

“Hell has no meaning outside the boundaries of repetitiveness”

## Providence

I found myself standing in the fog facing a desk stands in front of a huge door without handles, key hole, or one of them Door Knocker. I don't know how I got here or what I am doing here, my memory was scanning the very recent events of last night to get a reasonable answer for all these questions, the jungle of memories in my brain was so messed up so I decide to recall my life in a quick process hopping to find an answers.

I remember that I have led quiet dull and meaningless life, at the age of fifty six I am still working in my unfulfilling job as a night shift attendant at the local service station, a job I already knew very well it will take me nowhere when I applied for it 20 years ago.

This job has turned me literally into a human garbage bin, nocturnal people like taxi drivers, hookers running low on condoms, drunkards seeking fast food and the like kept on dumping stories about their boring life in me, always I complied trying to look interested in those faceless passer-by's stories.

I also remember that night when out of curiosity I tried to calculate how many times I will say how are you and have a good night, at the end of this shift I found that I have said that for two hundred and thirty six times.

I wasn't like that before, anyway not until my wife took the last shred of my dignity ten years ago, she started calling me names long time ago, she sensed my humility and took advantage of that , she even went further (as I have discovered later) and got herself a lover who stays overnight with her. One day I went home early for not feeling so well, I found her with another man in our bed, I stood there agape, speechless until she yelled at me

- Get the fuck out,,, pervert!

Pervert! Get out... that makes no sense, it's my house, she was making love to another man who might have been eating my food and drinking my whiskey, I paid for all of that, I paid for the house and its contents including her fancy clothing, her expensive rings. She has no job and because she did the Contraception surgery, she can't have kids.

Any way I did get out as I knew any confrontation would land me behind bars, I know the laws are very strict when it comes to woman's right, the laws remembered everything including a gold fish pet's rights but have nothing for a guy like me.

I spent the rest of the night sleeping in the parking lot of the local mall on the kerb, the cleaners arrival woke me up; half a sleep my feet dragged me home, I found three plastic bags that contains my work uniforms and a pile of my family photos with couple of books. I got the idea that I was kicked out from my own house.

The gate was slightly opened and an old guy with long white beard dressed in white emerged, the door was shut immediately when the old man was entirely outside. He proceeded to the desk without noticing me, went through some papers, lifted his head looked at me with wide grin and said

- Ah, you are here?! Welcome to heaven son
- Heaven? What are you talking about old man?
- Ah can't you feel it? Can't you feel that this place is different?
- How could I be in heaven if I am not dead?
- I can assure you that you can't be any deader than this; in fact you were dead for more than five decades
- But I can't remember my death
- Oh, off course you can't, can you recall your birth? The moment you merged to life? It is the same principal of entry and exit usually one door with total nothingness beyond and after. You see when you die you go into transitional stage, process if you may call, that stop you of thinking about the agony of the last moment. You died on the eve of the 29th of August 1980.
- I remember that day, I had an appointment with my accountant for my tax return, after that I went to work as usual the only difference is that instead of waking up in my motel room I find myself here talking to you.
- Do you remember any strange event took place at that night?
- I would rather if you refer to it as last night.
- Whatever yesterday, yester year, just tell me do you remember
- I remember my shift was normal like any other night
- Nothing unusual?
- Nothing
- Are you sure?
- Yes... wait, wait I remember this guy, I don't know why, he wanted a curry pie
- Bingo
- What?!

- Don't worry... why did you remember this guy, what so special about him, what makes him stands among the faceless souls that came cross your path
- There is something about him I can't remember
- You can't or you don't want to?
- I can't, his face eludes me, I am trying to recreate his features, I know he had a red hair, a goatee and an earrings but I can't remember the colure of his eyes or the shape of his face, was he tall was he skinny,, oh damned memory
- Do you remember the colour of his coat?
- Why would you ask such question, its summer, no one wears coats, Yes, yes, it's coming to me, I was held up by this guy, he was wearing a coat for some reason! He took a barrel gun he had hid carefully under his coat, pointed at me and asked me for the till, the cigarettes and....
- And?
- I think I moved too fast out of my fear so he shot me out of nervousness, maybe he thought that I have a weapon under the counter. God I was shot!
- You died that night son, now let us move on and talk about you here. Allow me to congratulate you for you have been selected for an honorary role here.
- Thank you, but what role are you talking about? I am just a human being who lived quietly and died alone.
- Yes, yes that's why you are here in heaven and not in the other side.
- But you mentioned a role, role means work, I thought in heaven we reap the fruit of our devotion, I did everything possible to reach out to god, I have never missed a Sunday without going to the church, on Saturdays I do my voluntary work as cleaner in the city synagogue, on Fridays I go to the mosque to listen to the sermon just in case if one of the holy prophets get upset, I even considered the idea of going to a Buddhist and Hindu's temples but I discovered that there is no heaven in their religion; just reincarnation. I tried to appease the vengeful god of Mosses, to be humble in front of the kind god of the Christians and to be rational in front of the wise god of Muslims. So at the end I think I deserve a rest in heaven.
- Now, now my son, you are in heaven and because of your experience on earth we are giving you this role.
- Just tell me what is this role?
- You will be sitting at this desk as the concierge of heaven; you will be greeting and admitting the new comers to heaven.
- For how long?

