

~ Change your life ~

by Rhuarc Black

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Description: "You gotta change your life, boi." That's what the old man said...

"You gotta change your life, boi."

That's what the old man said, the one that lives in the great old tree with its million crimson leaves.

"Enough of this. This waste you call living. This sadness that dodges every step you take. If that's all you got to give then better be no more. This thing, this pile of garbage and credit card receipts you call a life. It ain't worth it."

So the old man spoke, booming across highways and turnpikes that run with iron and dirty rainwater.

The child hid in the dustiest corner under the bed, calling soundlessly for mother.

And the girl, young skin bellying old eyes, looked to sky and earth seeking the light of stars long gone nova.

The boy, shy and brash in turns, took the old man's words to heart, losing the meaning.

The man, just grown, stood by the great door, stepping neither in nor out. Tears seeped from his unseeing eyes, revealing drop by drop the aeon-old dividing line.

And in the great hall, a woman stood, barefoot of her own accord. Sirens singing from the black jade throne, temptation of beauty divine and hidden vulture's feet. 'Tis only a doomed ship's length to the throne of dreams. "Come, reign and lead," the sirens sing.

In roads small, along the shores where the waves of desire lap and leap in mindless obeisance to an airless rock always obscured by walls of ever-rotting flesh, there the old man's voice blends with a whisper.

"You have to change your life, boi."

The old woman said, the one that lives deep in the dark grey sea, where no brave adventurer nor many-sailed ship has ever been.

"A million million steps have brought you here. On wide roads paved with gold and mountain paths slick with ice you've walked. No-one led you astray for you allowed neither man, nor woman, nor all-seeing god to lead you. And yet lost you are in this guileful desert that people seek to brand fruitful plain. A million million steps stretch before you. Better not take them than waste them in deserts painted of spring."

So the old woman spoke, a thready whisper carried on winds born of fate and lost dreams across barren plains and lush forests, no louder than a leaf's fall, no softer than a star exploding.

The child turned away, small pudgy hands closing unwilling ears, eyes unseeing from soundless tears.

And the girl turned her back, yawning bored and stiff from contemplation, to sun and moon and stars. Alas, the small mind behind the universe laughed for at the blink of her eyes the light of the nova shone and passed.

The boy sat, mesmerised in his reflection on the shiny blade, trembling hands making the single crimson bead weave along its hidden edge.

The man took a single step forth. The half of him past the threshold shone brightly gold as of a new sun being born. The half of him behind dulled and the clay that made his skin and flesh and white bone crackled as if in a kiln's unrelenting unending fires. And that tiny part standing shadowed on the dividing line sweated blood as dark as long-aged sun-drenched wine.

The woman stood trembling at the foot of the majestic jade throne. Her blood sang with temptation unnamed and unnameable. And as her mind urged her to the throne and her heart warned her away, her body, unadorned of wordly things, merely shuddered in fear.

Upon the high mountaintops, on air thinner than an aged parchment's edge, there the old woman's voice met the undulating wailing of a newborn crying with despair.

"Change your life, boi."

So the just-born cried, its voice thin of nature but earth-core thick with longing and wiles deep-seated in heart's blood.

"For what is worth the lauded black ship laden with silks and gold and precious crystal without the sea it glides on? What is worth the shiny diamond on the thick gold band without a hand to keep it warm in promise? What is worth the dark ebony box, well-designed, better-adorned with flowers exotic, without a single tear to mark its passing? Let your temptation be the wide seas

and the warm loving hand. For no silk and no heavy crystal and no price writ in letters small and unassuming can rightfully compete with a single tearful eye."

So the babe wailed and its cry spread beyond the earth and beyond the darkened seas into the skies where the stars rejoice in their eternal dance across the universe's million-hued skin.

And the child lowered its hands revealing its hideous face, heart's blood running in rivulets out of empty darkened space where once sight held sway. Bloody fingerprints and shredded flesh stand witness to the hidden elix' darkest wiles.

And the girl cried out as the shadow of unseen light shone upon her. At the shadow's passing no tear fell nor was a single heartfelt entreaty heard, for upon the wake of darkness skin young as the dawn's dew-laden bead fell, making way for the signs of time uncountable. The girl's shrill scream greeted the nova's passing, a future unkind of a past bathed in flames and swords' heady glint.

There the boy stood up, will and mind still untamed urging the step that takes body and blood beyond the simple wonders born of childhood's wild dreamings. And the skies cried and the earth tore in lament for neither will nor mind prevailed, as the body, drained of heart's blood, crumbled to embrace still freshly-crimson loam.

The man cried molten skin and golden water as mind and heart pulled and pushed his body's ugly remnant through the threshold. And there, just inside the diamond-crusted throneroom he fell on knees already bereft of life, mind and heart beguiled by the sirens' deadly song. If only his ears had never heard the music pumping of life coming from the great room. If only his ears had listened to the music's deeply buried rhythm, the sound of the dark scythe's arching fall.

