

Agape Timed Prompt

By: Giselle Sterling

December 7th, Twenty-twelve

21:33 I have lost my steady hands to this business of fear. I sense them trying to shake. Sorting through words which best describe this prompt:

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Fear. What do I fear for Marines. About Marines. Something close. Death. Everybody fears death. I fear life. But that's too big. Think small. Button small. Smaller than a button – think pebble. Sand. Grain. Think DUST.

I'm afraid of DUST. Seriously.

I'm a Marine and I'm afraid of dust. See, in the Marine Corps they teach you about the little things — the details. They're real animals about it. Always barking. Because if you can't measure the quarter inch space of uniform between your ribbons and your badges, then you can't measure the clicks it takes to BZO your rifle.

If you can't sprint from your mailbox to your car with a couple of 70 pound sacks of potatoes in your arms, then how do you expect to carry your grown son or daughter or kid sister to the HMMWV after someone's shot clean through their throat. How do you suppose you will notice the difference between the shape of a dog and the shape of a crawling man at one-thousand yards through the waving desert heat. It's all a matter of the little things and at this point in time dust is all that I can see past my nose as I lay on the couch; head propped toward the ceiling fan. Dust just sitting there. Settled. Dirty. Mocking. Across the room on the floor is the can of cleaner and beat up washcloth. Hands placed them there. The same hands now nurse our hungry baby. I want to nurse my baby. But I will have to wait. I will wait quietly for the baby to be put down. For those nursing and cleaning palms and knuckles and fingers that would help me with the prosthetics I've had to use since I lost my hands.

[Full Stop]

Time: 22:33

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