

ODE TO A JEALOUS MAN

By: Tony Foote
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"I don't like this at all" thought Peter. A man drove up in a Porsche and got out. The women all swarmed around him. Peter thought. "It should be me driving that car. That bastard gets all the breaks". He stood there for a while, his eyes burning holes in the back of his enemy. Peter was not from a rich family, as was this guy, who incidentally was named Lloyd Pottinger.

The Pottingers are from up on the hill. Daddy owns thirty companies or so, and mummy just drives around from beauty parlour to beauty parlour in her rolls. They live in a mansion overlooking the "little people" as mummy calls them. Now Peter Sagel came from a different lifestyle altogether. Mom and Pop were hard working honest folks who wouldn't hurt a fly. They paid for everything the hard way. This pissed Peter off no end knowing that all a Pottinger had to do was reach into their large wallets and pull out enough money to buy a new car or a boat or anything that they wanted. What did they know about hard work anyway? Lloyd, girl in tow, walked into Guys Pizza Place. There was a guy standing in the doorway with a smoke in his right hand. Lloyd said "Look out pal, I want to get through!!". The guy did not move. Lloyd repeated himself. The guy leaned forward.

"Say please punk!!" he said to Lloyd. Lloyd stood his ground.

"Out of my way pal, now" he snorted, pushing the girl to one side. The guy lurched forward and lunged his fist outward, striking the face of the young playboy, knocking him to the ground. Lloyd got up and went in for another go. The same thing happened. This time, a couple of girls picked him up and led him to his car.

He turned to the figure in the doorway, shouting "You're dead meat punk, dead meat!" He climbed into his car and drove away with a squeal of rubber on bitumen. Peter had seen the whole show and thought it rather funny. All that money and still he can't fight his own battles. Still, it would be great to have all of his money. Even half would be good enough. He walked over to the pizza joint. The guy was still in the doorway. As Peter approached the guy smiled and stood aside so Peter could enter. "Thanks buddy" smiled Peter as he passed and went to the counter. He ordered a Coke and fries to go. He paid and left. "Something funny about that guy" he thought. For as hard as Peter had looked at him as he passed by, he could not see a face. Even though at one stage he was looking directly at it. He walked on. Three streets went by then four and five. It was a long walk into town since the busses weren't running today, due to some strike or other. There was this odd feeling though. It made him feel very uncomfortable. It was as though someone was following him down this quiet boulevard. He turned this head, Nothing but his walk feeling was still there. He sped up to a fast walk, then to a slow run. Still looking behind. He broke into a run. Suddenly something stood in his path. He hit it with full force. A power pole. It stood firm in the ground with his form laying at its base. For a moment he lay there not knowing whether he was alive or dead until a voice comforted him. "It's ok, you will be fine. Just a bit of a bump on the head" it said. Peter could see a form standing over him. It was the guy from the pizza shop doorway. Peter just stared at him. He was right. There was no face. "Who are you, what are you?" squeaked Peter. "You are safe" said the voice, "There is nothing to fear" "But you have no face, who are you" repeated Peter desperately. "I am anyone that you want me to be, I have come for you. Take my hand" it said calmly. Too powerless to resist. Peter took his hand. There was a blinding white flash and then Nothing. Peter stood at the corner of Elm street and Conway. It was a sunny hazy day. Too hot for birds to fly, they just sat in the trees watching. There was not a soul in sight. Just the sound of an approaching car. Its tyres squealing loudly, irreverently shattering the silence. The birds still sat in the trees watching. A man walked out of the door of a nearby house. Peter couldn't see who it was because he was too far away. He wandered over to the street corner and started crossing. The speeding car appeared and the man saw nothing. Peter shouted to warn him, but

