

THE POISONOUS FLOWER

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IT IS ABOUT A MAN WHO IS A COLLECTOR OF BEAUTIFUL ITEMS...WHEN HE GOES TO BRAZIL HE COLLECTS SOME RARE FLOWERSHOWEVER HE RUES THAT....

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By Tahir HAMID

Everything that looks beautiful is not necessarily as it seems. However a rich man named Albert was not mindful of that. His passion was collecting beautiful things. Now his hall was adorned by beautiful antiques, paintings, furniture, carpets, rugs, tapestry and much more. His fame as an exquisite collector had spread far and wide in England. On his trip to Brazil, he was walking in a tropical forest over there when his sight fell upon a most beautiful flower species; a species that was so rare. Albert Small could not help himself from picking them up; he was going to take seeds for this wide variety and plant them on his estate that covered a few acres in Sussex. The petals of the flower were multicolored; it was a like a rainbow of colors that glistened under the sun. It has a strong and yet beautiful scent. Once back at the hotel where he was staying, he put the flowers in a vase full of water. Alas the perfumed and intoxicating smell has hallucinogenic properties.

And Albert soon found himself seeing things and hearing voices. The scenery of his room had changed and he was now carried off to a place where he thought that he saw his dead parents. He even heard his mother calling out to him. However the image of his parents changed suddenly and he was hurled forward towards a figure that was so frightening and scary to behold, that he could not help scream and yet he found that his ability to that had ceased. The demon that he peered threatened to tear his head off. And then the scene changed revealing an image of him when he was a child of perhaps five. He heard the child call out to him and point towards someone or something that was hidden behind a curtain. The curtain was suddenly thrown back and he saw someone really old and withered by age. This image called out to him and said, "I am your future". He then heard a loud rattle and the hissing of snakes. Albert was trapped in a dark and dimly lit pit that was full of snakes. They bit him again and again. The fear and the pain that he felt drove him half mad. And he prayed again and again to God to spare him of this nightmare and never ending madness.

Albert Small then found himself hurtling up through a vortex of light and changing colors. He next found himself in a strange and desolate land that marked by a large expanse full of rocks, barren hills and lots of sand. The sun shone down hard and he felt his skin sear and burn.

The landscape was full of big pits. And he heard a lot of wailing, moaning and sighing emanating from them. Every now and then there would be a loud hissing sound and steam would rocket out of these pits. The voices he heard seemed to be in pain and strangely human. Albert Small slowly made his way to one of these pits and peered into it. He found that it was full of naked men and women bound by what looked to be ropes and yet they were made of fire. They seemed to be in deep pain and agony. A really bad smell emanated from these pits. And he heard a voice telling him that they were the recipients of hell.

Albert Small backed up in horror. He saw that the searing heat was all the time becoming more intense. It was at this point in time that Albert was transported to another place. Dark Clouds of smoke hung low in yet another desolate landscape. There were lakes but the water was boiling and steam seemed to rise from these lakes and add to the heavy columns and layers of smoke that formed the general atmosphere. Near these lakes were hideous looking branches that had heads shaped to resemble demons. Albert Small then saw people clambering around chained and shackled. They seemed to be in extreme pain and seemed hungry and thirsty. People on all fours seemed to be crawling towards the searing and boiling water in these lakes. Some were

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slowly making their way to the hideously shaped fruit that grew from small trees in this land. And once again Albert Small was aware of a presence that would tell him that this was hell.

Once again, Albert Small felt himself falling downwards into a very intense white light. Strangely he felt extremely peaceful and calm this time. There was the loud sound of a whoosh and Albert Small found himself back in his hotel room sprawled in bed. The familiar surroundings about him were welcome news. As he got up, his eyes fell upon the vase of flowers. He was quick to throw them into the trash can. No he was not going to introduce these poisonous flowers in England.

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