

**Ahmed Al-aidy**

From *Being Abbas Elabd* (Cairo:2003)

### Chapter 3

*Don't believe her.*

*She'll swear to you by all that is holy, may lightning strike her if she's lying.*

*She'll spontaneously stroke your budding beard, and we all know the relaxing effect of having one's face caressed.*

*That's the truth in all its cruelty, so do whatever you like.*

Approximately ten years ago, I worked in a sardine can with a sign out front that read "Americo Video Film."

It was my pleasure to tell those who were exhausted and tortured how to act moronic.

Put your starched life on a hanger or toss it carelessly onto the floor.

Relax, man.

Undo that top button.

Isolate yourself and watch a life alternative to your own, which has become no life at all, and *become* your favorite movie character.

"Americo Video Film."

Here, who you are doesn't matter, and neither does your color nor the size of your crisis.

Here you won't find any answers, but you can suck up the questions.

Here...

You're just you.

You're the overworked accountant just off from your crappy job.

Fuck scales and payments.

Screw the debtor and the creditor.

All right, here's my secret spell...

Watch Michael Douglas in his latest movie.

"But I have to make this very clear, sir; this movie may present a problem."

"Like what kind of problem?"

"Like you won't be able to answer the phone and your tea will get cold and your boss will yell at you because you'll get to work late tomorrow."

He smiles and takes the bait like a king, pays and leaves.

A busty girl walks in, one of those AUC – American university- students.

(Some wise-asses say it's an abbreviation for "Are U Cacophony?")

She asks me about a movie she knows is unavailable in Egypt due to the obvious reasons. I ignore her belly button and her soft thighs and the look she has that says her boyfriend is waiting outside.

"Unfortunately..."

She begins to leave, and I continue,

"The movie's at my house, but it's not for rent."

"Are you serious?!"

Am I serious... of course I'm serious, would I kid you, gorgeous?

She says a bunch of "please"s and "4 God's Sake's," and for approximately an entire minute, almost, ?

She won't feed me grapes in bed in the morning, and won't empty her surrendered moans into my ear.

But this will do.

The hot one begs in a way that would please most ?.

Oh, glory to my favorite bar of soap.

I told her that my money-worshipping hobby affects my ability to make a wise decision, and left the matter up to her. She reached into her leather purse and brought out a note in a denomination I didn't think they made yet.

I told her the movie would be ready tomorrow, and she went to deliver the good news to her effeminate boyfriend.

You're a med student with symptoms of the 'shop window' variety.

The medical method which insists on curing patients and killing doctors.

If Montgomery's freckles showed up on Venus's breasts then what would hepatitis do for those who suffer from "hashqaloony"?

Watch Rober De Niro in *Cape Fear*, and pray for me.

Abbas says I didn't have a normal childhood, but I say it was just different.

For I grew up an orphan, and my uncle 'Awni raised me. 'Awni, the famous psychiatrist. Have you heard of him?

When you first go to see him, 'Awni is satisfied to play the part of the attentive ear. He'll gladly buy from you, but he won't sell.

He won't mess with your painful memories, and he won't pop your psychological zits.

He won't tear your childhood apart, and he won't tie your behavior with an elastic band the way Freud would have.

'Awni won't violate your secrets, and he doesn't care if you don't tip well or if you fail to raise your voice for the good of the country.

In spite of all this, you won't wipe your sweat without his permission.

"Hello? Yes, Dr. 'Awni, sir, it's so and so. Yeah...I'm sorry, I know it's a little late but it's sort of an emergency...yeah...I've got a crazy headache...do you think I should take a Tylenol or just wrap my head with something?!"

"Excuse me Dr. 'Awni, it's so and so. I'm calling because I want your opinion... today's Thursday and the wife wants to have fun tonight, so do you think I should ..."? come inside her or pull out?

"I'm so and so and I wanted to ask..."

Watch Richard Gere in *Final Analysis* and pray for my uncle 'Awni.

"When I'm stuck should I pee in the street or hold it in till I can go??"

According to 'Awni's phobia theory each of us suffers from at least three different kinds of phobia.

You may not have known that "phobia" is the clinical fear of things, but now you know.

Let's say you're the slightly cross-eyed bachelor with a mouthful of metal.

O, lovers of fruit...

Which of you would buy a cherry that rotted on the vine before it was even picked?

May a cement mixer break open the head of each and every man who doesn't immediately come to ask for Miss W.R.D's hand in marriage. The miss is pale and curvaceous and in her 43<sup>rd</sup> year and owns a furnished apartment and is searching for a man and a life of holy matrimony.

Watch Meg Ryan in *When Harry Met Sally*, and..."are you involved with anyone?"

If 'Awni came home from America, I wouldn't need to think so long before issuing a final analysis.

The triple phobia in this case is...

Anuptaphobia- Fear of staying single.

Catagelophobia- Fear of being ridiculed.

Macrophobia- Fear of long waits.

You're the high school dropout with the antagonistic look and the loose tongue.

Knowledge isn't power like it says in the song...knowledge is a bong.

And screw whoever invented the idea of rank.

Watch Jackie Chan in *The Drunken Master*.

Because the trinity is...

Didaskaleinophobia- Fear of going to school.

Testophobia- Fear of taking tests.

Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia- Fear of long words.

Abbas says that construction comes after destruction.

May destruction be visited upon all the jobs that never hired me.

And upon all the stations that never waited for me.

And upon all the long letters that my dead relatives never sent me.

And upon all the Titanic's rescue boats.

You're the computer engineer with a loosened tie and package of CDRs in your hand.

A blip in the digital cosmos. An electronic slave for the Bill Gates colony.

Watch Sandra Bullock in *The Net...*

Then click "Enter."

**Translated by: Randa Jarrar**