- Let me see, (after a short pause) the old man said : eternity; you see we keep the doors open for those who are condemned to hell who repent and the same thing applies to those in heaven who do not show appreciation.
- Where am I going to stay?
- Right here at this desk
- So practically I will never see heaven
- Come on, you are in heaven there is no need for you to go inside, there is nothing there you don't know.
- I simply can't accept that, there is no way you can make me repeat my life, I am not going to be a parrot again repeating greetings over and over.
- But god will consider such thing as an act of defiance.
- Still I am not going to do it no matter what.
- Then you leave me no choice but to send you to the other side, pity all these years devotion is wasted in seconds.
- I think hell will be far better than what you are offering me.

The old man seems angry he rang the bell attached to the table and out from nowhere two massive faceless men came and hold me by the arms and took me in a dark passage like a cavern tunnel to the left of the door.

After ten minutes' walk I found myself in the open, alone, I turned back to see the tunnel where I came from but it wasn't there, the two men have vanished somehow, I looked upward I saw the sky but it wasn't blue, it was crimson red, the ground was a like a white desert emitting unbearable heat, in the distance there are three parallel fiery volcanos and one man heading towards me, when he reached me I looked at his face, he had a two balls of silver for the eyes, bald, toothless with big jaw, he was a bit shorter than me.

- So you are the new guy
- I guess
- Everyone here is talking about you and how you defied those bastards up there.
- It wasn't a big deal; I just refused to repeat my boring life for ever.
- It is a big deal, wait until you meet the caretaker, he is very pleased with you, and he might look after you here.
- Care taker? Don't you mean the devil?
- Shhhhh! No one call him that here. He is the caretaker.

## The Ugly

The heat outside was unbearable, according to the weather report the mercury has hit an unprecedented scorching 48 Celsius, but that didn't deter me from going out to the cafetorium for my 4 o'clock rituals; to have my strong espresso and to practice my filthy habit of perving on the café patrons and the people passing by my window. My eyes were like two black holes but instead of devouring galaxies and universes, they consume the miserable reflections of the pathetic souls that come in their range, without substance, without the satisfaction of fullness leaving them with eternal hunger.

Usually at this time of the day I have to wait at the coffee bar until my favourite table becomes vacant, today was an exception; just fools will venture out in this heat to have a hot drink. The Cafetorium was empty save for two tables, the table next to the coffee bar was occupied by a young man wearing blue suite (damn them corporate rats even heat won't Loosen them up), he was reading what seems to be some work papers. The table next to my favourite table was occupied by a fat bald man in his late 30s with earring on his right ear and a fat lady companion with a pile of donuts in front of them.

I ordered my coffee and glass of cold water and went to my table; I sat facing the street giving my back to the fat couple, trying to ignore the fat lady hysterical laughter (apparently her fat companion was telling her jocks) I started scanning the passer-by's as they pass by my window, looking at their sweaty faces, Oh God I think their stinky sweat can fill an ocean. My scanning was interrupted by the smiling young waitress Clair.

- Here is your coffee and your cold water Mr Miller, Ah I see you got lucky today, you got your favourite table without waiting.

- Thanks Clair, I guess I am lucky today, mind you I owe it to the hot weather.

She placed the coffee and the water on my table and went back to the bar.

After an episode of annoying laughter the fat female behind me said to her companion

- Oh matt you are killing me, you are a sack of sugar.

I wanted to shout at her, No he is not and so are you, You are both sacks of shit, a living laughing excrement, look at your oversized bellies, look at your faces covered with the crust of donuts you kept stuffing your ugly faces with, but off course I lack such courage so I just grind on my teeth with contempt.

