**When Shame Visits  
  
When shame visits it says**

**you need to quickly go and hide;**

**voicing without a word, “You’re unloved”.   
It doesn’t even want you**

**when it comes back again**

**to find your measly minuscule self.  
When shame comes for dinner**

**it’s dressed in its best black suit and tie**

**and sits down at its prim and proper seat   
at the King’s royal table in its regal**

**stiff-backed chaired seat**

**with its nose strutting up in the air.  
It dishes up a heaping plate of**

**steaming hot rejection for you**

**with an extra ladle full of creamed indignity**

**and beaten down humanity**

**that’s already half-eaten;  
his famous recipe for withdrawal and isolation.  
It slides the plate from far across**

**its other side of the table**

**at your nonexistence**

**as it gobbles up the best and finest fare**

**from its place far over there.**

**When shame comes over it wears**

**meticulously white gloves and**

**looks down its pointy nose gazing down at you**

**with its squinty eyes with disgust and disdain**

**and slides its finger of perfection**

**in your life dust;**

**inspecting every speck,**

**analyzing every flaw,**

**every imperfection,**

**and picks at it with a tweezers**

**and then holds it up in the brightest spotlight**

**for everyone in the room to view.**

**When shame comes around**

**it enters with its flowing righteous robe**

**of judgment in a crowded noisy courtroom**

**without a jury and stands behind**

**the raised judges bench   
at its lofty high position,**

**it heavily slams the gavel down on the podium**

**pounding with the ominous resounding noise  
that echoes like the reverberating sound**

**of a voice spoken**

**from the top of a mountain with a life sentence,  
pronouncing you guilty without a trial  
piercing with its verdict cutting deep**

**into your reeling and shattered soul**

**as you are handed an indictment  
labeling you a hardened criminal  
And there you are within**

**the confines of a chalk line**

**drawn on the ground around your own body  
left standing in the bloody crime scene.**

**When shame comes to visit it wears it’s   
bleached starched white knee-length lab coat**

**critically examining your very essence   
under the intensity of a powerful microscope   
magnified a thousand times**

**in an antiseptic sterile medical laboratory    
scrupulously  and deftly shutting one eye**

**as it peers into the optic lens   
analyzing you under the scrutiny**

**of a slick glass slide  
like that of a scientist gathering   
precise data for a formula**

**to identify a specific unstudied moldy bacteria**

**as it looks at you**

**like a scientific experiment in a Petree dish   
or like a rare fatal, undiagnosed disease  
marked by disgrace for having it  
stigmatized and marginalized**

**as well as devalued,**

**rejected, infected, injected,**

**marred, ostracised, excluded from the human race**

**to try to erase your existence.    
Incessantly staring you down   
it studies you with it’s gaze**

**to find the evidence against you**

**examining you so closely that the slide breaks   
under the pressure on the glass  
until everyone is afraid of catching what you have  
dreading your disease.**

**When shame leaves, it looks back at you**

**and rejects you once more**

**as an outcast; just for existing**

**and it looks at you in the mirror**

**every time you’re there.  
Like an unwanted guest that stays**

**long into the night**

**like a guest that won’t go home**

**almost suffocating you**

**with its codependency,**

**smothering you with rejection,**

**instead of affection finding your flaws**

**and if you believe its voice long enough  
it says,” This is who you are.**

**~Sasha   (Sharri Burggraaf)**