

ALLEGIANCE

A spoof on an American pledge

The room was heavy with the scent of lukewarm coffee and the stifling humidity of an afternoon that refused to end. Sam, Tim, and Kris were huddled around a scarred wooden table, the kind that had witnessed a thousand debates and even more silence. Sam paced the small, cramped apartment, his movements tight and agitated. He held a scrap of paper as if it were a burning coal, his jaw set in a line of grim disapproval.

"This is just... toxic," Sam muttered, flicking the paper toward the center of the table. "It's blatantly unpatriotic. It spits on everything."

Tim didn't look up from his notebook. He was a man composed of measured pauses and deliberate movements, his focus as sharp as a scalpel. He leaned back, his chair groaning under the weight of his contemplation.

"Every nation has a shadow, Sam," Tim said, his voice a low, steady rumble. "To see clearly, you have to look at the darkness, not just the light. We have to be willing to examine the machine, not just admire the paint."

Kris, sprawled across a moth-eaten armchair, didn't even bother to open her eyes. She toyed with the zipper of her jacket, a look of bored indifference etched into her features. "Too much effort," she drawled, a languid wave of her hand dismissing the entire topic. "Life's too short for a thesis on the flaws of the system. I'd rather just enjoy the ride."

Tim sighed, a sound that carried the weight of a long-standing frustration. He fixed his gaze on Kris, his expression firm. "That's exactly the problem. We are obsessed with the 'now,' addicted to the speed of the surface. But examination is the very engine of discovery. If we don't stop to peel back the layers, what exactly is the point of being here? What else is a human birth for, if not to peel back the skin of the world and look at what's really underneath?"



I pledge allegiance to
dah United-Estates-Ah-Capitalism
und dah Ledger fer which it standz:
wun market under a Unified Economy
wid low-tariffs fer the favored few,
& violable in money wayz
granting liberty fer major stock holders
& justice only fer rulin' elites -
a hollow champion ah liberty
ready ta kill err jail any
who dare to disagreeeee...

The silence that followed was brittle. Sam looked at the paper again, his anger slightly muted by the cold reality of the rhythm. Kris shifted in her chair, her boredom finally cracking to reveal a flicker of unease. Tim simply sat, the paper balanced in his hand, waiting for the weight of the words to settle into the marrow of the room.

- T Newfields

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