

A Headache in the Cinema.

by Shan Shaikh

It wasn't until the guy, my mother hired to fix our front door, left that we went to the cinema. We saw the film with all of those hotshots from Hollywood playing themselves in the midst of the apocalypse. It was actually pretty entertaining. The only way someone would be granted access to heaven was if they sacrificed themselves for the group. One by one, I saw actors admit their faults and face death. One by one, they were sent to heaven. Except Franco. He sinned on his way up and lost his ride.

After the film, I was feeling a bit odd. I had an excruciating headache, but a majority of my disorientation was coming from the film. I was connecting to it even after leaving my red seat. In the bathroom, while waiting for a urinal, I remembered a scene from the film. There were only two actors left, and they were about to face their death, when one of them decided to admit all the wrong they had done to the other. In that instant, a beam of blue light engulfed the actor and began to raise him off the ground. As he was ascending, the actor offered a hand—a free ride to heaven—to his friend, but the weight was too much. Neither of them could make it all the way up unless one of them let go. So, the second actor hanging on decided to let go. He let go so that his friend, who had admitted so many awful things, could ascend to heaven. And when you least expected it, a second beam of light engulfed the second actor and they both made their way to God's front desk.

The scene was still rattling in my head when my mother decided to sneak into another film. I was half asleep, and my headache wasn't necessarily making it easy not to be noticed by security. But, they're never really good at catching anyone anyway. I

remember walking up a flight of stairs, but I was completely oblivious to which theater we walked into. It was until I sat down on those hard red seats, with a balcony view, that I knew exactly which theater we were in. I got up from my seat and monitored the first row directly underneath the projector room. I was looking for anything, anything at all, that would prove that you and I had been there. That we had been there, entertaining ourselves for two hours because, the film was horrible. And I found what I was looking for. I found our exact seats, and you know what I did? I sat down, and I started to cry. My mother, deciding she'd rather go home because it was almost midnight, saw me crying and was only capable of laughing. We had gotten into an argument earlier. I told her how I felt about leaving things unfinished and being remembered from tears not smiles. She was robbed nineteen years of her life because she loved and was never loved in return. Her bitterness definitely showed in her response. She had told me that they would move on and be happy again. But she never got my point. I tried telling her, it has nothing to do with their future with someone else. I know that you'll be alright. I do. But what you think of me, matters. What you think of me matters to me. It means the world. And my mother could not understand the concept because, no one ever cared what she thought of them. They used her and were done. We were still able to enjoy the film, but I put my mother in an odd position. During the previews she told me that my father ought to learn a thing or two from me.

We were going about eighty on the freeway, and I could barely keep my eyes open. It had been a long day of editing and I wanted to get some rest. As my head began to sink from the weight of a million thoughts, and my eye lids were preparing to kiss, I started to see beams of red lights. There were hundreds of them in front of us, and they were moving as fast as we were. But none of them were close enough to reach me. Here were all these people beaming their way to their little piece of heaven, and I, sitting in an uncomfortable gray seat, was stuck living in a world that no longer exists. I was still

waiting, still hoping, that I'd get beamed to heaven. But it seems as though it's not my turn yet, and I'll just have to keep letting go until that changes.

