**John Coffy and The Shawshank Redemption**

By Roesha’ Godbolt

Andy Dufresne has given up. Andy Dufresne, once a miracle to the prisoners of Shawshank, has now become indolent. It wasn’t his fault particularly, but rather his fate was dealt by three men, Elmo Blatch, the robber who took the lives of his wife and her lover, Tommy Williams, the young crook who had the chance to clear his name only to die under mysterious circumstances, and Samuel Norton, the obtuse warden who refused to let him go. Not even the Cold Mountain State Penitentiary has a warden like him. But it doesn’t matter now; nothing matters because Andy decided to take his fate into his own hands. On this night, Andy Dufresne is going to take his life. Almost twenty years of suffering was enough for him and he couldn’t continue to be the warden’s sycophant. Today, he had gotten some rope from Heywood to do the deed in his cell. All he has to do is this last bit of paperwork for the Warden, this last job to hide that bastard’s money, and it will all be over. As the warden steps out of his office, leaving Andy to it, he remembers to tell Dufresne to go into his office closet and shines his shoes for the next day. Andy nods and starts on the pile. After fifty-seven grueling minutes, Andy feels his tension leaving him, knowing what is going to release his despair. He just had to shine the old screw’s shoes. As he approaches the closet, he hears a strange noise. It is faint, almost like a baby crying. Andy quickly dismisses the thought because a male prison would be the last place a child can be heard. But there is it again, but this time it sounded more like a wounded animal. Andy, allowing his curiosity get the best of him, opens the door and sees a dimly lit cell and the most enormous colored fella he has ever seen, weeping. Andy steps fully into the closet, the door slamming swiftly behind him. He tries it but it is no use, it won’t open. At this time, the fella on the beds looks up to see Andy and speaks to him. He says that his name is John Coffy, like the drink only not spelled the same and he was in prison for a crime he didn’t commit. Andy is able to sympathize with the dark stranger, seeing he is in the same plight. John then went on to talk about the prisoners, the guards treating him the way they do, Mr. Jingles the circus mouse, and the evils of the world and how he wishes to be done with it. Andy consoles him, expressing that freedom comes in many forms, that maybe he should embrace the inevitable. John accepts that but he looks at Andy and says to him that maybe their ways of freedom are different, that what he really wants is not death, but rather life. John then tells him thanks and that he has a gift for him when he gets back to his cell tonight, to ask Raquel to lift up her legs. Andy is confused by John’s message and was going to ask him what he meant when the door opened. Andy steps toward the door, thanking him and the door closes as John gives him a smile. Andy wanted to say one last thing and opened the door, but there is nothing but the warden’s shoes. Andy proceeds to shine them and then is taken to his cell. In the darkness, Andy looks at the Raquel poster and thinks about John’s last words to him. Lift up her legs. Andy thinks he meant lift up the poster but it doesn’t make any sense because it was just plaster. But Andy decides to do it anyway for John and what was there amazes him. It was a giant man-sized hole that leads down to the sunny and wonderfully beautiful Zihuatanejo. Andy, baffled and stricken silent by this mystery, cries tears of joy. John is right. As Andy climbs into the hole, he feels the warm sun on his face and crawls ever closer to his destiny.