Trying to distract my thoughts from the two elephants behind me, I returned to my favourite hobby, perving on the passer-by's, there was a woman apparently waiting for a taxi, from her back view I can tell that she has everything in the right places, long neck, slightly broad shoulders, excellent waste line and rounded firm ass. Her white shirt shows a wide line of sweat that was dripping from her neck, her G string lines revolt against the tight grey skirt. I was hoping that she

turns her face towards my window to see whether her face and boobs match the perfection of her back side.

Perfection, what am I thinking? Nice body, beautiful face?! I have seen in the anatomy lesson what lies beneath the skin; muscles, bones, glands ugly smelly fluids, saliva that carries the stinking smell of her stomach smelly acids, what am I fascinated about, the dead skin she shades every moment, the smelly stinky sweat she is bathing with or maybe the G-string?! Yes, it has to be the G-string, but now as I think deeper of it I imagine that she is wearing a white G-string with its string turning yellow because of the sweat and the excrement fragments from the last shit she took in the office toilet before leaving hurriedly. Thinking about all of that sickens me, I can actually sense the smell of her stench filling my nostrils nauseating me; I became overcome by the urge to vomit. I left the Cafe and went back to my cubicle.

## Ghost Town

Paranoia has nothing to do with what I am about to tell you. It may seem like delusional raving of a mad man or a teenager concept of reality after watching the Matrix, I can assure you it's not like that at all, on the contrary if you follow my steps and try to look through my eyes you will grasp the nature of what is haunting me.

I am haunted by a place, a town called MacDonald town. My story with this town started last year when I became a regular commuter on the Sydney south western rails, catching the train from Liverpool station to the city circle a journey that take almost an hour.

Day after day I became more familiar with the stations and towns that my train cut in halves. Each town has its distinctive features, tales and life forms, take Warwick farm for example, from my train window I was able to see the stables, the race course and off course the pretty horses.

Cabramatta the following town is a town that has obtained its Asian identity, I don't know why some people are so intolerant for such gathering of immigrants, if they just think of towns as fields they will have no problem with that, fields are usually dominated by certain type of trees, maybe it all started with one Asian family chose for some reason to settle in Cabramatta, they became the first seed that will attract more to come, the old seed will provide moral support to the new ones until they have roots and when that happens it will be too late to leave, roots have been already gone deeper into this urban town.

I didn't like Yennora, it looked so dull with all the factory and car repair shops on both sides of the station, Yennora has its own burnt oil stench. Flemington was a farmer market, an entire town serves one purpose, selling and buying farmer's product. The rest of the towns looked nice and lively until the train reaches MacDonald town, this place resembles nothing before and after it, it is unique like the purgatory.

All the stations on my way (except MacDonald town) are adorned by billboards, all have station master office, all have people waiting at the station, people and cars moving in the streets around the stations as far as I can see from my window and above all, all the stations have these green trees.

MacDonald town doesn't look like any other town, it is barren, throughout many journeys I have never seen any movement in it or around it, no people waiting and no station master office. The station left side appeared to be a train's cemetery; rusty dark trains lay there motionless for eons to come, a yard where one can't distinguish the ghosts of the trains from the ghosts of their passengers, I can swear that I can hear the howling of the wind inside them mixed with the tormented metal and souls.

On the right side of the station there is what seems to be a disused old silo with ugly graffiti all over it that matches the ones on the dead trains, broken windows, grim dark brown bricks that turned greyish by the dust of the ages.

What enhances my unrest about this town even more is that damned tunnel. All the way from Liverpool until Newtown there is no tunnel, just steps before Macdonald town there is a brief darkness, when the train enters this tunnel, it is short but it is enough to make me think about the possibility of this tunnel being a portal to a morbid ungodly place.

Sometimes I think that someone or something had placed this station, this town in my way just to torment me, other times I tend to think that it is not real, it is no more than a figment of my tired imagination

In the beginning I tried to ridicule my thoughts and dismiss them as childish notions but day after day I became more and more obsessed with this town, the idea of leaving the train at Macdonald town and explore it was so persistent.

After many sleepless nights I decided to take my chances and board one of the few trains that assumedly stop at MacDonald town. I studied the train time table carefully; the best choice was to catch the 4.42 pm from Wynyard station as my shift ends at 4.30. According to the time table I will be in MacDonald town at 4.53 pm.

My heart was beating rapidly when I boarded the train, my fear was embodied like a massive entity that fed my thoughts; thoughts like what if all my fears were confirmed, what if this town is barren as it looks without people, without shops and without station master, what if this town is fictional; how can I get back to the real world from a town never existed, what if I get lost in its empty streets forever with the howling ghosts of the trains and the passengers haunting my wandering steps, after all it will be dark soon.