

**To Hell With It**

*Dead people receive more  
flowers than the living  
because gratitude is swapped  
for regret.*

At least that's what was written on the chalk-board outside of a flower shop.

Flights were scheduled to touch down at 8 precisely. The sky above me looked lazily drawn, the colour of old-television, but tuned to one of those long-dead channels. Clouds stared back at me, continuing the notion I held, that they looked nothing more than splodges of dirty paint on a clean canvas, before continuing with their journey. And there seemed to be a constant racket of murmuring, just within earshot.

Yes, today was day, I was set to leave. The date was the 29<sup>th</sup> of February I had just graduated from university and was ready to be packed and shipped into one of those dinky little office cubicles they kept in the big city. Having, sat through years of state education all my life, It felt only fitting to show my grades to my father, Having shifted through hundreds of job openings, father finally looked at me with a half-sunken face, and said 'Why ye-s', after concurring with

his friends.

describe will suit. my host or buddies as they were called. Over the course of my final academic years, I had developed what I could only describe as an unprovoked and unimagined scorn to every man and woman, I was to meet.

However, two people were exempt from my criticism.

Yes, Akbar.

Akbar was exempt.

If tolerance, is a continuous chain of suffering, then there was something gorgeous about him in the frenzy of it all, some heightened sense of alertness, as if he was related to one of those self-aware simulations, locked thousands of miles away.

When most registered men, could do nothing more than to look away and raise a handkerchief to their face, as if to politely protest your presence.

Akbar would waver you on and give it no second thought. Akbar was more machine

than man in that sense. In my worst of temperments, I snapped and asked.

“What do you want Akbar? Money, Broads, Dames, Hookers... There’s loads of them downtown, you should go there one day, do a man like you some good” .

“I don’t know... I want something that isn’t this, old sport”

This annoyed me.

He looked to me, as if all principle left my body, then resumed his current task and continued with his sanguine walk.

I knew what wasn’t this. And I knew never to ask again.

No-Akbar turned out alright in the end.

What preyed on Akbar, was something I believed every good man must be put through, before he be considered, that he be recognised for his deeds.

Other men of our time, took much apart into mere prattle without practice. Akbar had not. Only conditioned, to make many a permanent of decisions, on temporary fuel. Akbar had not.

No-Akbar had turned out alright in the end. If not for her, I'm certain his character would be revealed to all the hidden chasms of the world. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word, capable solely for her.

That sign I had read this morning, obviously must have meant a great deal for me, well at the time of course. I've brushed it off as clever marketing but I wouldn't still be thinking about it, if that was the case.

Whenever, I had made a clever observation in class I wish she could have been there to witness my temporary geniusness. The rational thing to do, would be to just ignore it. But...

It was a beautiful sign. Letters seemed to dance and flow down the and the white chalk stood out.

The alarm bell rang.

Rring ring! Rring ring!

Two giant arms and two steel fists were cocked back like a revolver; ready to fire their empty rounds, into not-so-empty space. Rounds ricocheted off of bruised walls and dove right into my ears, rattling the ins-and-outs of my skull.

Rring ring! Rring ring!

Post-it notes.

Tacked to the wall and written in a cursive script, all but one, began to lose their grip. Fluttering towards the floor; they bowed towards their audience. Reduced to rubble they were no more.

Glass bottles.

Half-full and half-empty. Clanked from side-to-side, rolling past and right into each other And as they did, their insides swashed up and down like a ships rum on a stormy night. And just like Poseidons wrath...

Rring ring! Rring ring!

My ears were met with a heavy thud.

Then a gristly crunch.

And a small shatter.

At first the crack was tiny, like the spindles of a spiders web. But as it skipped along the panel of glass, it reached every corner and made work, where needed done. As if a million hammers had struck all at once, it lay there defeated.

Wind, swept through the crime-scene, bits of glass were blown left-and-right carried.

At that moment in time, I could have only been clawing at the insides of my eyelids. I wanted out.

And fast.

My eyes felt like two tents, pegged down and flapping about amidst the chaos.

*Huh?*

*They won't budge.*

Left eye.

Shut.

Right eye?

Shut to.

My brain felt hot and heavy and I put in every effort to open my eyes. My bed, which had sat patiently along my room soon began to give into the alarms demands.