still he did not hear. The car smashed into the man sending him sprawling across the ground. At once it sped off leaving its victim in a pool of blood. Quite dead. Peter recognised the car, the red Porsche. He thought it was Lloyd Pottingers. Yes it was. He could see the number plate. It said "Lloyd i". The windows of the car were tinted black, like a death wagon. He turned to look at the guy who brought him here. He was gone. Peter opened his eyes. He found himself lying in the street with people coming to his aid. A kindly woman explained that he was not watching where he was going, and ran into a power pole. "Where is the guy who was here?" he asked. "No one here but us, never was" she said "I was the first one over here young man" Peter thanked her and went on his way. Days passed, and the resentment grew towards Lloyd. He had just taken another of Peters girlfriends away from him and was giving him a hard time about it. Peter could take no more. Something inside him broke. He would teach that asshole a lesson. There was to be a party that Friday night. All the well off people were invited. All those pompous bastards"he thought. "I'll show them all" All week he planned his, surprise for the party At last the night came. The night before the party, Janette had asked him to come to the party. but he had refused because Lloyd was there. He couldn't stand to see Her taken from him as well. All the hob knobs were there. Especially Lloyd. He saw Peter arrive with Janette and leave her at the door. No amount of pleading would make him enter the house. His jealousy was causing some really bad vibrations. Lloyd stuck his head around the corner of the door. "Are you coming in nerd" he laughed. That was it. Peter lost control and swung a punch at him. It missed and his fist went crashing into the door frame. He yelled with pain. Lloyd grabbed at his throat, and threw him backwards down the sixteen marble steps to the mansion and into the unattended car parking lot. As blows were traded, and blood spilled all over the place, the intensity of Peter's jealousy grew. The line at which one draws the line between Jealousy and blind hatred, to the point where one would take the life of another with no care was reached. Peter pulled a knife from inside his jacket and struck it into the heart of Lloyd. Again and again he struck out. Again and again Lloyd was punctured and his life juices ran free of veins and linings. The knife stuck in his left eye, and stayed there The sky was black with thunder clouds. The smell of rain lay heavy on the breeze. Brilliant yellow outlines sat on the edge of time in the sky. A cloud hung low. It looked like a face Peter thought. Lloyd lay in the path of still warm blood. Bloody bubbles leaving his mouth and entering the cool night air. No one had seen him fight with Lloyd, at least that's what he believed. He would take a little of that Pottinger cash. Reaching into the pockets of the corpse he felt for a wallet and car keys. He found both. The corpse must be hidden he thought to himself. He dragged that into some bushes nearby. Laughing to himself as he did so. "That's the end of that bastard" he whispered quite seriously. He had gone quite mad. He put some leaves over the blood on the grass and walked calmly to Lloyds (the late) car. The key slipped effortlessly into the door and it was a matter of a minute or so before the car burst into life. Peter thought he heard a scream as he turned the key. With a squeal of tyres, the car raced off, away from the party. Half an hour later, Peter stopped the Porsche and pula pulled out the wallet. Looking inside, he found all of the usual bourgeoisie things like credit cards and condoms. There was a small amount of cash as well, about five hundred bucks he thought. Time for something to eat. He started the car and headed into town! This car should get the chicks, he thought "It always has before. "he said aloud. He suddenly thought of the strange man at Guys pizza place. A solemn thought. He remembered him saying" I am whoever you want me to be" Then the thought waned and died its last death. He instinctively headed for Guys. He knew o of no reason why, just that that is where he was heading for. When he got there, there was a girl stand -ing outside the store, and another one inside with a guy, and a fellow leaning against the door post. He turned his head for a moment and spotted a guy

watching him from across the street. He turned pack and went in for pizza. The guy at the door stepped back and let him in. He was there or two, maybe three hours. There was a bar in the corner and he had had a few beers too many. It was an all night place so there was no need to shift. e didn't want to anyhow, so he just sat there getting drunker and drunker. After twenty or so drinks, he passed out. The guy who r ran the bar left him there until the morning. "Hey wake up pal" said the bartender, shaking him. "what time is it" "Seven in the morning" said the bartender. The guy was still leaning on the doorway. "How long has he been here?" he asked, pointing at the doorway. "Who?" asked the bartender? "Him" he said. "Are you crazy mate, there aint no-one there. "Yes there is I see him with my own two eyes."

"Get out pal, we don't want no nutters in here" came his answer as he was grabbed by the jacket and pants and thrown out the door onto the sidewalk. He got to his feet and went over to the car. He go in and drove rapidly off from that place. He couldn't work out what was going on. And who, was that stranger at the door who wasn't there at all. Left and right he swerved. He was still eight parts drunk and only two sober and controlling the car was more than he could do. He headed home, darting to and fro over the road, tyres screeching loudly, irreverently shattering the silence. The birds, sat in the trees, just watching. A man walked out of a nearby house. He wandered over to the street corner and started crossing. The speeding car appeared and the man crossing saw nothing. The red Porsche smashed into the man, killing him instantly. The car stopped and a man stepped out. He looked at the street signs. Elm and Conway. It shook him to the core. He looked down at the body, and saw himself. The car started. It drove toward him. The throttle opened and he was struck down, but not before he saw Lloyd, laughing at him from behind the wheel of the Porsche. The knife still sticking out of his left eye. And the birds just sat in the trees, watching.

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