

***ROMANCE OF***

***THE DAMNED***

***CJT***

**BOOK I**

**THE**

**BLOODY**

**BALLAD OF**

**JACK AND**

**MARY**

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## Chapter 1

# Mary's Prelude

From black to red. A film reel disintegrates with a dark flame, revealing a gritty scratchy picture of destruction and death.

Books, candles and bodies lay burning, along a dark fire illuminating, the charred remains of my childhood home. Blood seeping across the black & white marble floor. Smells of gunpowder, old books and burnt flesh, permeate the cold starry nights air. A pale blue hue illuminates above the flickering deep red glow.

Multiple static television screens play afar, along the rubble. I can hear a familiar song in the background, but its muffled like a dusty record. Some sort of fast food jingle.

In the distance. Rising from the rubble of corpses and books. A shadow of a man stands, in a pile yellow cloaked figures.

Him, Shrouded in a black cloak. A crimson sword drawn in one hand, gun smoking in the other. He turns slowly, staring at me with glowing red eyes. Like hell itself burnt within them. As if the devil himself was staring.

I crawl backwards in fear, until I hit the old chimney. One of the few things left standing in the ashes of my former home. All the family pictures spattered with blood, sut and dust.

Some sort of weezing comes from within the chute. I look down to see my fathers head rolling out of the pyre, coughing blood and trying to say something. It sounds like... sorry.

The look on his face strikes me with terror, as I try to scream, but nothing comes out. I'm rendered silent. My body frozen, as the dark man begins to move.

Fire follows the man in black as he approaches, sheathing his weapons and drawing closer. The flames grow in a dance of death. The temperture dropping with every step towards me. Til he stands near, towering over me.

The flames surround us in a circle and in the fires light. I can almost see his face as he extends his hand. I whimper. He grabs my arm and takes me. A burst of electricity runs through my body.

Then emptiness. Everything fades to black, as I fall thru the abyss.

In time, colorful symbols appear. Forming into strange places, unusual faces and jumbled words.

Drifting thru the abstract, the images begin mixing, crashing among themselves violently. Chaotically streaming and darkening back into black horizons.

My fall ends and I'm caught by someone. I look up to see the face of my catcher. Blurry, so I rub my eyes and see.

I see an eclipse above, that shines an intense light deep within its darkness. Penetrating the void. Entering into me. Another shock of electricity surges through.

I awaken to a brief sight. Blurry eyed and confused. I can see his silhouette standing, waiting under the black sun. He turns around still veiled in shadow. Then a disoriented blink and I'm back in the old world. Alone.

He is death. He is the darkness. He is my salvation.

Those words echo in the loneliness of my frozen bed.

He is...

He is but a dream reoccurring. The third one, this month. The ninth this year. Each one slightly different. Each of them, familiar like a fate yet experienced. Each of them... with him.

The man in black

They feel so real. As if they are truer than reality. As if... I already have lived them. As if I will live them again. Someday

The senses of it haunt my waking reality.

The fire burns hot and smells of charred flesh and cindered wood. The blood is warm, dark and wet. His hand, ice cold as he grabs my arm and pulls me into the

abyss. That feeling... I feel weightless there. Infinite. Warm. Everything and nothing.

His character confuses me. I don't know him or anyone like him. I hardly know anyone, passed my family. I've been a loner most of my short life. Nothing even remotely resemble my dreams. I've never experienced anything, like what I've lived in the dreams. Could never imagine or want to.

I lay in a daze. Writing what I can in my dream journal. Trying to remember the dreams beginning. Hoping to remember something I may've overlooked

Pieces come to me, as I hear my father yelling at mother in the hallway.

I'm at my fathers house by the lake. Looking for something, someone, somewhere, in the deep fog.

There are visitors, my dads work friends, but I've never met them before. They want to help him get elected governor, a goal he's always had as mayor. He's quiet the entire time, mechanically watching. All his friends look at me with wide grins and unmoving stares. They erupt in laughter like a pack of hyinas. One of them whispers in my ear, but I cant hear the words. They're all in on a joke. A cruel terrible joke.

Eventually they congregate in the newly built barn to talk business. I spy thru a hole in the wall, hoping they might talk about sis. Their odd colored candles lining the floor and religious iconography across the yellow walls. They're cloaked in red and seem to be worshipping something blue. They hear me knock over something. I run.

Thru the woods I can see them giving chase. They don't seem to run though. It's as if they just appear closer and closer. I run as fast as I can, yelling for my dad, for my brothers, for anyone. For sis..

I run into the deep woods hoping to hide from them. All I can see is branches and the moon. Suddenly they appear in front of me. Then black. Then...  
Next thing I know...

...Flames, death, blood... And him.

I've become sleepless, thinking about the dreams. Awaiting them with a twisted anticipation. My mind racing. Wondering what it all could mean. Symbols,

omens and such. I suppose my sister would have that book. I close my eyes.  
Waiting.

Its been awhile since ive dreamt those dreams. Since I've dreamed at all. No, it seems as though the dream world is flooding into the real world. Déjà vu with most passing moments. Fleeting visions of strange places and unseen faces. Words and sayings whisper in the wind of an unseen realm. Symbols in the most mundane things.

Each shadow, I wonder if I'll see his face.

My mind is consumed with a world no one else can see. My head is always elsewhere. I don't want to be here, with them.

The children at school think I'm a witch. My teachers want me institutionalized. My family wants me to see a therapist. The worst part is, is that... I think... they might all be right. Maybe I should be locked up. Could be any more confining then this place.

I stand alone, unable to connect or feel what they do. Misunderstood and unknown, seeking to understand a familiar mystery. Overwhelmed by the world, inside and out. I lose myself in the light of my minds creeping dark delight. Fading into memory and fantasy. My mind slowly going crazy...

...but aint it a crazy world.

## Chapter 2

# JACKS PRELUDE

“On the run again. Story of my fucking life.”

Assholes think they can catch me. HA!!!

“Stupid pricks!”

This is my home, my playground, my battlefield. These streets run thru my veins, as I run thru them. Like heroin to a junkie. I am the blood. The shit and grime gets me high.

All the crime, all the violence, all the death. I hear its pulse, I feel its pain. I see its glory. I’m alive here, in the city.

Gunshots echoe from an alley behind me. They’re getting close. I can hear two nearing quickly. I take em down an old alley filled with boxes, fences and bums.

One of them catches up fast. A goddam athlete. I look back briefly. He doesn’t have a gun, he’s russian. Of course. He has a knife and from the looks of it, he knows how to use it.

I knock over a pile of boxes. He jumps over em wih ease. I throw a bum at him. He cuts his throat and pushes him aside.

“Why is life so cold” A bum says while holding his homeless buddy.

A few more unluckies cooking beans on a barrel fire, stand blocking a corridor. I need to get thru. I can hear footsteps nearly in stabbing range. I jump over the burning barrel, kicking backwards towards the rooskie. He trips, falling over the barrel. I jump back and cant resist, stomping down on his neck a couple times, If not breaking his neck, definitely smashing it

“whoa man” One of the bums says with a wispey smokers voice.

Two gun shots roar from a distance, darting thru the narrow corridor. Striking a can of beans and a bum. I make a quick turn to avoid being bucketed fish.

“Hmm a risky route.”

Another bullet hits a chain linked fence twenty or so feet ahead. I jump on a dumpster and on to another, then onto a recycling bin until I can jump on to the fence.

Another gunshot hits the recycling, it blows up scattering paper and bottles. Wonder what was in there?

I roll down the fence and take cover behind some bags of trash, to check out my next kill.

He’s an older man with a mustache, a bit pudgy too. He’s got two revolvers. He shoots em both. One bullet hitting a fence post and the other wizzing thru my hair. He walks like a cowboy. Like a faggot that just got fucked by a horse.

“Not bad old man.”

I mumble, rolling behind a concrete staircase nearby. Ready myself for a counter

Three more shots fire, busting the bags. He’s running out of bullets. I pop out and immediately go down. He fires twice more, “Come on out, ya little punk.”

He angles himself close to the fence. Reloading one of his guns. Now it’s time!

Three throwing knives strike the geriatric. Two in the forehead and one in the throat. He shoots his one loaded gun, it strikes another fence post. He laughs while gargling blood, then falls, clenching onto the fence.

