

“Mmm. Scrumptious.”

I bit into the finger again, licked all the blood off the table and finally ensconced myself in the chair.

“This is the best thing I’ve ever had in my life. Let’s keep some for tomorrow.”

Macabre ignored me and proceeded to deep-fry the thighs.

“I met a man the other day. Tall, lanky fellow. Said he worked for the government. He seemed pretty keen to befriend me.”

“Well, that’s a first.”

“I told him I’d love to have him for dinner. The poor thing was very pleased. Maybe he needed a favor.”

“And then?” asked Macabre.

“Then I had him for dinner.”

His expressionless face continued to stare at me.

“Funny thing is, he kept talking about how he had life planned out. He seemed to have the misconception that everything was under his control.”

“Uh-uh”.

“I guess that is what foolishness tastes like,” I said.

Macabre took the beautifully fried thighs out of the sizzling oil and started soaking it.

“I’ve tasted rage, terror, helplessness, madness and despair. Even pusillanimity. But never hope. People nowadays have stopped believing in hope. Sort of defeats the purpose of living, doesn’t it?”

He flung a plate at me and then threw a part of the meat on it.

“Maybe hope is what is left when everything else is taken away,” I said.

He sat down at the other end of the table and started chomping.

“How is it?”

“Tastes a bit like fish. But definitely better.”

Somewhere far away, a woman on the verge of hysteria, whose husband (who worked for the government) had been missing for four days, finally decided to visit a clairvoyant. Not wanting to sound trite and boring, the psychic came up with a story about how some demon disguised as a human had eaten her husband. The woman verbally hurled abuses at the psychic and stormed out.