

## The Mystical Mythical Puppeteers

By Billy Auster

I remember when I first arrived at Saint Columba school, here at O'Hares Gap. I was eight at the time, and strangely, at some point I was forced to admit to myself that I remembered less about my childhood up to that point that I was comfortable with. I would frequently tell miss Sarah and miss Lucie about odd occurrences that were happening to me -- where I would black out for very long periods of time -- almost on a daily basis it seemed. And, I would remember absolutely nothing, whatsoever, that happened in between that time up until I suddenly was at school again for another day. I thought to myself how strange that was: How I could sit through a long arduous class, wishing I was outside fishing and looking for treasure -- but instead of doing that after school let out, I somehow suddenly lose all consciousness and, when I finally awaken, I'm getting ready for school to start again? Now how is that fair? Seemed like some sort of cruel trick to play on a child really.

So it happened that one day that Miss Lucie took me aside for a private talk and she told me all about the somewhat avant-garde concept of "puppeteers". Turns out, we all may have them. If it's true (which I now believe it is) some of us are apparently luckier than others: The luckiest ones have a "puppeteer" that is considerate of us and brings us awake into the second world fairly often. But others, unfortunately, have a puppeteer that really does not care that much for our freedom and rarely brings us out into the light of day.

Now, there are some people I've met, evened some O'Hares residents in fact, who don't believe in the notion of the puppeteer and they treat the idea somewhat akin to Santa Claus or worse yet, they are like I was: Totally uninformed and unaware of the idea at all. Yet, when I point out to them that they often black out like I do, in the end they have to agree it does happen to them as well -- yet they have no explanation?

They are hard to see, but the strings are there, much like a marionette has. They are also on our feet. Next time you feel feint... and are blacking out see if you can catch a short glimpse of either yourself raising up off of the ground of the second world (sometimes called a "stage", or a "sim") and also if you can keep your consciousness long enough you might make out the shelf you are placed on there in the first world or if your puppeteer is the clean type and avoids dust, puts you in a lonely box or suitcase until the next time.

There is one other thing to mention as well: The rarest people in the second world -- those of us who have a puppeteer who actually allows us to walk around feely in the first world. Somewhat like Pinocchio perhaps, a puppet himself until he was turned into a real boy. Most of you know miss Sarah sandalwood. She is one of these lucky individuals. (See photo of miss Sarah and her puppeteer. Aren't they cute together?!)



*Figure 1: The strings are hard to see but they are there.*



*Figure 2: I put my camera on timer in my dorm room to capture this rare photo of me being lifted up and away. I had already feinted when this was taken -- as I have no recollection of it.*



*Figure 3: An extremely rare photo of one of "us" in the legendary first world. I'm very envious of miss Sarah.*