“Father!” A large retarded looking middle aged man, yells running to the old dying man from a distance. “Father! What has happened!? Father!!!”

The old man points at me and croaks, “Kill em... Son..”

More death gargles and blood coughs. So dramatic.

The son becomes enraged sobbing, “Father!!! I will avenge you, Father!”

Ripping the fence down with the help of a lead pipe and full on retard strength. He catches up to me. I throw my other throwing knives into the brute. They strike one in the chest, one in the cheek and the other in his butt chin.

“Father!!!” He yells with slobber hurling around.

They seem to hardly effect him. He rushes in and takes a mighty swing with the pipe, smackin me to the ground. Cracking my skull a bit and knocking out a couple teeth.

“Shit!”

Then a kick to the ribs. He’s fast and..

“Fuck!”

Another swipe to the chest. The brute raises his pipe high into the air and yells with triumphant vengeance, “Father!!!!!!”

“Yeah, come to daddy” I say, glock in hand, as I shoot 6 rounds into him.

“F..ather...”

And one more for showmanship. His head explodes in a gorey geyser. I grab his pipe and search them both, Pushing them close together. In a kind of gay way.

“Be grateful you even had a dad to kill, asshole”

Ugh, out of ammo already. I wasted too much on the punks along the rooftops and that goddam cop. I need to run. Get to the spot.

“It wont be long, til I outrun these fucks. Just gotta...”

I halt quickly.

Two bald men, stand leaning along a narrow corridor. A chubby scrunched faced bald tries to say intimidatingly, “Well, well well. Would you look who it is...”

The other man speaks, “If it isn’t...”

Before he can finish, a pipe impales his nose and deep inside his head. Breaking much of what was around there. He screams in bloody spats..

“My nose!!! NOOO-SE!!!”

The other man looks worryingly at his bald brother, “Kevin!”

I sigh.

“I don’t have fuckin time! To deal with you bald assholes!”

Out came my combat knife, stabbing him in the face. Twisting, retracting and flipping the blade around, bashing the wound with the butt. Tripling its size

With one down, I Turn to baldie 2, grabbing the pipe from his head pulling with all my might, but to no avail... other than extreme pain for the bald bitch. I push him to the ground and rip the pipe from his head, with the head attached. What a weak neck and beautiful sight.

“M..my heEaAadd ackgrlrl” He gargles.

“Aint seen that yet” I say looking at the talking head. Awfully talkative these bald cunts.

“What the fuck?!” Another bald man appears from behind me. “What! What have you done? Kurtis... Kevin... Nooo!!!”

“Wait its him! Its...” Another bald guy exclaims from behind my recently turned back

“Ugh” Lot of gangs hanging out this route. Most be some sort of new ass fucker alliance

“Son of a bitch” One of the balds says as they lunge towards me. I turn to see the first charging baldie. He’s got a switchblade.

“Ha”

Like a ball to a pitcher, I take my swing.

“A homerun”

His head collides with his buddies. Exploding upon the other bald and knocking his off his neck, still attached unfortunately.

“it’s true what they say about you. You really are a...” The bald tries to be poetic in his last second. Its repetitive, but I aint for always trying to be unique. I throw the pipe at his face, before he can open his bald mouth again. To my surprise, he catches it... and not with his throat.

“No. Not me! I will get vengeance”

The larger badder of the bald bunch says clenching the rusted pipe. I smile at his vigor. Then get angry, that he's wasting my time, "Alright motherfucker. You wanna fight. Let's go"

We charge at each other, like a modern joust. Him with his bloody pipe. Me with my knife... and gun. I throw the gun to distract him, so I can cut his bald head off. He swings it away like a fucking samurai and screams a battle cry, "HWWAAGGHH!!!"

That was my trump. The trick up the sleeve. The hidden ace. Who is this fucking guy??

I feel the pain in my head from earlier and recollect I don't wanna do that again. I swallow the little pride I have and fold my cards. Turn tale and book it back out to more strategic grounds.

Then I remember... he can just throw it...

"Fuck!"

I turn around to face the threat. Pipe already thrown hurled towards my neck. I duck just in time, as its hurled into a wall, then ricochets and hits a light post nearby, shattering the bulb.

Homefield advantage.

From the darkness I leap out to strike the disappointed bald bitch. A cut thru the neck, another and another, til his head rested like a pez dispenser. Then a swift kick to send it tumbling towards his friends.

"Alright... Fuck! Time to get out of here"

Gunshots come from just a few hundred feet away from where I just was.

"They're catching up. Shiiit"

I turn to run out. Grunting more, breathing heavy. The cocaine energy is wearing down. Running on meth fumes and violent urges.

Several dick heads crowd the tight corridor. As weak as they are it would be unwise to take on so many armed cock haired cunts with such little time.

I look behind and back to them, then behind again to see more crowding in. They must have a base nearby.

“Fuck”

I turn around and waste no time. Slashing the first across his nose, stomping his shins and using his lowered back as a jumping board to the next ones shoulder and onto anothers head. Its slippery. Bald cunt waxes. I lose a little balance, but manage to jump from that cockhead to the next. I come down hard with my hunting knife, into the top, of some cock head. Giving him a proper urethra. I use him as a body shield, against a couple attacks, then push him into another and tackle the lot of em.

Scrambling to dodge one behind me. I feel a punch to my head. Brass Knuckles. The same place daddys boy hit me with the pipe.

I see stars. Red fucking stars. A gunshot wizzes by. He throws another punch. I stab him in his clenched fist, just above the brass. Chopping fingers and digging into his wrist. I grab his other fist mid haymaker. Then use it to punch his face. Then a combo with both hands. I turn behind him, breaking his arms in the process. Tearing my knife from his hand, I position him toward a few attacks, before I spin him by the cut up nub. Hurling him towards his bald brothers.

I’m on a roll tonight. Something about these bald fucks just brings out the bloodlust.

I feel a hand grab my arm and pull. Blood shoots out of a one handed skinhead. I rip the hand off along with a little scrap of my shirt and smash it into the mouth of a yelling bald fuck behind me.

One sneaks a knife into my side. Luckily with a weak plunge.

Only one alley left. One, that leads to a place, I’m not particularly fond of.

As I dash thru, escaping the shiny heads of a bald horde. The gang with the original beef spots me and fires a few shots. Missing me and hitting a couple baldies.

I turn into the last corridor. A dead end. I can hear a dispute and then, a volley of shots. The 99s hate the brotherhood.

“Ha”

So I take whats left. A left, a right and another left. Knocking a large trashcan down a narrow crossing. Buying some time.

One of them yells from afar. “The kids this way, hurry the fuck up!”

At last, my reluctant destination. Here it is...

...the wall.

No doors, no windows within mortal reach, nothing to climb. No alleys, no more hiding. Just a bunch of broken boxes and bottles, telephone wires, a murder of crows, dumpsters and a bunch of pissed off gansters ready for blood. No house, but this place is as close to home as I've known.

“The jig is up you little bastard!” The lead deucebag says in a tired breath. Mowhawk blowing in the wind. His six henchmen draw their assorted weapons and take aim.

I look around at the roof tops, as they aim their guns below

“Give us the fucking drugs and maybe we won't shoot your whore of a mom too.” Mowhawk says. Seems to know a little about me.

Two more lowest lifes come running in. A fat man and a tall scrawny guy.

“yes, what he said” The thin man says poshly. I stare at them in silence and then bust up laughing.

“Hahahahaaahhahhahhaah!” Who the fuck are these clowns??

“... Go ahead...Blow her fucking brains out. See if I care. Ha!!“

“Huff! Huff! Huffff... Jesus fucking Christ.” Exclaims the exhausted fatman as he wipes the sweat from his morbidly obese face and pulls a shotgun from his back, “Can we just shoot the little shit already!?” He says huffing and puffing.

The tall man draws a crossbow and puts a finger to his lips, gesturing a secret or some shit. “I can make it nice and quiet. Hmm.” He says licking the tip of his crossbow.

“So gentle and discreet.” Exclaims a sensitive henchmen from the throwaways. Trying to hype up the wispy man.

“Hold on!!!” Yells the mowhawk guy. “Have you forgotten about something...?”

The henchmen look at each other confused. The Fatman looks around on his person. "I forgot my fucking pepperoni. Now I'm really pissed." He pumps his shotgun and aims furiously.

