

Respice post te mortalem te esse memento

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*look around you, remember you are mortal...
ever thought of killing someone?... she did...*

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**Chapter 1 - Respice post te mortalem te esse
memento**

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1 - Respite post te mortalem te esse memento

spice post te, mortalem te esse memento* There she silently watches from the cliff top; the periwinkle ocean's heartbeating against the shore. The leaves of the magical Rowan tree sway in the wind with the haunting phrase of twinkling chimes. These leaves are on the verge of bursting into their scarlet autumn plumage. A Red Kite soars above the oceanscape below, searching for something to devour. She watches it for a while. The coasting movements of its wings somewhat ease the tension that dwells within her. A Ulysses butterfly tries chasing after the Kite, but soon gives up the futile pursuit. The wind tells her of an epic story: forgotten rhythms of Mother Nature. It brings with it wispy clouds. The sun looks upon her filled with dejection, its light dissipates behind its duvet of clouds. Behind her the boards of the ancient porch creak, singing like the nightingale floor. The house is a beautiful, vintage Victorian, reconstructed to suit modern times. A breeze groans through the roof gables, the waves ebb away, as she confesses her soliloquy to the salty zephyr of wind. Her mind swims with confusion about the dark thoughts that have veered her dreams into unforgivable nightmares. "You're leaving?" Her mother shouted at him from the stairs, her countenance a mixture of disbelief and hate. With sagging shoulders he looked directly at her, "Yes." "Is that it?" She retorted. "You get a high-class business offer out of town, don't even discuss it with me and then just bugger off? HOW COULD YOU?" Her mother was nearly hissing with spite. Then she looked at her daughter and softly said, "She's only eleven!" Her sob singed the silence, "...How could you...?" Her mother's voice trailed off into nothingness. Her father looked at them both, as if trying to apologize, then turned around, shut the door and left their messed up lives behind. The memory lingers and steadily evaporates. Two years ago her father had come back, asking for forgiveness. They had not heard hide or hair from him for four years and then those two years ago... her mother had taken him back! Now, even though she loved her mother, her father was a mere acquaintance that did not deserve this life with his family. Still the docile ocean ebbs away from her, fearing her sanity; steering clear of the beach beneath her, part of the soil she stands on. With smooth gliding movements she turns around, tucks a stray lock of hair behind her ear and drifts towards the house. Her dress billows around her and goose bumps gradually creep up her spine, as the wind starts to pick up. Once inside the house, her eyes take a while to adjust to the darkness of the sepia-brown, wooden walls. Outside the weather gradually deteriorates from a bright cloudy sky to a greying, darkening empyrean. Her footsteps echo through the hallway as she makes her way into the cosy living room. The fire in the hearth is already crackling warmly, stocked up every hour to keep it going. The room darkens with the declining weather; she decides to light numerous candles. They flicker with the draft that drifts in from the window. All around her the eyes of fire wink at her, illuminating the various hues of wax, blues, greens, yellows and pure bright whites, reflected in the silver framed mirrors and also on the blades of the scimitars hanging on the wall. There before the mirror she studies her reflection. Her flowing, dark hair falls in ringlets below her shoulders; eyes sparkle back at her with a crystal, green iridescence; her slightly pale skin, tinged with rosy glow from the chilling draft, creates a stark contrast to her dark blood-red satin dress, draped down along her svelte body. Enough of this, concentrate! The little voice inside her head often purges her thoughts with snide remarks, but she knows, this time it is right. She really needs to concentrate on her gruelling task ahead. Her feet drag her through the living, past the generations of photographs in the hallway, to the darkened kitchen beyond. There she flicks a switch and gives light to a joyously painted kitchen, in soft pastel yellows; yet her mood does not improve. She moves swiftly, having to finish the preparations before her father gets home. She is making a delicious dinner for her parents and herself. After preparing the roast and

