

## **I Shall Not Kill Argh! Brains!**

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My mind plays cruel tricks on me.  
The universe plays cruel tricks on me.  
I find myself on top of the World Trade Center of late. The first tower has just fallen. The one I am on is next.  
Does that make it the North Tower? Or the South?  
The East? Or the West?

I confess I do not know, and rather than look that bit of trivia up on the Internet, I would rather dwell on the literary limitations that including such a mark of popular culture--etched in the social consciousness as it is--puts on my work. It sets the story in time. A few years and this story will be dated. It will be too old and relegated to the dustbin of history... never to be republished in an anthology or other collection of assembled works.

I would be better saying that I find myself on the front lines--in the trenches--of WWI. A reference so terribly old and outdated that its inclusion no longer marks a work as obsolete, but as a time-tested enduring classic.

No matter. Let's see if this helps any. I used to see myself on the front lines--in the trenches as it were--of WWI holding a gun, shooting away, and getting picked off by snipers, but not anymore. Now I find myself on the roof of the World Trade Center--South Tower I think, but don't quote me on that.

The flames dance around me here on the roof. It's wonderful in a hellishly delightful type way. My hands burn. My face bubbles and peels. And when I breathe, I inhale the toxic vapors of burnt aviation fuel. Ah, the sweet fantasies the mind is capable of devising. Such is the power of our brains.

At some point I started to spend my time here, up on the roof, watching others--no doubt those equally demented and cursed as I am--as they run around helplessly in fright. Some of them jump

over the sides, but I do not bother. I have come to enjoy the smell of smoke, the stench of burning flesh, and the knowledge that if this were real, one good breath and my lungs would cease to function. From there, how long can it take to asphyxiate?

I know for some of you, this story has started off strange... and from there, has only veered off into some indescribably madness. That is only because the words on the page follow the progression of the story in my mind and not the rules of the linear narrative my American Literature teacher in high school wished to instill in me. How many D's? How many F's. I still don't know how to spell surprise. Well now there's a suprise, I guess through the wonders of spell check and repetition I may have finally gotten it right.

Of course, all of that matters not in the least. High school and spelling, that is. Or even the limiting concept of a linear narrative. For you see, I like to think that I work in a different realm. That I relate the sort of morality stories that the Devil might write if he were switch sides. Or the kind that Christ might tell, if he were trying to reach anyone but a Christian. Because, believe it or not, this is a morality play, and the only reason that I am here--on the roof--is to testify my faith. Why else would a person repeatedly succumb to the slowly burning torture of a virtual death, but to accept death for what it is? And therefore, to accepting life for what it can be?

I suppose to put it all in perspective, I should go back and tell you of a time before. A time when--if I had found myself in this world, on this roof--I would have made the most of it, which pretty much means raping and killing and murder.

This world. This roof. Perhaps you do not know what I mean. Perhaps I should give an example.

At work, as I look up from the computer--over which I undoubtedly slave and give my complete and undivided attention rather than writing fictional dribble--I stare into the distance, down the endless rows of cubicles, and imagine gunning down the lot of my coworkers. Perhaps I would rape that pretty young thing in

accounting before I was through. For something like that, I would need a few clips. Undoubtedly, I would reload. And if my gun jammed... I would need another.

I have these thoughts, which is to say I had these thoughts. Constantly. Incessantly. I'd dream of winning the lottery, only to be sued, lose it all, and then what was there to do, but buying a gun, and getting revenge. Or of being stuck in traffic, getting into a fender bender, getting sued once again, or let's change it up, maybe I'd lose my temper throw a punch--or use the wrench I was thinking about putting under my seat just for this purpose--and winding up in jail, and then, when I got out... well, I'm sure I would be buying a gun. It was odd--really uncanny--how many events led to the purchase of a handgun, rifle, or shot gun: getting married, getting divorced, getting a raise, or not getting a raise... I could go on. The list was endless. Not simply near endless, but literally endless. And please, don't be foolish enough to believe I needed a gun. There are ways around that. It's not like I haven't learned a thing in the past few years. Aviation fuel is easy to come by after all. As is gasoline... and a flare gun.