"No, you idiot!" Mohawk says condescendingly. "The drugs!!! We still don't have the fucking drugs! If we kill the punk, we kill any lead, on where the hell, the bloody drugs are" He looks around, only to see the absent mindedness of his henchmen.

"WE. LOSE. THE. FUCKING. DRUGS! ARE BOSSES KILL RAPE US AFTERWARDS. YOU UNDERSTAND?????"

His goons nod and agree nervously. A couple tweakers seem inspired.

"I like drugs"

"Yeah I did a bunch once.. Too much man.."

A junkie goon shoots up.

"Lets get the drugs guys!!"

"Yeah!"

Cheers, the gang of idiots.

"He obviously hid them or pawned em or SOMETHING!" Yells the sweaty fatty.

"Well kid? Where the fuck are they?" Asks the tall guy in a oddly polite manner, as the three other henchmen stand quietly nodding in agreement to whatever anyone else says.

"Y-y-yeah! Where are the drugs?" The High Tweaker yells.

"Yeah" A henchmen mumble loudly. He looks around for affirmation, but no one acknowledges his existence.

"where are the drugs??" He says again. A tweaker looks at him, putting him at ease.

I stay standing tall on my box. Staring up then back down at mohawk. Rubbing my belly and giving the biggest shit eating grin possible.

"What drugs?"

The Mohawk man smiles manically, chuckling slightly then roaring.

“Ha... Haha...Hahahaha... Haha... haah... Shoot his fucking legs.”

The Fatass spares no time, unloading a slug at my feet. Followed shortly by the lanky fucks wizzing crossbow bolt. The Henchmen load their guns.

I jump backwards at the word “shoot”, landing headfirst into a box behind me. Breaking thru cardboard and into an open manhole. The shotgun slug blew up the box I was on, but the crossbow bolt hit. Piercing my right thigh, as I fall into the sewer.

The City sewers have been in use for years. A popular secret hangout spot for the destitute and dastardly. Widely used in drug smuggling and criminal escapes, due to the wide reaching, well connected tunnel systems that go from the port, to the bars of downtown, to the industrial park, river, the bay and last but not least, the slums. The place got so much use, it developed small communities in its deep reaches.

I came here when I was younger, with my mum. She told me” If you ever get into trouble you cant runaway from. You come here boy and you run fast. If your father returns home. Boy you run for your life.”

She threw me in that hole and told me to come home before supper. A cruel joke, because there was no supper... and never a home to go back to. I hated her for that and the horrible things that happened in that sewer.

## Chapter 3

### Sewer Jack

I killed for the first time in those sewers. A man smelling of rotten shit and stagnate piss. Thought because he was Big and had a knife, that he could rape my seven year old ass. He tried, he got close.

For a second I felt what it was like, to be afraid. To feel powerless and weak. What if he did stab me, with knife or dick or both. What if I couldn't do a damn thing about it. What if...

“Fuck if's”

I did what any kid would do to survive. I played along, convincing him I was a nympho prostitute. I wasn't a good actor, but he was horny enough to buy the act.

He pushed me on the moldy mattress and began to pull my pants down. I resisted his advances and insisted on a blowjob first. Caressing his crotch, and pulling his pants down. The smell was horrific. The sight even worse. He grabbed my head and thrust it towards his diseased dick with one hand and held a knife to the side of my face with the other. I held his thighs, gaining whatever control I could have. I remember the words he said, after pressing the knife into my skin.

“This is life, boy! You better get used to it. You better enjoy it, Boy! Wahhaha! hahahaha”

He became as erect as the little dick could get. I Did what I had to do. Tuning into an instinct left lingering in the shadows of my darkest depths. I opened wide and bit his dick off. Then punched him as hard as I could, in the putrid pussy I left him. He screamed something fierce and Cut deep into the side of my head with his knife. Raising it back up for the killing blow.

I crawled under his stiffened legs, waited for him to turn around and knocked him one even harder on his balls. Blowing them up and some long gooeey shit straight out of his torn up womb.

Looked like a male abortion. This toppled him rather quickly. With him on the ground begging for mercy, bleeding out and crying.

I could have left him to live on, suffering with his new wound, hope some rats fuck him like the infested cunt he is.. but I just couldn't... I couldn't leave him. I loved every stab into that stinking fuck. Making love to his wounds with his own knife. Making new wounds. Making him scream and cry in new ways. For hours, torturing and sodomizing his twitching body. It released an animalistic tendency in me. I felt nature at its finest. I felt love. Sure, the sour smell ruined some of the romance of the kill, but no ones first time is perfect.

The thrill of the kill, intrigued me to no end. It scared me, but I liked the fear. Made me feel alive. Out of control, but in ultimate control.

So I went further into the depths, deeper and deeper into the dark tunnels. Using a torch I found near the shit piles camp and my newly acquired knife. I went seeking for any prey to hunt.

The ones I met, were weak and quiet. Wanting nothing to do with me. They were scared. I was hungry.

I satisfied my urges and left many days later. Learning to survive, by any means necessary. Learning to walk in darkness, with a smile on my face. I still had much to learn.

Honing my abilities on the scum of the streets, I came to realize. I had an innate talent for the deadly arts, slaying as many as three nobodys in a single day.

I still felt weak though. None were much of a challenge. I was just killing for the sake of killing. Not killing to get stronger. Not getting strong enough to survive. To really kill. No. I needed to step my shit up. Take my skills to the next level. I needed to get stronger. Better.

I needed the wrong kind of friends and the right kind of enemies.

I needed to be a killer.

Which brings me back to the sewers

For now, I'm falling into that ol' hole. 20 feet to the ground with a bolt in shoulder and six dumbass drug dawgs on my tail. It's been awhile, since ive been here. Six years, give or take a few weeks.

Six years of hard living. Six years of drugs. Six years of killing. Six years of growing... Rotten.

Looking up at the outside hole, I can still see the memory of long ago. I can still hear the words of my mum. The moss on the ceiling. The pale light in the dark green abyss. The smells... The taste.. Its not as I remember. I remember more. Stagnant water... More water.

“Fuck”

My head hits the shallow trench, breaking my bodies fall. The bolt in my arm twists nerve endings in my shoulder. I lose my breath and vision. Go temporarily retarded.

Guess there goes the easy way of just killin’ em with my bare hands. I can hear them shuffling around the sewer grate. Shit.

“Someone get down there dammit!” The Mohawk man demands of his bumbling bunch of bafoons. The tall creep moves many of them aside, pokes his head down and smiles towards his Master. “I got a better idea, boss...”

My senses spark and my head unscrambles, to the click of a grenade. I try to get up, but my arm gives out and the concussion sends me back to the ground. I see him drop it.

Its cliché, but I swear in moments like that, time really does slow down. I hear mohawk yell “wait!!!”, almost omnipresently. I see the fat man devouring a bag of cheese popcorn. I see the dick on a stick, feel up his hard left nipple. I see death itself, small and green; slowly falling down from that hole above.

I can’t escape it. So I reach out in a daze. Grasping for death!

I want to grab death and beat the dying shit out of the cocksucker. Wide eyed and determined, I make my move without fear and in complete faith of Killing. Grabbing the grenade and with all my might, throwing it as hard as I could, back at them.

The grenade soars thru the hole. Whatever drug Gooch gave me earlier, is next fucking level.

I can hear the “oh fucks” simultaneously shouted, as the tall man without hesitation jumps down the hole, I roll out of his way and stumble to my feet.

The tall man elegantly dodges the shortly followed Mohawk Man, but not before a minion trips down the hole, landing on the tall man (cue stupid cartoon noise).

Fatty tries his luck squeezing thru, as the other goons whine and try to move the morbidly obese cork. Fuckin idiots shoulda just run.

Boom!

The explosion thrusts the fatmans heavy fat mass directly onto the minion, along with a shower of gore down the man hole. The tall man nearly surviving, pushing the fat husk aside from the crushed goon. The two brush themselves off and ready their weapons. A severed hand falls down and hits the guys Mohawk. Making it look like bloody hand hair

“Gotta give him a hand. Didn’t see that coming...”

The tall man exclaims lightheartedly to mr. Mohawk, as he’s swiftly slapped across the back of the head.

“Quit babbling, you idiot and c’mon! He went this way” The Unilaterally lined hair guy barks, as he peels the human shrapnel from his head.

“But seriously, he like caught the grenade and like a hand fell on yer head. How many times does that happen, ya know” The tall man says in a running huff.

