

HUMOUROUS ANECDOTE

He'd taken on a job in Auckland; a job in interior demolition. He'd never worked interior demolition before, but presumably it was easier than construction. I mean, how could you mess it up? As long as the building was *destroyed* by the end of the job, then you'd succeeded right? The only feasible way to mess up demolition was if you tried to demolish the building, and accidentally built an extension instead.

On the first day, he was introduced to his manager; a kiwi man by the name of Will.

He'd never seen a man quite so passionate about demolition as Will; that man was built to destroy things. For the first half of the day, he watched as Will gleefully smashed up the office, tearing up the place with his crowbar, wire clippers and sledgehammer.

Will handed him a sledgehammer, and instructed him to smash through the plate glass windows and doors which vivisected the rooms of the office. He'd wondered about how this process was done, assuming initially that there was some delicate process in which the glass was carefully removed by the plate and gingerly carried away to be

recycled.

He was wrong. It turned out that the way to break a window was simply to smash it to bits with a hammer.

“What if the glass flies back and hits me in the eyes?”

“You’ll be fine,” Will said dismissively, “You’re wearing your hardhat aren’t you?”

He looked at Will with a puzzled look, as he grasped the hammer, trying to figure out how those two statements went together.

He stepped towards the window, swinging the hammer into the glass. To his astonishment, the hammer simply bounced off the glass.

“No no!” Will said, “You have to hit it right in the centre, that’s the sweet spot. And try to slide your hand down the handle of the hammer to maximise power and accuracy.”

He nodded; it seemed there really was an art to destruction.

He swung the hammer, striking the centre of the glass and watching as the glass shards burst outwards, punching a hole in the centre of the

glass. The sound of crunching glass followed as the window pane fell away.

He grinned broadly, unable to contain the feeling of raw power that the smashing of the glass gave him. He understood now why Will seemed to enjoy this primal act so much.

As the day wound on, he found new and inventive ways to smash the windows; hurling the hammer through the air and watching as the defenceless window came crashing down before him. He looked back at Will and his array of tools; amongst them lay a nail gun.

Suddenly, an idea formed in his head.

“Hey Will,” He said, “What would happen if we took a nail gun and fired it at the centre of the plate glass window?”

Will shook his head, “No no!” He said, rolling up his trouser leg and showing him a small round scar on his left knee cap.

“You see that?” He said, “I shot a nail gun at a glass window, and it bounced right off and hit me right here in the kneecap. Hurt like hell!”

He winced at the thought of a nail striking him in the knee.

“Sounds painful!” He said.

“Yeah, it was.” Will nodded.

Will lifted his right leg, and rolled up the trouser leg to reveal another scar on the other kneecap.

“And look,” He said, pointing to his kneecap, “That’s where the *second* one went in.”

Q: What does Will mean when he says ‘Hurt like hell’.

A: It was very painful, comparable to torture.

Q: Why does the narrator consider demolition to be a ‘primal act’?

A: It satisfies an innate need for destruction/violence.

Q: Why does the narrator think demolition is easier than construction?

A: Because he believes you can’t destroy something in the wrong way.



Language Advisor