushed by snarling waves. The artifacts of prime numbers reduced to the irreducible. Bathe and spout and breach in the push and pull of it. The seas are not completely toxic. Tar balls are close cousins to marbles. The same way that tern and lapwing and piping plover and cattle egret and kestrel and Kronosaurs and old fish write letters back and forth.

The reptile says, *Sure, I’m on the receiving end of that bird’s mail.*

Love is not a survival instinct. I want correspondence, the intricate weave of why and who and what in our threadbare diaspora.

Rules are scorched into driftwood. Someone comes ashore in dark to write, “No swimming during a new moon.” The dog writes, “No dogs allowed.” The pyromaniac adds, “No open fires.” Tiresias mutters, “No opening your eyes until you can’t dream anymore.”

I burn my own advice: “No personal rhetoric.”

A lone surfer sawing his board ashore, and back out, legs dangling, waiting beyond the Gaelic chop, all smiles and sabers. For him, the Earth is just beginning on each wave.

My darling angel, if you don't stop waving that sparkler at me I'll run it through your eyeball. People will say: there goes Wen with that amazed expression; there goes Wen with the Fourth of July in his eyes.

It would help all of us get a little sleep around here if you stopped chanting. Who made you into the swarm of bees landing on my piano? Everyone else gets a can of peaches and I get the aging rock star snoring through her tracheotomy.

The ancients burned sand to make glass. Pretty much went downhill from there.

It's time for my morning seizure. The breaking waves cannot break me. In spite of centuries of bite sticks, it is quite uncommon to swallow your own tongue.

Close your eyes. Just because it feels like a taxi cab doesn't mean it's not capable of Bach inventions. Here's the problem with your striding left hand. Listen: memory is the past and desire is the future. Right here and right now are just artificial borders. Lose tomorrow and all you've got is yesterday. Destroy words like "remember" and you've got nothing. Without information a brain is just nerves, and a piano is just a Chevrolet with its wind-uhs busted out.

To memorize music you have to sing it. Didn't anyone tell you that? Here, sit beside me on the black bench. Let's have a duet. At certain precise moments I will say "Knock, Knock" and you should answer, "Who's there?"

Got it, Lady Landslide?

The new quiet part without ascending fifths. Composition means nothing. It's all in the arrangement. This next song is a true story. A composer turned all the light in the world into sound and all the sound into light. You know Wen, you can get into trouble for doing that. For even wondering what would happen if you did that. Light and sound are thirty-eight paces past the end of consciousness.

When the composer played the music backwards her right hand fell off her wrist. Now you're walking along the beach and there's a rustle in the sea grapes. You turn. Nothing. Maybe it was just a mongoose hunting a mouse. You walk on, but now you feel that hand on your shoulder. It's her hand. The sound / light composer. Your mother.

Knock, Knock?

Who's there?

Knock, Knock, Knock, Knock, Knock.

Who's there?

Ten women named Harvey. That scare you? Breathe out the fear. Just let go of it. We've all got butterflies in our stomachs, Wen. Just make sure they're flying in formation.

If you want to make a difference then you want claws on a chain. These claws have killed all the animals. The claws will make you powerful. The spirits will live through you. All connection will be yours. The Earth. The Moon. The key of G.

If there isn't any future why am I feeling so much desire right now?

Mirror in the sky, hop in this taxi with me. What say we see what this piano can do? We'll drive to Sheepshead Bay and say all the right things to people who look just like us, only better, with more teeth.