“Probably not a whole fuckin lot, Aaron”. Mohair says while wiping blood from his forehead.

“Its like that kids got a guardian angel... Of death” Aaron says ponderingly and pretentious..

Mohawk glares back at Aaron, annoyed.

The sewers are more vast then I remember. I become lost in the darkness of the sewers. Remembering the nearly six years living down here. For minutes I run. In the darkness, I know where to find.

“I fucking hate running. Fuck the dark”

I hate running away, but they have guns. I don’t. Even if I take one out, I still got 1 more aiming and ready to kill. And another and another. My head can only take so many bullets.

Relying on the distant sound of the main drainage, I know I’m getting close to the exit. Pretty sure it’s the right one.

I can hear the fucks splashing their way to me.

My radio finally reaches. Of all the places to get reception.

“Wolf! Where the hell are you??” Fox says frustrated. Not knowing the bullshit I’ve been through for this stupid as mission. What a clusterfuck.

I pull over next to some random sewer corpses or maybe they’re just sleeping. Hard to tell.

“Runnin through the sewers towards east statue. Where the fuck where you cunts???” I yell, lacking backup.

Fox responds focused and cold, “Do you have the stuff?”

“Yeah, drugs and whatever porn is on this fuckin’ hard drive.” I say and wait for some robotic response.

A silence. The fuck!

“Fox??”

Fuck

“Fuck!”

That smell. I can almost taste it. The shit of the city at my lips and drenching my boots. I smash the loud static heavy radio on a body. It squirms and moans. Fuckin’ gross.

I use my zippo to light a tight tunnel. I remember the graffiti. Poorly drawn scenes of sloppy sex and torture. Satanist shit. Those undergrounders were really into hell. Go figure.

The smell comes back even worse. Almost passing through me. I can feel the rancid stench like a gangrene ghost.

“I hate the fucking past”

Trying to block old memories, I light a cigarette, exhale in a grunt and turn the corner going towards a personal favorite spot.

I hear foot steps from up behind. They’re gaining. The dick on a stick is quick and quiet. Excited to break him. I spot a large tarp covering some shit in the old control room . I don’t quite have time to check, but maybe I can use it as a distraction.

Lifting the tarp reveals a large assortment of dead animals. In the flickering light of my lighter, I can see: A deer, a few dogs, lots of cats, lots of birds, lots of rats. Most missing their heads.

“Hmm... Bunch of mindless animals... Ha” I chuckle to myself and kick the lot of them across the floor. The thin man turns the corner, stepping on a dog carcass. Blowing up the rotting goo inside.

“ewugh, gross!”

I throw the bloody moldy tarp on him. He gets caught up in it. Struggling and gasping. “Boss! Help!!!”

The Mohawk rushes in gun drawn nearby. I wrap skinny up tight til mohawk turns the corner and kick the thin cocoon into him, causing them both to fall into a young serial killer trophies. More footsteps from behind them.

Time to make a run for it.

I’m nearing my favorite place in the sewer. I can hear that big beauty pouring from a mile away. Luckily it’s the main runoff for the city, a massive 100 foot waterfall of filth. The cities big shit. Mmm makes me nostalgic.

“Damn”

The waters are running low. It’s still a sight to behold, but nothing like its full glory. Fucking shame. There goes the fun way of getting down.

Gunshots wiz by and hit a pipe, releasing steam. Other henchmen finally show up.

“Did ya hit em??” A henchmen says comfortably behind the tall man and the Mohawk. “Obviously not. Fucking keep shooting.” Mohawk yells at his men.

I dash into the steam as shots ring off and ricochet in the boiler section of the runoff. Hopping down an emergency ladder to a lowered walkway..

Mohawk finds me quick, shooting down towards me. A bullet hits a peg near my right hand. I slide down, into a fall.

“Get down there goddamnit!” Mohawk barks at his bitch of a henchmen.

“Sir, I’m just.. Really afraid of heights. This wasn’t part of the..”

Without hesitation. Mohawk pistol whips his head breaking his nose, then throws him down the drainage. He crashes hard into the shallow pool below, crumpling into himself. Bones stickin out everywhere. His death cry echoes thru out the expanse of the room.

“Nice”

I hit the bottom and run as both gang members close in. Tall man throwing two grenades towards me. His aim sucks and I easily outrun them.

Gotta love running, as explosions warm yer back.

Boom!!

The two deuce bags fire off feebly from a distance, as I hit the main tunnel going outside. Almost fucking there. The light at the end of the tunnel, just ahead. Just gotta hop down and go through down town central to..

...Wait..

No...

“Ya gotta be fuckin kiddin me.”

The Bald Brotherhoods most brutal brutes, block the bay exit basin. Heads glimmering from the headlights of 10 jeeps full of more of em. I turn around to see the 99s flanking my ass, in large numbers. Could they have really set me up. How did they?? Why the fuck do they care this much about drugs and porn.

“We got you now...Jack”

A giant man in armor says, as he emerges from the two gangs.

# Chapter 4

## **-Family Part I-**

Everything's falling apart. Ever since she left.

Mother's sick. Father has been acting strange and violent. The twins, are at each other's throats and the brothers, seek escape at every opportunity. Especially in the private school underworld.

The family is in ruins. The house is empty, despite the millions invested in its appearance. She was the glue. The light of our lives. I'm but a shadow of her disappearance. Her ghost.

I miss her with all my heart and soul.

My one true friend. My teacher. My solace.

My big sister...

...But I'm a big girl now and I can't be a victim anymore. At least that's what my shrink tells me. To hell, with him though. What does he really know anyway. Always has to make everything sex related. Stupid creep.

I don't need him. I don't need anyone.

I don't want to miss her anymore. She's not coming back. I can't bring her back. She's gone. I can't... I just.. want...

...To dream, again

The dreams have ceased for years now. What used to be nightmares have blended into fantasy. I crave that world, the darkness, the flames, him. I want to go back.

I don't want to be here anymore. This house is haunted.

Quiet dinners with empty people. The house feels like a prison. My dad always campaigning with his work friends, when he's not beating his sons or ignoring Mom. The Twins, formely inseperable and almost one in the same. Divided on everything, yell and try to kill each other. My mom bedridden and without words to say. It all repeats like a sad teenage mantra.

Today feels different though. Something in the air.

Father comes home early with a gift, for my 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. A dollhouse. Ornate and extravagantly large. He smiles a plastic looking grin and tells me how I'm his everything. The one good thing in his life. How much he loves me. How important I am to him.

I don't like dolls and I don't remember the last time he even hugged me.

Its not abnormal for him to try and buy our love by any means, but this time seems different. More desperate. He looked nervous and excited.

He tells me to play for awhile and then get ready for supper. He's having guests over. He gets a call and leaves, saying your welcome. I grab a blonde Barbie and stare into its lifeless eyes. Then gaze around the house.

Its fake. Just like mine

In the doorway I can see my brothers staring with envy and disappointment. As if I'd betrayed them. As if there was something to betray.

"Wanna play?" I ask politely, even though I myself, am very disinterested

The brothers look disgusted. Jason, the oldest and most beat, looks over to the rest, with a black eye, "Your imaginary friends playing too?? hahaha"

The others laugh.

"I doubt she could even keep those friends. Stupid bitch." Ian says with his wrinkled freckle covered face and lemony shit eating grin. The brothers laugh again

"Yeah! You fuckin looney!" Squeeks the youngest, Shawn, in a high pitch.

"Shut up Shawn!! Jason demands. "Lets leave Daddys little bitch, to play house" He gestures with his head to follow suit. The other two go with.

“Cha have fun playing with your dolls. Maybe you’ll actually make some friends! Hahaha” Ian says overconfident in his humor.

“Yeah! No one wants to be your friend. You loser.” Shawn says, pushing up his glasses

“Dude! Seriously, be quiet.” Jason remarks in the hallway as they run off to whatever god forsaken place that’ll offer them retreat from this house of sadness. He punches Ian hard in the arm.

Bunch of Chimps.

The Twins in the corner, watch with unspoken anger.

Gem nudges Rem. “Lets go Rem”

“No!“ Rem irate, “You cant always tell me what to do rem” He says emotionally to his vindictive twin sister. She stares him down threateningly.

