

# [1]: The Glass:

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15/06/16

It had been placed there to mock him, and ultimately to be his self-prescribed death. In the end he knew he would drink it, the temptation to do so would only grow with each hour, with each day he attempted to ignore it. He knew it had been poisoned, he knew it was being used as a game played mercilessly by his captor.

The glass continued to stare at him, as he stared at it. The dryness of his tongue rasped across his lips in a pointless, self-pitying attempt to relieve his lips from the cracking of this perpetual parched cell.

He was unbound of course, and free to move in his cell. It wasn't that his confines were particularly harsh, they were clean after all. It was more the lack of the singular giver of life Water His cell boasted books, music from all ages of man, anything he wanted that would remove boredom But no water, other than that damned glass.

In a moment of clarity, free from the clouding effects of his thirst, he remembered his captors face as he had placed the glass in the room. A face of unprintable evil despite its polite, 5\* restaurant, overtly friendly demeanour. The glass had come with olives, some home baked bread and the morning edition of his favourite broadsheet. He had eaten the olives, too quickly he thought, as he needed their millilitres of water to sustain himself. But what a cost, to taste that slightly bitter aftertaste while his captor discussed the manner of his self-prescribed death.

He must drink, for water was the only thing he lacked. But the cost would be his life. His captor had explained the game, to either die at your own hand by refusing temptation and refusing water, or to die at your own hand by consciously choosing the poisoned glass. The choice, if it was a choice at all, was to assess ones own sense of honour, of ones own self-will and indeed free-will, the ability to transcend into the afterlife with the knowledge that I made my choice, I was not broken by temptation, and that I know myself better now and therefore better able to represent myself as the defendant in a court of my peers.

The glass was ample to satisfy his thirst. Perhaps not quite to prevent the damage the lack of water was doing to his body. He felt drained by it despite it being full to the brim, lightly sparkling and visibly cooled. It sparkled under the cool lamp his captor had placed it under, continuously illuminated when he tried to sleep and ever being re-filled as it slowly evaporated into the chemically dried atmosphere of his cell.

In some ways he was not glad they chose to only torture him with this loss, one singular freedom that had been taken away from him. He knew that others had been deprived sleep or deprived food. Somehow, right now, with the glass staring at him, twinkling, those seemed better options, quicker options, options that would more quickly lead to psychosis or a clouding of his cognition. But alas he could sleep, and he was permitted high calorie foods. In the last hour alone he had eaten two chocolate bars and a slice of coffee cake. Neither had helped with his thirst, but he knew it was another layer to this game, his captors ever keeping him lucid with ample brain stimulation, ample calories and a very slight food-based input of water to prolong the process.

There had been a time, when he had watched the glass for the best part of an entire day. In his mind this had been an attempt to force his mind to make that final choice, to just get it done. He thought that if he spent the hours, concentrated, he would be able to ensure his free will was asserted in the most logical manner. His captor played him well, by the end of the day he was broken, not broken enough that high calorie food and sleep couldnt bring him back, but enough that his will would not be free, that he would not be able to force himself to logically and robustly internally argue for a particular and most importantly speedy choice. His captor had let the glass evaporate, he had watched it transcend from a bright, full to spilling, ever

tantalising glass, into a crystallised dry emptiness. He had watched the water level slowly decrease as his own self-worth decreased in complement. With nothing to refresh the water as it leached into the atmosphere and was lost to the extent it couldnt even prevent his nose from feeling dry on the inside, he had fallen asleep just as the final crystal had formed at the base of the empty glass. Despite his slumber, that empty glass and the knowledge that his choice could ultimately rely on the will and choice of his captor, had broken him.

The glass was ornate, much like everything in his cell. It rested on a cut crystal coaster and was presented with a gold spoon and a cube of sugar. He hadnt been told if the sugar was also poisoned, perhaps that was also a test, also a game. The glass reminded him of an older style for drinking Absinthe and taking LSD. One would pour the drink through the sugar, allowing a sweetness to be imparted to it. He considered if this was a final affront to his sanity in that the captor had offered something to sweeten the bitterness of consuming ones own demise or to take the edge off if the final decision was to refuse the water.

Self-reliance, free-will, knowing ones self to a core in which your prepared to make the ultimate choice. He had struggled with this even before his capture.

It had been placed there to mock him, as part of a cruel game to force him to think, to force him to look inwardly, to reassess his self-worth and his worth in society. The glass had done its job, after 13 days of water deprivation he took up the glass, sipped, wetted his lips and drank. So cool, so sweet, and so so needed, but at the same time so bitter, so hateful, so lacking in personal honour, and perpetually recorded as the moment in which temptation and damnation won

He died, but not as one would like to be remembered. Temptation not his torture now defined him. His entire being was now summed up, distilled down to a single outcome. He died satisfying his temptation and giving into the games of others. He had died without a shred of self-control.

As his captor, I do pity him. I tested him to the very limits of his humanity in an attempt to perpetuate humility. One must control oneself if one is to remain honourable, and one must define oneself by ones actions and ability to refuse temptation. Ultimately his capture, his detainment and punishment had been proscribed by his peers and his punishment embellished by his own choices.

As his captor, as a man discussing this with you as I walk down this hallway of despair, I ask you to not judge this judicial system, I ask you for the self-will and personal power to set another glass down for yet another individual.

As his captor, as a man enabling the self-destruction of others, I ask you, what would you choose, what would you do to avoid damnation?

The End...