

## Luigi

Revised, February 14, 2020

Dampness hung heavy in the cool spring air when Giuseppe took a seat on the curb at the back end of an ally by Macy's. He was holding a bag of Wetzel's Pretzels. Luigi loved pretzels, his reward for dancing so nicely for the customers as Giuseppe wound the crank on the ancient organ grinder.

Giuseppe had found an old discarded snow shoe in the nearby dumpster and laid the dead monkey on it, and he placed a wilting tulip through the tiny hands folded across the chest of the frayed red jacket. A fitting showing Giuseppe thought, even though he'd be the only viewer.

The gray beard on Luigi's face spoke of his long life and matched the gray in Giuseppe's hair. Giuseppe's twisted, gnarled, fingers gently stroke the white blaze atop Luigi's head as salty rivulets flowed over his cheeks across his quivering lips, and he says in a tender voice, "you're a good boy, Luigi, you're a good boy."

Giuseppe stands and picks up the organ grinder and places it in the dumpster. Then, he covers Luigi with a tattered towel, picks up the snow shoe and heads for Central Park, Luigi's favorite place, a fitting place for a proper burial.