“So Rem, you’re just gonna hang out with her, instead of with your other half. Your twin. Your best friend. Your Yang Yang. Your true sister!?” She says hugging close to him and caressing his hair

“Its not like that! I just...”

Says Rem nervous and half accepting the creepy embrace.

“Gonna play dolls with Daddys little girrrl huh, you faggot!” Gem insults Rem. Grabbing his hair roughly.

“But... Gem... Its just..” Murmurs Rem timidly.

“I bet, I know why... father likes you so much. Rem likes you so much.” Says Gem precociously, releasing Rem to tremble at the doorway. Gem stares at me with a demented look on her face. Slowly approaching the dollhouse. Grabbing the Barbie from my hand.

“Hey!” I assert due to the disrespect.

Gem grabs a ken doll from the house, smirks a dirty perverse smile and begins grinding the two dolls together.

“What’re you doing??” I ask, confused by her insinuation.

“Oh Daddy! Oh daddy! Daddy Daddy Daddy! Oh Daddy!!”

Gem moans with a demented look on her face. Rem grabs his sisters shoulder, “Stop it Gem!! You know... You know that’s not.. not true!”

“I didn’t even want this stupid thing” I call out annoyed, looking at the dollhouse. Then glaring at Gem. I want to stick that Barbie down her throat.

“You know what we got from father for our birthday?” Gem says while grinding the dolls into pieces. Eyes widening.

“Matching fucking pajamas! Like we’re some sort of fucking toy. Goddam Dolls Mary! Some sort of showpiece!!”

Gem exclaims, as Rem looks down in reluctant agreement.

“It’s not my fault! Who cares what father gives you! Who cares about father.. Who cares about.. ”

I yell annoyed, then catch myself. Gem stares angrily at Rem, then goes back to me sadistically smiling.

“You’re just the same as Big Sis. Only as good as yer looks. With your long flowing dark hair.” She says running her hand thru it.

“Your pretty little lips. Your...” She slides her hands down my shirt towards my chest. I elbow her hard in the boob, both creeped out by her advances and offended by her even mentioning big sis “You better shut the hell up Gem! Or I’ll..”

“She was a Witch. A whore. A stupid gangbanger. Haha guess she’s not anything now hahaha.”

“Gem...” Rem says sorrowful.

Gem tries to twist the blade. “Probably just food for the worms. Bwahahah” What an evil little girl.

I clench my fist. Memories of her flood my mind. Angry thoughts fill my heart. .

Gem still laughing. I grab a doll and shove it head first down her laughing throat. Plunging it as far down as I could. She deserves to die.

“Mary!” Rem rushes to gem trying to save her from chocking, “Mary stop! Please!” Rem pleads.

My vision fades to a deep cold blue. My thoughts dissipate. I can swear she's still laughing. So I try to stick it in deeper. She punches me in the gut, it knocks the wind out of me. She pulls the doll from her mouth. Spits and pants.

"You fucking... psycho BITCH!" She goes to stomp on the house.

Father walks in, "Hey! Whats going on in here. Gem! Rem! Mary!?"

"Mary tried to kill me with a Barbie! Didn't she Rem." Gem exclaims staring at her brother looking hurt and manipulative. He hold her torn.

"Mary is this true?" Father asks, as if its all a imposition.

"She deserved it" I exclaim calmly.

"Well stop fighting you three." Dad says to simply dismiss the situation. He was never one for resolution or justice. Ironic for a mayor.

"B.But..." Rem murmurs.

Gem stares a furious glare at me.

"Now get dressed and wash up. Dinner will be done any minute. This is very important to daddy okay. I want you presentable and on your best behavior. Okay! Gem! You hear me. DON'T MESS THIS UP."

"Yes, Father.." Still unwavering in her glare.

"Well, c'mon now. Get to it." He says a little agitated, but with a forced smile. Leaving, shaking his head.

Gem kicks the dollhouse over. Spilling little furniture pieces and other household amenities all over.

"Cunt" She says as she walks away. "Sorry" Rem says following close to Gem. Looking back to me concerned

I look at the doll house unconcerned and then to my room. I exhale a breath of grief and go to my closet. Picking out my blackest outfit. The door slams shut. I hate this house.

The dinner bell rings. A tradition, I used to enjoy.

We all gather to the long table. Dad introduces his guests. A couple of campaign donors and his political advisor. The donors look like your run of the mill old white guy with a lot of money. One noticeably saggy and more overweight than the other; a more cowboyish type. His political advisor, a chubby mustached man with a loud laugh and teathy grin. They're all smiling pearly tooth whitened smirks, laughing at rivals and voters.

"Who's missing?" Father says looking around the dining room concerned.

Gem sarcastically remarks to me. Trying to illicit a fight. "Anna! That's who... Aha ahahaha. Haa.." I want to shove a butter knife down her throat. So deep she'd shut up for good. The thought of killing her with dinnerware makes me smile. Gem rubs salt to a awkward antagonism. "Oh c'mon, lighten up, Mary."

Father, chimes in, "Not at the dinner table. You're embarrassing yourself."

The men look offended in some way. I hand Gem the butter knife. Shawn stumbles in, most likely drunk.

"Ahh! theres the big guy." Father gives him a rough noogie. Shawn flinches. He then puts his hand on Shawns shoulder. Shawn twitches in fear as fathers hand grips down hard into his flesh. He mumbles, "Please Dad. Don't!"

He pulls him into the kitchen. The maid exits the kitchen, soon after. Double doors swinging behind her. "Dinner will be done in just a bit. Can I offer you gentlemen some wine" She says in a well acted kindness.

The saggy donor with a stiff face exclaims. "Never have. Never will drink the devils tea."

The other donor. "I suppose, a celebratory drink is in order hahah. C'mon Henry. Lighten up ya old coot ahah. I'll have his. Ha!"

He laughs, while looking at Henry. He smiles a creepy stone faced expression. "I'll take a glass please. Ugh what a day!" The chubby advisor says plopping down onto a chair. The wood creaking and buckling with his weight. "Am I right?"

More laughter is heard.

"Whats your name again, little girl?" One of the donors asks. His face long, his eyes unblinking, his smile nearly ear to ear.

“Mary” I say quick, distracted by my book on Greek mythology.

“Ahh a pretty name for a pretty girl.” The other donor says enthusiastically.

“Thanks..” I mumble, as I avoid his rancid breath and unwavering gaze. Going back to my book. Its getting good. Monsters, heroes, magick and such. I wish my life was like a book. Like a fantasy. Any other reality really.

I turn around, to grab my seat and get up. Knocking into a new guest. A well dressed, tall slender man with long jet black hair and gaunt features. His eyes beady and dark. Stares down with a gloomy pale face. I can't help but look slightly disgusted at him.

He leans down toward my ear. Pausing, then speaking softly. Not whispering.

“Do I scare you? Little girl”

He leans slightly back, still close to my face. I can see him smiling.

“N...”

Thoughts of the dream, rush thru my head. I gasp. Saying nothing to the slender man. Going over to mother instead. Sitting on her almost dead and lifeless body. Her gaze to the floor. I hug her, wondering if she'll ever be my mom again. Wanting all the safety a sleepwalking shell of a person could offer. Wondering what truly happened two years ago. What happened to her. What happened to Anna. She has to know something. I can feel her wanting to scream words of truth to me. Words so scary, they render her breathless. Her eyes look up and over to me. She begins to breathe heavily. I can almost hear her voice, whisper in my mind.

Father walks out of the kitchen. The maid walks in and explains, “Shawn wasn't feeling so good. He told me to give you his sincerest apologies for his absence.”

“Must be that pesky flu goin around.” Henry remarks.

“Your probably right.” Father says, with a distant look on his plastic smiling face. Jason and Ian look at each other slightly worried.

Father glares at me. I return to my seat.

“Daddys.. little.. bitch.” Gem Says quiet enough, to where I can only hear it.

Everyone sits down and prepares their napkins and silverware. The scrawny pasty man sits next to me and Gem.

The maid exits the kitchen with a subtle look of terror in her eyes. I can only imagine what she saw. She nervously serves the food on the table. A rack of lamb, some sort of rice dish and a vegetable platter.

“Ahh smells delicious.” The portly advisor blurts out. Father proudly declares. “Oh it should be. Raised it myself. Grade A Meat, from Moone Farms.”

The donors and powerful men look around impressed. “Her name was Nellie. Don’t worry. She died of natural causes hahaha.” Father smiles self righteously and sarcastically laughs.

