is a twenty-four inch replica of me
during an alcoholic blackout.

The toy of me
does not run on batteries or solar power
but on lunar power
at night it turns itself on
and won't stop talking.
It knows a lot
but remembers nothing.

The toy of me is
the second least popular robot toy in Japan.
The least popular robot toy
has a name that translates to
"The Low Self Esteemed Robot Turkey
Who Needs Lots of Hugs
and Whose Feathers Are Made from
Jagged Metal Bits."

In the anime cartoon
that was made to promote
slumping sales of both toys
both the turkey and I die at the end
when we catch god pissing whiskey from the sky,
can't stop from looking up,
and we both drown.

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The Other Universe of Bruce Wayne

There's an alternate universe
in which Bruce Wayne is poor
and I have my shit together.

Without money,
there's no Batman;
no Batmobile,
no Batcave,
no utility belts,
much less a cool butler and a trusted sidekick.
Without Batman,
there's no crimefighting,
no hot vigilante action,
no pensive brooding on the rooftops of Gotham.
In this universe,
Bruce Wayne drinks alone
in his trailer home in Arkansas.

Bruce has one friend: me.
He calls me in the middle of the night.

"Hey, it's Bruce.
Can you come get me?
I'm feeling real low."

I can tell by the sound of his voice
that he's been dumped again.
In this universe,
Bruce Wayne ain't that lucky in love.

I pull up outside his trailer
in my convertible '63 Lincoln Continental.
Bruce makes his way inside the car,
reeking of whiskey and cigarettes.
“She’s gone,” he says.
“Can you stop by the store?”

When we get to the store, Bruce hobbles in.
His knees and feet have seen better days.
He’s got a couple of vertebrae in his lower back
that cracked and healed poorly that gives him constant pain.
He has chronic headaches
that the VA hospital won’t do anything about,
they say it’s psychosomatic.

I buy Bruce another bottle of whiskey
and go back to my place.
I know that he doesn’t want to talk.
He just doesn’t want to be alone.
I turn on the TV and we watch as he drinks.
We watch The Tonight Show with Lenny Bruce.
Tonight’s guest is Jimi Hendrix.
He’s plugging the album he just cut with Miles Davis:
The Kind of Blue Haze Experience.

He’s asleep by the time Late Night with Bill Hicks comes on.
During the guest bit
when Richard Pryor’s talking about the cure for Multiple Sclerosis
I hear Bruce talking, awake, but not rested.
Bruce talks in his sleep
and I would let him
but when he starts screaming
it’s not fucking right, it’s not fucking right, it’s not fucking right,
I have to wake him.

When he finally realizes he’s awake,
he instinctively moves for the whiskey.
He’s shaking so hard he can’t pour it,
so he drinks it right out of the bottle.
I sit next to him and hold him close to me.

“It’s okay, Bruce,” I reassure him,
“There’s another universe out there
in which everyone loves you.
Children read about you in comic books,
adults make movies about you,
and you symbolize justice in human form.”

Bruce exhales loudly and looks up.

“And this in this other universe,” he asks, “What are you?”

“Bruce,” I say,
“Don’t you concern yourself with that.”