

Gladiator

By J. Poteat

As I stand impatiently in the darkness, I feel a cold sweat slip down my forehead. My emaciated body feels as if it will soon collapse from the cumbersome armor encasing my frail figure. I am shaking with nerves as I prepare to walk out into the arena, possibly for the last time. The cell door begins to creak, "Calm down," I tell myself. Seconds later the heavy metal door begins to rise just enough so that a sliver of light shines into the dark room: as if it is a symbol from the gods of my sliver of hope that I survive, "calm down." The door rises so much that I can now see the roaring crowd, I immediately grasp my spear tighter. I know my time has come to be a man and fight to show my masculinity to my emperor and my gods, however there is something inside of me that forces hesitation. I try to walk out but it's as if my feet are superglued to the sandy, bloodstained floors and I stand still terrified, like a deer in the headlights. I faintly hear the crowd roar but my mind is moving so fast the cheers of the crowds are drowned out from my conscious perception. I feel a bang on the back of my helmet that knocks me back into the moment, I turn to see my manager. He tells me to go, I know I can no longer procrastinate. My time has come. It is after one last deep breath that I step out into the colossal arena that makes the strongest of men quiver. Now I must fight, for my life depends on it.