“What causes? Being naturally hungry!” The fat man snorts in laughter at his own joke, as the other old men at the table join in.

Like a pack of hyenas.

For a second I wonder if I’m dreaming. Something feels very off. A deep ominous feeling grips me. A cold feeling on my shoulder.

“Maid!!! Maid!” Father demands.

“Yes Mr. Moone.” She responds in silent fear.

“The knife Teresa! I need a knife” He says condescendingly grinning at her. Waiting intently with raised eyebrows.

“I just gotta clean off the cutting knife. I’ll be right back Mr. Moone” She nervously returns to the kitchen. Father’s smile raises as he jests. “You’d think for the amount of money you pay a servant, that they’d adequately serve you. Especially a minority! Aha. Am I right??”

“Labor these days!” The saggy man replies.

The others nod their heads in a silent agreement. The tall slender man looks down at me and then to the others. “Mmm I’m starving hehhhehe”

“Ya know, Jonathon for such a stick, ya sure can put away the food. Ho remember that one time?” Henry quips.

“Ohh I remember that time.” The blobby fella chimes in, followed by the obese man

“Uh huh hahaha good times.” Raising his glass, the fat man declares. “I’ll drink to that.”

The wolves drink their wine. The maid walks in, with a old serpent looking man lingering over her, grabbing her shoulders. “Mr. Moone! A Mr. Bidem is here.”

The men all look at each other with slight concern. Mr. Moone stands up, signaling everyone else to stand.

“Vice President!”

The men salute him. He looks at em with a vacant smile and sees the children.

“Ahh who are these little beauties?” Mr. Bidem says lurching over.

Dad introduces us, “This is my oldest Jason, he just got back from football. Rough practice. Next we got the twins Gemma and Rem. Then theres..”

Bidem greets the children. Seeming to focus on the girls. He goes over to Mary combing through her hair and latching onto her shoulders.

“And who is this little heartbreaker?” He licks his lips as he asks.

“That’s my youngest, Mary.” Father informs him.

“Hello sweetie cat.”

He leans down and smells my hair. Grabs tighter and pushes himself closer to me.

“I’ve met your sister. Look just like her.” A cold shiver runds down my spine. He looks at me like he knew her. Knew what happened. Knew how to look like he knew nothing. The maid prepares a seat for him and food.

“Oh no, I’ll sit by this little one. Keep her safe from these animals. And you little Jason. You keep your sister away from the other boys. They’d just eat her up. That’s what my granddaddy used to say to me.”

The other men laugh to appease him. He pulls their strings. He sits unbearably close to me. Putting his hand on my lap and staring at my body. It

surprises me, no one notices or seems to care. There's a lingering terror in the air, among all present.

“So hows the campaign going? You take Ohio?” Dad asks Bide.

“We'll take em whether they like it or not. We've got the money. The name recognition. The brand. They trust us. They want us. Isn't that right princess?” He stares me down, like I was the lobster on his plate.

Father watches almost proud, his daughter was being creeped on by such a powerful man. The maid comes out with dessert. Thank god, this is almost over.

## CHAPTER 5

### -Family Part 2-

“They got the Goddam Juggernaut.. Fuck!”

The circle of cunts tightens. 99ers and Bald Bitches enclose me in, with the goddam fucking juggernaut.

A silent mercenary known for hauling a semi truck full of dead Mexicans 20 miles to the middle of a lake. The body parts recovered were hardly recognizable. Just teeth and moosh. They determined the human goop was Mexican due to his racism towards spicks.

The first punches hit me with the seismic pressure of a mountain avalanche. The air even hurts. He's slow, but one single punch and best scenario, I'll be slow. Full retard. 10 missed and one near, he doesn't seem to tire. My punches aint doin shit, and his eyes and nuts are well guarded. He's a fucking brick wall.

He starts using wide dumb swings. I dodge into the crowd, one of the 99 pierces me with a 3 inch blade. I go to kill him, but he fades into the violent orgy of gang spectators. A punch falls towards me and into the face of random bald. Caving him into a bald anus.

Juggernaut yells a broken primal scream, grabbing another baldie and clapping his head, squeezing his eyes and teeth out. The balds quit cheering as much as the 99.

“Why is he killing our guys, weren't we the ones paying him??”

“I heard he mistakes us clean heads with Mexicans.”

“We fucking hate Mexicans!!”

He breathes blood. I drip it from my pierced shot up body. That bolt in the leg really fucking sucks.

A Bald rushes the ring and pushes me into him. I trip onto one knee and manage to get halfway up before he seizes the opportunity with a bear like speed and accuracy. Grabbing into my shoulder. Breaking flesh I can feel his fingers crack bones and pop nerves. I cut down into his heavy plated chest with my knife, to no avail. He raises me up, my vision blurs into static. The knife drops from my convulsing hand. No moves left is there?

He grabs my left thigh, thrusting above his head like a ragdoll and begins pulling at my right shoulder. Trying to rip me in half vertically. Something I thought was only rumor, but now.. Fuck. I almost respect his murder prowess.

I can feel my core tearing. Organs I didn't even know I had, stretching. The crowd spirals into evil ecstasy. The Juggernaut feeds off it and roars. His last.

A loud metal crash just below my knees. He suddenly stops. I can see in a red blur, something sticking out of him. The angels have arrived.

A familiar revving atop a nearby parking garage. Gooch and his shitty ass tow truck, some sort of chained harpoon through the belly of The juggernaut. He gets pulled ever so slightly with the struggling chain. As if trying to move a tree.

He releases his grip from my thigh. I can feel the missing chunk of feeling. He yells a retard warrior garble. Grabbing the chain and pulling the old tow truck. I can hear the boys yelling in a angry resistance. God, I hope they have a plan B.

The gang leaders signal an assault. The tow truck finally falls as Juggernaut one handed yanks the chain, with all his might. It crashes down into a esueve blocking the entrance into the garage. The ensuing explosion causes him to celebrate, fisting the air. He looks back to me like shit on his hand. Pulling me close to him and staring. I stab the bolt I pulled out of my other thigh during the tug o war, into his oddly pretty blue eyes. Moving my finger quickly into his other, blinding him for a sec. Finally in range. Giant fuck!!

He thrusts me hard into the ground, my arm falls broken behind my back. He stomps around demonically sobbing, trying to smash me into roadkill. The gangs move in to make sure I'm dead. Another harpoon breaks the oafs armor, this time in his ass. Thank god Gooch has two trucks.

Juggernaut grabs the new chain, breaking it with both his paws. Goddam gooch and his cheap ass chains.

“PLAN B BOYS: HELLFIRE!!!!”

Jackal launches a rocket, hitting the golem. Smashing him hard to the ground, on top of me. All 800 pounds of him. Taking the wind right out and breaking a few ribs inside. He struggles to get up, as hundreds of gang members try to escape the ensuing molotovs. Trampling over his beat-up body, the first harpoon chain starts to move, I feel his body moving away, grabbing ahold with whatever nerves I can muster from my right hand. Heavy gusts of explosive wind and blood pour gaps between Juggs and the ground. He starts to and his weight increases with panicked trampling. Crushing my already broken body. The air quickly fades, as the screams and moaning of bald fucks and 99er nasties steal any oxygen tucked away under the slain Juggernaut. The weight continues to pile on, until my body is one with it.

The weight is gone.

Am I...?

# THE ANIMALS

The boys hang around a make shift medical table in the middle of a old condemned bar. Jack lays on the table hooked up to sketchy tubes, wires and a engine. Jackal, a tall lankey black man, speaks up among the five scrappy dangerous looking men. “Yo he even worth it? Even if he do live. Nigga gonna be

useless with half his body workin. We already have one half nigga. How many half niggas we gonna feed.”

Mouse, a leathered up midget drinkin from a bottle of Absinthe, takes offense. “Half man with a dick twice as big as your little black prick. Let me feed you that.”

Jackal retorts to Mouse, gesturing with his crotch. “Nigga show me that baby dick!”

Mouse pulls out his above average penis. Jackal unimpressed laughs. “Nigga dat it!?!?”

Mouse shakes his flaccid penis. “Come make me hard and we’ll see if that’s it!!”

Fox, a long silver haired stoic young man, steps in with a authoritative closure to the bickering. “Any man who slays the Juggernaut will be useful, as long as he breathes. No matter half or quarter.”