pre-heating the oven, she slides the pot into the glazing heat and begins to make the salad, a very important component of her delirious plan. While ripping apart the luscious green leaves, her thoughts stray. And she thinks of human beings. Why do they do these terrible things, like leaving people they supposedly loved? Her father is only one of the millions of people out there who leave their friends and family. How the HELL could they do something so harsh? She smiles at the irony of her thoughts; it's not like she's a perfect little angel either. Her heart, mind, body and soul are infested by toxic thoughts daily. She knows that in every heart in every person lies a true Lucifer, hidden beneath false faces of light. It is a mortal trait. Mortality is human, and humanity can be dangerous. Deep down all people have an evil streak. Unlike most others, she decided to accept the feelings that corrupt the mind. Some may call her crazy, but EVERYBODY knows there is something within them. Something evil. Something that hungers to be unleashed. The salad is ready; cleaned and topped with a tangy sweet salad dressing, which would later on serve to mask the taste of a deadly element. Now the time has come to obtain this lethal component. She makes her way, back through the hallway of photographs, smiling at her with those fake masks of light (...the truth is always there...), past the blinking sea of burning icicles in the now tepid living room, and out the oak front doors. The bite of the chilly wind grips her immediately, but she does not turn back to fetch a jacket. She has to go through with this, before her building guilt gets the better of her. During her walk to the enchanting garden, she is once again intrigued by the countryside, isolating her family from the company of others. Her house is the only one out here for a couple of miles. To the right of the path stretch wide open fields of grassland. To the left is the edge of a captivating forest before which stands a small cottage. In there she can see her mother painting. At least that means her mother is out of her hair for a while and she can now concentrate upon the looming plants ahead. She meanders through the garden, marvelling at her creations. Most of these plants are red in colour and more than three-quarter of them poisonous. Among them grow the Lipstick Vine with its tubes of crimson petals and the poisonous sap running through its veins. The rose coloured Frangipani and the cardinal Mona Lisa Lily crowned the thrones of beauty. One of her most favourite is the Scarlet Pimpernel. As she thinks of this she remembers a famous saying: open for sun, closed for rain, that's the poor man's weathervane. And how true this saying is. The blooms are already closing and she realizes how close the blackening clouds are to evolving into a small tempest. Once again she quickens her pace and quickly finds what she is looking for. With a gloved hand she prises the six fatal seeds off the Datura Moonflower. Next she picks six seeds from the purple flecked Hemlock and six more from the White Oleander. It is a deadly combination of little demons. On her way out of the garden she looks back once more. The vermilion of the plants around her had buried deep inside and invaded her heart, much feeding her hate, with their poisonous traits. Only the Rowan tree in the distance at the edge of the cliff provides protection and healing familiarities. She grins silently to herself and with a focused walk advances to the house. Back in the kitchen she takes one of the salad bowls and tips the eighteen seeds onto the leaves and carefully conceals them beneath. Her gloves lie forgotten on the counter. Casually she stares out the window, breathing in the mouth watering aroma of the roasting meal. And what she sees out there lets a strain of panic course through her body: the man she intends to poison tonight, is fitting his house key in the lock of the front door. Realising it is open he struts into the entrance hall. Why had she not heard him drive up the gravel drive? She knows she has to react quickly. She dives out of the kitchen slams the door and hastens to head her father off. "Um, don't go into the kitchen! ... Please...", she tells her father. "Why, may I ask?" "Oh, it's just, I'm preparing dinner and it's supposed to be a surprise!" And what a surprise it will be! She adds with an afterthought and heads back into the friendly kitchen. She opens a window and breathes in deeply the rain filled air, clearing her head. Sensibility returns as she fights back tears, shocked at her own nefarious nature. She takes more long, deep breaths and watches a sunset moth, in all its colourful splendour, drift past lazily. A few minutes pass quietly. The clouds burst quenching the country's thirst.

The rain pats methodically on the roof. Only later is the still ambience shattered by the oven clock. Dinner is ready. She brings out the roast and lays it on the table, which had already been set by her father. Her mother, sometimes a meek woman, comes at the father's calls, and they eagerly await the salad. With numb hands she walks to the kitchen. Oh GOD, she looks at the three bowls and realises with growing fear she does not know which bowl is the one that will send her father to an early demise. I'm sure it's the centre one... It has to be... She has no time to check, her father is eagerly waiting. She walks past the eerily smiling photographs into the dining room and sets down the bowls for each person. Dinner is served. The meal runs smoothly, there are no seeds in her own salad and a secure feeling settles in her stomach. Her parents are delighted at the meal and smile heartily when she brings in the dessert. "Did you enjoy the meal?" she asks politely; the question directed at her godforsaken father. Her mother answers instead, "Oh, it was very delicious! But honey, what were those seeds in the salad?" The young girl's heart skips a beat, with slow motion her fork drops with a loud clink to the plate before her. And with formidable trepidation she looks at her beautiful mother, whose hands begin to tremble...