You could even take that away. I wasn't planning on living. Give me a lighter, a kitchen knife, a baseball bat, or a hammer. I could go on--endlessly, and my mind did--but you get the point.

I was so infected--it was so ingrained--that I thought these thoughts normal. How could I not?

"Good morning," my sweetheart would say, and my response was death: cold, calculated, and methodical, and--if need be--delivered years in the distance, on my deathbed or slightly before.

Needless to say, eventually I found the thoughts troubling, and far more to the point, useless. My life is simply not so bad that it makes sense to mindlessly throw it away over a fender bender. And if I were to lose it all in a lawsuit or a divorce? Well then, I could use the newfound freedom as an opportunity, as a sign from the universe that I should spend the next year walking the Appalachian Trail or finally hiking all the way to Alaska.

Clearly the dreams of violent retribution were not to be acted upon. And it would be here, that if you listen closely, you can hear a collective sigh from the any professionals in the audience. No longer will they need to report my musings to the proper authorities as the rant of a madman. It is all past tense.

But be that as it may, I still am not through. My rant is not over. This has all been preamble. But please, rest assured, I have made a vow--to myself, to whoever--that I shall not kill. It's a simply vow. Not overly complicated, but it says a great deal.

I will not kill.

It says, I don't know about you. You are not my concern. Maybe killing is right for you, but for me, killing is simply not in my playbook. No doubt a divorce would suck, but no one would die. And if you sue me, well... I'll hire a lawyer, but that gun will never get bought.

You would think that this is where it would end. I have made a decision, and that is that. But my mind will not let it go. It still asks, Would you kill here? No Would you kill there? Still no. Others kill. Others have killed. Others will kill, but I will not... and furthermore, I will not judge. Make your own decision, as I have made mine. You have freewill. Use it. Or not, the choice is yours.

Still. I had imagined--it was part of my original intent when I made the choice after all--that the visions would fade, that wars would exit my dreams, and violence would vacate my mind, but sadly this has not been the case.

Often--and it is indeed often--I once again find that I am on top of the towers. I am on a plane with maniacal men wielding comically ineffective weapons. Or I am in airports run over by the zombie undead horde...

This last one is a fun one. Past security--where no one has a gun or any weapon more effective than a toothpick--the zombie menace erupts and everyone around me falls victim. From the food court a mass of undead rush to consume me as the pretty stewardesses in high heels go clattering by. In latter days, I might

have chased these hobbled women down. I might have had my way with them in their compromised state--here in the safety of my mind--but no longer. Not today.

Today the zombies run over me. They surround and envelope me.

“Help! Do something!” the stewardess screams as they tear her apart--even being raped by the likes of me would be better than that--but I do nothing. And then, when they come to me--when it is my turn--I turn the other cheek. Isn't that how it goes? So I offer them my neck.

“Brains!” they murmur in delight, but they are wrong. I will leave a sour taste in their mouth. It is not brains that they seek. They are zombies after all. What do they care of learning, knowledge, or wisdom?

“Brains!” they insist as they pull me to the ground, as if in some way I have misunderstood their cries, but I have not. It is not brains that zombies crave, but fear. But I have no fear, for I shall not kill... nor run... nor hide.

And I'll love my wife too, even if she thinks that it is I who am the brain dead moron with my idiotic stories and moronically based morality tales...

But then she's a wage slave zombie down with the flu trying to make light of the situation, so you've got to take her opinion with a grain of salt.

“Argh! Brains!”

You know--for whatever reason--I seem magically immune, curiously impervious to her haunting refrain.

After all, Zombies have no power if you heed them no mind...

**B- for writing style**

**-1 for grammar**

**-1 for spelling. It's surprise!!! Get a dictionary.**

**-1 for another stupid zombie essay**

**Final Grade = F**

**Keep this up and I'll be seeing you again next year Mr. Paufler.**

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Brett@Paufler.net

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