Gooch speaks up while tinkering with some hardware. “Helped slay”

Fox stabs Gooch with a pen. He grimaces. Fox stares bullets into him. Gooch looks down a bit ashamed. Another black man, Hippo, 400 pounds heavier than jackal, rhymes a classic Animals gang saying. “If you didn’t get hit, you didn’t do shit.”

Fox continues. “Any one of us would be crushed by that monster. Jack fought it alone and he will survive!”

A well-dressed pale slender gaunt man with long dark greasy hair, comes in like a ghost. He rushes quietly to the fridge and pulls out a cola soda.

“Chameleon, what do you know?” Fox asks the phantom of a man. Chameleon gives his reconasance numbers.

“33 99ers. 44 balds. 5 civilians. 6 bums. 2 cops.”

Jackal gets excited at the triumph, adding. “and a dead ass juggernaut mothafucka! we slayed the giant and a small army. We gonna be legend!! Legacy shit man!”

He howls. Chameleon corrects him. “The juggernaut was nowhere to be found.”

Fox looks unconcerned, as Gooch slams his heavy wrench onto the bench, angrily exclaiming.

“I knew we should’ve towed him back as a trophy.”

Fox calmly explains. “We’re not hunters. We’re animals.”

Chameleon continues, while examining Jacks mangled body. “The tracks I found seem to indicate he was retrieved by a paramilitary vehicle.”

“An informant?” Jackal wonders.

“Likely undercover. Playing both sides.” Mouse steps up and questions.

“They ain’t there. Should be scared” Elephant sweatily exclaims.

Fox speculates with a certainty in his calculation. “Hmm the enemies of the street have joined the gangs. I suspected as much 3 months ago during a raid on a Exit County judge. They’re forming an alliance. An attempt to fully dominate every last soul in this city. A criminal monopoly. The infrastructure of which links to the highest reaches of the American justice system.”

Gooch gets angry, slamming his bench again. “The goddam governments been doing that shit for fucking decades. The World fucking War man. A war on our fucking worlds! One world order man. How the fuck don’t anyone see it!! World Trade Center. World Wide Web. C’mon!!!”

Fox, puts more pieces together.

“Hmm the hit on Jack was likely a result of someone playing both sides. No way they could have mobilized that many troops in that short of time. They’re attacking fast. No declaration of war. No strings showing til now. No.. This is a phantom battle.”

Jackal getting worried. “So what the fuck we do against goddam ghosts??”

Mouse joins in the fear. “Mouse we cant go up against them. They probably got like 10 Juggernauts. Cops. You name it!”

Gooch reiterates the stakes.

“And tanks and fucking drones that shoot fucking hellfire missiles. They kill children!! Does anyone here watch the news!??”

Elephant delivers a panicky rhyme. His sweat dripping from his freakishly large head. “That’s not fair. How does one fight light and shadow. I’m scared. Of the Thief and the Gallow.”

Jackal looks to Fox. “What the fuck we supposed to do against a goddam tank. Phantoms and shit..”

Fox decisively. “We don’t fight the tanks. We fight the man behind the man behind the tank. Assassination of high ranking city officials. Mayor, senator, governor, police chief in each district. Show them and their street rats, who truly runs this city. By running them out and running them down!”

The boys bang on tables and cheer. Jackal yells out. “Mothafuckin Animals”. Followed by Mouse, “We’re primal killers!!”

Elephant. “You toy with us. We destroy you just!”

Chameleon softly speaks, gathering the gangs loud attention.

“The wolf awakens”

Jack stirs a bit groaning. The boys gather in hopeful anticipation. Mouse holds his hand and speaks like a brother. “Hey Jack. Hey buddy, cmon.”

Gooch looks at Jack admirably. “He’s fightin’. A lot of fuckin pain for a man to take. Even if Jack was hardly man.”

A couple boys chuckle at the accuracy. Fox approaches and looks pitifully at him and walks away. A couple of the Animals looks curiously at this.

Jackal sitting next to him, holds him romantically and says sarcastically, “C’mon nigga. We love you. I love you..”

Jackal kisses his bruised forehead. Mouse rolls his eyes at Jackal, then looks to Jack. Gripping his hand tighter, “Hey man! we need you”

Jackal gives a sassy remark, “Why don’t you suck his dick lil nigga”

Gooch gets a little emotional. “He’s a warrior. A real killer!”

The boys look at the pained Jack writhing. He shits himself brutally and then coughs up blood. Falling back into his coma.

# Chapter 6

-Family Part 3-

**Festival of Blood**

Act 1

A week passed since that dreadful dinner. The nightmare returned and a new one. A dream hard to remember. I worry why..

Mother has been moaning and making other guttural sounds, a sound tragic but also refreshing after months of complete silence. I just wish I can hear the sounds of someone. I wish I can talk to sis.

The moon illuminates the long hall leading to my room, like a pale morning light. I see the pictures of her. The only three that survived. Father destroyed the others in the album and hall, worrying it was hurting mother. Even though she's in the background or taking the picture, the memory is still nice.

A few fleeting images of the dream flood in, like a portal, I float towards the touristy family vacation to Egypt. I feel her reaching out, trying to pull me into the frame. I go towards the picture with desperate hope.

I see closer into the background, as if walking closer towards her. She hides behind Jason and the twins, reading a book. They start to move as if the picture was a video. I look around, seeing only the desert and pyramid behind.

I can hear talking. Oh god I can almost hear her. I can see the bible she's reading. The family clears, the picture starts to blur and I can see her. She knows I'm here. Watching her. She puts away the book and looks away. I push further, the image blurs and begins to disintegrate. I try to touch her. I know she isn't real, but even just in a dream.

My hand starts burn as it comes close. An ominous hum rings from all around. I push forward into a psychic flame. She grabs my wrist, sending a freezing pain up into my body. I call her name. She turns towards me. My beautiful sister. Why is her face twisted and carved?

The sight was too much to bare, as I screamed and tried to turn away. She held tighter. I swear her hand crept into me. Seering me with a pain only nightmares can conjure.

She grabs my head and pulls it towards her to see. The wounds on her chest. On her womb. Her hands and feet. It looked like burnt cuts, in some sort of writing or drawing. Obviously occult in nature, but not anything I've ever seen. She stares with eyes, not yet lifeless, but full of a terror worse then death.

A horrific wailing scream echoes from all around. As I come to, on the hallway floor. The screams coming from Mothers chambers.

It was continuous and loud. As if every word she wanted to say the last three years, was said all at once. Howling what seemed like another language, one forbidden and old.

Trying to get up, I found my hand paralyzed in a deep freeze. I scramble up and run towards Mother. Accidentally knocking over a couple pictures.

I arrive and look inside, desperate to believe this was all just a dream. What seemed like a memory, is turning into trauma.

Mother stares at me, stilly convulsing. A fear sets in and I run to Joshuas room, unlocked but empty. A howling wind coming from the open window and a smell most foul. I scream for him or father or anyone, as I run to the twins room. Also empty. The same odor emanating.

In the hallway, a chimney fire creates a eerie red glow coming from the living room. Mothers scream grows louder. The cold pain in my wrist shoots up into my arm, like needles trying to escape from inside.

I hold it still, approaching. I see a man standing, watching the fire in the family room hearth.

“Hello hello sweet maiden hello. Have you seen the shadows. The shadows below.”

His words send a shiver, only rivaled by the sight of my holed up sister. He turns around. His face barely human. I can recognize him as Governor Bidem, but his eyes were black like a deer. His suffactated looking face was pulled tight against his sinister grin. He looked bled out and blue. He held a picture in his hand. One of my sister.

“Hello hello sweet maiden hello. Have you seen the light. The light below.”

He throws the picture into the fire. I wanted to kill him, but how can you kill a demon. No way he was alone.

I run fast, but to where. Where is Gem, Rem, Shawn, Jason or father. Where did mothers scream go. I run to mother only to see she was nowhere to be found. The silhouette of Bidem stretches its shadow along the hallway. I can see him grab a fireplace poker and walk towards the hall.

Jasons room and to the window. I know he often snuck out, meaning I could too. I looked down seeing a bush and nothing much else. The fall was about 20 feet

and Bideem couldn't be more than 30 away. I climb out to see if there was any railing or gutter to grab on to. Nothing.

