

1965

## like the rat in dark horde...

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#### Recommended Citation

Callahan, David (1965) "like the rat in dark horde..." *The Angle*: Vol. 1965: Iss. 2, Article 16.  
Available at: <http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1965/iss2/16>

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**Cover Page Footnote**

Appeared in the issue: Volume 10, Number 2, Spring 1965.

all-encompassing fires. He was nauseated by the musty stench of . . . He shuddered—his foot was afire.

The savage blast was relentless, and he felt he was enclosed in a fiery brazier, a reeking morbid tomb, darkened by the oil-black clouds of smoke which suggested to him horrible menacing arms grasping for him, soon to clutch him and drag him down to the depths of the baleful amber hue. Ghosts of memories shot through his aching brain like pale wisps of drifting smoke. He crashed down, sinking into the inferno, torrid, seething.

The flame crawled up his leg like a cancer, throwing unsparing torment to his brain, eating away, always the throbbing torture of pain! He writhed like a gaffed captured shark, turning, twisting, adding with his convulsions more racking pain.

As he threw back his head in a wild, uncontrolled seizure, the thirsty tongues licked at his chest, pouring heavy billows of black to his blistered countenance. An enraged demon—some crazed ogre—clung to his shoulders, dug its powerful talons into his soft body, and ripped him apart, thrashing and flogging him with a red-hot lash. He twisted about the furnace like a wounded snake, alternately moaning and screaming, gesticulating with a nodding torchlike head.

He succumbed with a shrill piercing shriek, anguish personified, conflagration consummate.

Like an infant tiring of a new toy, the disenchanted crowd turned, grasped and stumbled, split into individuals, and trngded to its haven. Soon, like a flock of vultures, the fervent band of photographers would descend on the scene to record for all time the grotesquely crumpled and half-cremated human at final rest in the middle of Main Street.

. . .like the rat in dark horde  
with its ugly grin  
lifts its green eyes glaring in their hollows  
bares its pale fangs  
to some light  
flashed by its hole

D. CALLAHAN