

Roost

A short story inspired by 'Hawk Roosting', a poem by Ted Hughes.

Striking control over viewpoint.

You sit on top of the world, your eyes closed; your thoughts are, for this instant, calm. Aloft above the clashing turmoil of the inner city, you stop, and are at peace. The moment passes, and you're back to the distortion, clouds of smoke belching out of the factory chimneys, the bland cityscape stretching endlessly as far as the eye can perceive. A barren landscape broken only by the occasional skyscraper piercing through the grey; beautiful analogue shapes among the digital metronomic concrete blocks.

Real flair in timing and clarity of delivery.

But none so beautiful nor so high as where I reside. I have reached the pinnacle, the top, having risen all the way with the sun behind me. You may question the circumstances bringing me here, putting you in the same boat as countless journalists; 'From the very bottom to the very top?', 'How could someone so insignificant have become so influential?' Or even, if you were to read the daily street-rags calling themselves 'newspapers', selling only to the poorest, 'Jason 'Roost' Drake: highest, from the lowest of the low?'. Touché. But that is in my past, a long time ago. My rise to power took the world by surprise, catching them unaware, the path of my flight direct to the top. They were not ready for me then, and perhaps they never will be. I am a god, my importance surpassing all mere mortals, living in my sky-high heaven; omnipotent due to money and omniscient thanks to thousands of cameras installed throughout my empire. But how did this all come about? All will be revealed...

15 YEARS EARLIER

Impressive control over timeframe

A young man, no more than seventeen, slipped out of the alleyway, seeming to shy away from the light. Pale nostrils breathed puffs of steam, his slim shoulders sagging inside his

Artful use of figurative language

crumpled overcoat. He set off at a light jog towards the distant market, the billboards flashing out at him as he passed. The air, thick and smoggy, clung around him, creating patches of darkness and shadow despite the sun's futile attempts to break through the dense cloud layer. Which suited him fine. His skin had become oversensitive, clammy during those long days underground and even the gentle half-light of the city caused him pain.

Extraordinary capacity to craft and integrate multiple viewpoints

I slowed to a walk; people were beginning to appear, and I needed them to earn my living. Pickpocketing was dishonest; I hated it, but it was the only way I could scrape a living. I had tried all other methods, even stooped to begging, but none were as effective. This was not how I should be living. Inside me, a knotted ball of pent up rage formed, built of hopelessness and poverty. I grimaced, and steeling myself for my first target; a fat technocrat singled out from the whole. If the man had looked down, he would have seen a slight hand dip through each of his pockets, removing all items from about his person. But he didn't. They never did. I only took enough to keep me going, never 'borrowing' more than a few times a day; a man has his honour to keep. A wallet, fat with notes. A phone. A travel card, dated three days ago. A security pass. An odd chunk of motherboard. Some loose change. They would keep me going for a while; the money could be spent, the phone sold for parts, and the hardware would fetch a good price in the markets underground, despite me not knowing what it did. They would do for now.

Highly coherent story delivery. Control over sentence, paragraph, viewpoint and time.