

## The Computer Nightmare

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Once upon a midnight dreary, fingers cramped and vision bleary,  
System manuals piled high and wasted paper on the floor,  
Longing for the warmth of bedsheets,  
Still I sat there, doing spreadsheets:  
Having reached the bottom line,  
I took a floppy from the drawer.  
Typing with a steady hand, I then invoked the SAVE command  
and waited for the disk to store,  
Only this and nothing more.

Deep into the monitor peering, long I sat there wond'ring, fearing,  
Doubting, while the disk kept churning, turning yet to churn some  
more. "Save!" I said, "You cursed mother! Save my data from before!"  
One thing did the phosphors answer, only this and nothing more, Just,  
"Abort, Retry, Ignore?"

Was this some occult illusion? Some maniacal intrusion?  
These were choices undesired, ones I'd never faced before.  
Carefully, I weighed the choices as the disk made impish noises. The  
cursor flashed, insistent, waiting, baiting me to type some more.  
Clearly I must press a key, choosing one and nothing more, From  
"Choose Abort, Retry, Ignore?"

With my fingers pale and trembling  
Slowly toward the keyboard bending,  
Longing for a happy ending, hoping all would be restored,  
Praying for some guarantee  
Timidly I pressed a key.  
But on the screen there still persisted words appearing as before.  
Ghastly grim they blinked and taunted, haunted, as my patience wore,  
Saying "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"

I tried to catch the chips off-guard --  
I pressed again, but twice as hard.  
I pleaded with the cursed machine: I begged and cried and then I  
swore. Now in desperation, trying random combinations, Still there  
came the incantation, just as senseless as before. Cursor blinking,  
angrily winking, blinking nonsense as before. Reading, "Abort, Retry,  
Ignore?"

There I sat, distraught, exhausted by my own machine accosted  
Getting up I turned away and paced across the office floor.

And then I saw dreadful sight: a lightning bolt cut through the night. A gasp of horror overtook me, shook me to my core. The lightning zapped my previous data, lost and gone forevermore. Not even, "Abort, Retry, Ignore?"

To this day I do not know  
The place to which lost data goes.  
What demonic nether world is wrought where data will be stored,  
Beyond the reach of mortal souls, beyond the ether, into black holes?  
But sure as there's C, Pascal, Lotus, Ashton-Tate and more, You will  
one day be left to wander, lost on some Plutonian shore, Pleading,  
"Abort, Retry, Ignore?"

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