



The Appellate Lawyer's Lament

with apologies to Edgar Allen Poe

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*Once upon an October dreary as I pondered weak and weary
Staring at unbriefed cases piled high up on my floor;
Transcripts loomed in piles rearing as I hid from supervisors, fearing
More new cases, more assignments, clients banging at my door;
I scuttled like a spider while the abyss yawned that much wider
But I thought, "It's merely panic, not to worry, nothing more."*

*Then I started transcript reading with the sweat on my face beading
As I realized that the case had nothing good for me in store;
First the facts were quite confusing – then my neurons started fusing
At the thought of crafting something when the issues were so poor;
I craved a bout of drinking from the pain made by my thinking
About issues in this brief – a brief I'd come to just abhor.*

Yet I plowed on with my writing while a-desperately fighting
All my knowledge that this brief was not just dreadful but a bore;
Wishing now to be quite finished and my energies diminished
I cobbled law together quickly with my brainpower tested sore;
Looking over what I'd written, though, I jumped up as if bitten:
Could the product of my research be so crummy and so poor?

My poor head raw and aching – I stood up – my body quaking
And cried in horror that the logic of this brief was –

NEVERMORE!

GB