

Squared Circle Justice
By Frederick William Schroeder IV

This town would be a better place
if everyone were a professional wrestler.
Imagine how simply disputes could be solved!

A waitress serves your steak too well done?
Tip her
with a body slam through the table.

Some jackass dings your new car?
Blast his car
with a metal folding chair through the windshield.

A coworker is spreading nasty rumors in the office?
Grab a microphone
and bring up her daddy issues.

Some make better wrestlers than others.

The massive pizzeria owner
with the handlebar stache
is a believable no-nonsense,
roughneck type. He'd hip-toss
those shithead teenagers to the curb;
he's running a family place, after all.

The busty bartender
has no shame
in exploiting her male customers
for a nice tip.
She'd make a great valet.

The homely woman
with the scarred face
at the dollar store on the other hand
should start wearing a *luchador* mask,
pronto.

The new guy in town
would have to run the gauntlet
to prove himself more
than fresh meat in a town
built on ego and muscle mass.
He'll face impossible odds in the ring,
and get ribbed
by the grizzled vets in the locker room.

It's sink or swim out here;
not everyone is meant to be a star.

Speaking of stars,
you should know
that I'm world champ material.
I'm not trying to be cocky;
I'm just that damn good.
Oh, you didn't know?
Well you oughta see my ass in spandex.
Built like Zeus's own son,
I stock up on baby oil
every time it goes on sale
to keep my pecs glistening.
I wear the golden strap
around my waist at all times,
so there's no mistaking
who the top dog in town is.

I don't expect you to understand,
but being a champion is about more
than being a stylin', profilin', limousine riding,
jet flying, kiss stealing, wheelin' and dealin'
son of a gun.
When you're the champ,
you can't trust anybody.
I can't even trust my best friend,
my neighbor and tag team partner
who has felt overshadowed
since the day I moved in.

One day, he'll no-show
our tag team match, leaving me alone
to get beaten to a bloody pulp.
How dare he embarrass me
in front of my opponents,
and my fans,
as I don the crimson mask of mortals.
After the beat down,
I'll call him out
about his violation of the Code.
I'll stand alone
in the middle of the squared circle,
ignored, and in silence,
as the fans are too disappointed
to even chant my name.

Back in my private locker room,
I'll check my phone.

Not a single message
from the ring rats,
the groupies whose appetite
can only be filled by a champion.
Maybe they're with *him* instead.

I'll stare in fear
at the tile floor as I shower,
watching waves of blood circulate
like whirlpools down the drain,
paranoia and thoughts of sharks
swirling in my mind.

I'll know my former friend is out there,
waiting, stalking,
but that's just a fact
of being the champion.
In this town, how quickly
an ally becomes an archrival!
I'll put my championship title on the line
to get my hands on him.
Give me a steel cage,
and a referee to make sure
I don't kill the bastard.

Ring the damn bell.