

THE MAN ON THE STEPS BY SUZANNE NIELSEN

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There he sat, smug, anointed, and oblivious to the cold yet a coat of dampness clung to his ruddy skin while he muttered and spit into the silent snow watching it sink deep into the contours of whiteness as re-tied his shoes in double knots, preparing to continue his journey into the wee hours of darkness.

Inside sat a woman, watching and waiting for the shadows to depart, frozen in her silence knowing one kick, just one tough kick with shoes tied tightly would break down the door and leave her trembling in her worn cotton robe.

Anyone who had a heart held tight to its rapid, steady beating as he steadied himself, made no introduction and turned to leave. She watched him take slow, steady steps with the streetlight now at his back.