And the woman sat on the throne, the sirens' falsehood-ridden song bewitching mind and thought. Only the body, flesh and blood and bone still remembering the life it once held of clay fresh and thrown damp stone, trembled still in protest. Just as trembling flesh touched cold jade so the stone reared in ugly hidden truth and so did ambition exchange life for a statue's stern feature and timeless countenance. Only deep in the core of flesh where once heart beat did the arrested scream begin, lamenting freedom lost to desire unneeded, never to become more than a slight barely-heard whimper.

And deep in darkness born of where the sun's ray was never meant to reach, there among the earth's time-laboured bones and the echoes of souls whose belief has long since passed, did the newborn's reedy cry collide with the memory of voice.

"Change your life, boi."

So the voice that once had been soundlessly project along earth and sea and unending sky. And so it travelled on the earthson's shaking breath until it reached the great old tree making leaves tremble and old men of power cower in their musky thrones of time-etched oak. So it travelled within the gray sea on the wake of the whales' song until it reached waters where only dragons be, making dark red seaweed bow and old women of wisdom hide in caves that no whisper of

light has ever seen. And so it travelled on the scorching desert-wind until it reached the great heights where the earth stretches to touch the skies making dark rock crumble and babes of new-born wile turn quickly to their mother's breast seeking solace.

"Let no words of power nor of wisdom nor of wile guide you. For they are no more than old men's regrets and old women's ramblings and newborn's unworldly thoughts. Don't allow even the echo of souls long-past to guide you. For they are no more than the mind's midnight-born imaginings. Inside you look and seek what you desire most. Let that desire guide you for that is the road that chaos-born heaven and life-bearing earth bestowed upon you back when time herself was born as the first soul saw the light."

So the voice that came from whence the gods of old were buried of their own accord sounded with neither sound nor breath.

And the child turned to listen, allowing flesh to begin its healing kneading. Mourn the dearth of mortal being, for no clear sight was restored and deep scaring was left to mark its passing. Yet still the child heard and in its hearing desire was born.

And the girl ceased her screaming to better hear words carried in wave of neither sound nor breath. Deplore the universe's harsh judgement, for skin remained old and wrinkled and crackled with age untold. Yet still the girl saw the end of the shadow of the nova's long-ago light and in its seeing desire opened its eyes.

So the boy writhed weakly on the crimson mud seeking to listen thoughts that stretched beyond words. Hate nature's cruel force, for neither strength nor blood were returned to the body on the verge of manhood forever arrested. Yet the boy felt the soil beneath it and the salt-bearing breeze upon its back and in its feeling desire found long-awaited awareness.

The man's remains stirred with the whisper of air bringing words never born of fleshly chords. Fear bewitchment's unseen taint for no life was reborn in the dust and charred remains of ambition. Yet the still-lingering sullied soul of man hoped for flesh to stir with the phoenix' light and in its hope desire found purpose.

The statue on the black jade throne trilled with vibration born of the cry of the souls of old. Rejoice in the merging of body and still weakly-beating heart for in joined rebellious communion they subdue mind and thought. And so the stone casing lost its chilly grip on dusty flesh and weathered bone and like a chick's first foray into the world's unyielding cold the woman emerged once again standing on her own trembling feet. Rejoice for as the sirens screamed their anger at their thwarted conquest, in the just-freed flesh desire found a home.

In that insignificant moment of great portent it seemed as if the great fabric of the universe sighed. The old man smiled letting his aching back rest upon his throne of mighty oak. And the old woman closed her eyes in happiness she never thought to experience allowing her long grey hair to flow upon the sea's gentling currents. And the babe relaxed in its mother's all-enfolding arms, suckling in the peace born of youth. And the voice of souls long gone merely echoed the universe's tiny almighty sigh.

As desire settled in the place accorded to it by nature's own hand, so the child curled upon itself in blissful sleep. And so the girl closed her eyes allowing the nova's light to shine from within. And so the boy relaxed upon the blood-soaked earth, the blade gently falling from fingers finally relaxed. And so the man's great soul severed the anchor shackling it to ruined flesh and bone and the memory of the siren's song, gloriously free.

And so the woman strode forth, away from the black jade throne. Her eyes shone with light born from within, unreflecting the diamond-crusted walls. Her ears attuned to the beat born of an aching heart, unknowing now of the siren's shrill scream. And deep within, where heart met flesh and knitted bone, desire laughed unrestrained rejoicing in future's unending light.

In desire's heady laughter, a minor note rang unheard by all but the weary soul hiding in the vibrant space between centre and wall of mortal life's tiniest component.

"As was, it shall be no more.

As it should be, it now is.

As it will be, we shall discover."

The End

Thanks for reading. Any comments, good or bad, are welcome at rh.black@hotmail.co.uk ~RB.