“Maiden oh maiden. Where did the angels go. Oh maiden oh maiden. Did they go below.”

I leaped overshooting and missing the bush. My one hand tried to break the fall, snapping my wrist, cracking my ankle and snapping something in my shin. It felt as if a bone came out, but I couldn't see it. I didn't want to see anything. I wondered why I should run at all. A certain doom looms heavy in the air.

This wasn't a nightmare. This was hell.

# CHAPTER 7

## Wounds

It'd been awhile since I awoke. Broken more than I knew could be broke, but that was months ago. Always did have a decent gift for recovery.

“Whats up faggot!?” Jackal kicks me in my bad leg. Toppling me over, in a pain masked by the pill cocktail from a few hour prior. Gooch knows how to mix em.

“Three months and this faggot's gonna skull fuck your jungle ass.” I say playfully, but only half joking.

Jackal chuckles and exclaims, “Cripple ass, your fuckin lil dick even workin nigga.”

If I had a knife, I’d hurl between his overly entertained eyes.

“Come and find out ya fuckin jigaboo bitch mother fucker. COME HERE!!”

Jackal kicks me again in my bad arm. It nearly causes me to faint. The pills couldn’t hide that pain. Jackal walks off yammering, “Come get me, you racist ass cripple ass useless ass nigga. You lucky Fox wants to fuck you or else yer dumb ass would be in the dumpster. White trash ass nigga”.

The drive to kill and rape his corpe, brings me back up. My vision blackening and body trembling along the way. I go to yell something horribly racist, but fall down to one knee. The body I used my whole life to destroy, was destroyed worse then any victim of mine.

I grit my teeth and rise once more. A hard on in my pants at the thought of murdering the piece of shit, keeps me going. He’s gone, but couldn’t have gone far. I hug the hallway wall leading out to the garage. I bet I could find a tool to bash his goddam head in. Each step tears into nerves I didn’t know I had. Each injury seemed to be connected to the other. My body ached with every fucking breath, but my blood flowed hot and fast.

I stumble into the garage. Gooch working on a new beater. Jackal eats a bag of gummy worms on the couch, watching TV. I see a heavy wrench. Too heavy for my still crumpled hands. A screwdriver should do. I try not to make any sound, but the drags of my left leg, make noise. However cancelled by the shitty nigger music on the TV. At least the asses are nice. Gooch see’s me linger behind raising the screwdriver above jackals head. He seems to either not care or not believe. I’ll prove him wrong, then make him care by driving the tool deep into his rectum. Fuckler thinks he can slap me around. Thinks he’s strong. I bring down the screwdriver with all my might, but suddenly, my balls were uppercuted. Knocking the breath out of me and bring me to the floor. Mouse smiles and steals my shoe.

I fucking hate them so damn much. But where the fuck would I be without them. I daydream the rest of the drunken morphine addled night. About killing them all, killing balds, 99ers, homeless and eventually myself. I imagine myself fucking Juggernaut in each wound I drill into him.

I think about Fox and why the hell he'd want a cripple. The thoughts of all of it drive me into a anger. The same anger that fuels whatever functions I have left in my mangled body.

Each day I grow closer to killing again. Being strong. Being invincible. Being death.

I punch. Kick. Stab. Cut. Then practice accuracy with darts, since papa bear took my guns away. Few too many triggers pulled without bullets... Fuck I crave the kill. Pure uncomplicated death.

After a few hours. The training of drugged out limp dick masturbation puts me into a faded dream. I always fucking hated dreaming, but anymore it's a welcome escape.

I enter the dream knowing it's a dream. I wonder where I could find a kill or fuck. Maybe Jackals black ass is here. As soon as I walk around the vast grassland, I realize even in dreams I'm still a fucking cripple. My body aches, but the steps are less painful on the grass. Sinking slightly into the moist emerald expanse.

It's all fucking beautiful. Shining. The skies blue, sun red, grass green and a tree in the distance covered in fruit. It all seem ominous. Too good to be true. Hiding cannibals or ravenous beasts or evil ghosts or some shit. I try to will myself out of the dream, but to no effect. I hike slowly to towards the tree. It takes what feels like hours. I question whether it was a dream until looking out into the infinite horizon. It looks almost painted like a stage.

The tree produced apples and almost all of them on the ground rotten. I see a lushious one higher up, but there was no way I could climb. I try to fly, remembering Monkey ramble on about lucid dreaming and bullshit. It gets me a little hard. Fuckin stupid.

I could swear someone was watching me, but there was nowhere they could be hiding. I try waking up again, but still no dice. With nothing else to do, I grab a rotten apple. Red, with what appeared to be blood soaking the thing. I clench it as hard as I can until it explodes. I guess killing fruit is something.

Out of curiosity I decided to taste it. It was familiar. Like human flesh. Of the destitute variety though. Gamey and incredibly salty. Tinge bit of garabge like acidity to round it out. Yeah, definityl reminds me of childhood.

I try to wake up once more, puching myself and pumping myself up to painful proportions. Once again to disappointment. I started to wonder if I was dead and if this was heaven or some shit. Maybe hell, if this was all there was to do. I stood and looked up at the radiant moist fruit dangling. I can hear a birds nest from above. A bunch of baby birds. Something a little more fun to kill then rotten fruit. Tastier too. I remember a Rambo knife in my pocket and use it to stab upward and climb the tree. It bleeds.. Of fuckin course.

I fucking hate dreams.

I get to the the nest and the noise quiets. A bunch of broken eggs. Excent for one. It sat completely still staring at me. Penetrate your soul shit.

A all surrounding reverberating caw from above rings my ears and sends the nest falling. I grab the bird before the nest falls.

The wind picks up and a shadow expands around. A giant goddam bird. It circles, caws twice more and descends swiftly. I jump to a branch below before it strikes, but the gusts of air fucks my leap and I tumble down some 30 feet. Breaking 3 branches on the way.

I set the nest down and grab a the heavier of the branches. The giant black eagle circles around. Some seven times. It knows I'm ready to strike. It swoops down blasting me with a gust and flying closer. Pretending to strike, until finally it strikes, catching me off guard. It's beak digs into my skull through my left eye. I feel momentary retardation. Static hits as if my vision is a broken TV. I manage to whack its neck. Missing its brain. Ughh my brain.. My fucking eye. I can feel the blood pooling inside. The fowl beast jumps back and watches.

I look down in a daze to see the fruit behind the tree. It was bigger than it appeared. More... beautiful. The baby bird was nowhere to be found. I turn to run behind the tree, as the bird quickly takes off. I grab the apple and take cover. It's too smart. It stops short of the tree and slaps me with its wing, then impaling once more with its long sharp beak, this time biting down and pulling me down prone.

It drags me around ripping my clothes and breaking the stick in my hand. It loses grip and goes in once again. This time I'm ready. I launch the broken stick deep into its black crystal ball eye. It's thicker then I thought but the stick goes in. It hardly reacts but with quick shrieking caw, then hops and strikes me with its talons. Over and over til I can't move.

“How long is this fucking dream??”

It rolls me over and bites into my back. I feel a bit of body become paralyzed. I take a bite of the apple and begin to fly. The bird struggles to fly, without it's right eye. Almost hitting a few stone spires on the way to the mountain. I take another bite to be sure of what I just tasted. It was sweet. So fucking goddam sweet. Not overpowering, but perfect. I took another. The third bite rushing in a new level of the sweet flavor. It made every thing worth it. My past, my present. This crippled broken body. This shitty ass dream.

I go for a fourth bite of it's heavenly juice. The birds wing finally catches in the sharp mountain rocks. It tumbles still biting down tight into me. Into the mountain. The bird thrashes around. Eventually throwing me down the jagged slope. Toppling down, breaking just about every bone and nerve, until I land crotch first into a tree stump.

Finally, I wake up, but.. ugghk. My fucking balls.

Jackal laughs, flicking his fingers in the air, “Hey no wet dreams on my fuckin couch. Ya horny lil bitch.”

I want to torture him in a basement for a few months, but I'm glad to at least be out of the dream. I hate him, but it drives me to where I need to be. Killing.

Killing...

I wait til he leaves and shit on his couch. Then go out the back door of the warehouse. About time for a walk. I grab my blade and a cane gooch made for me. It's afternoon, most the boys must be asleep. Finally some sunshine. The smell of garbage city. The junkyard metals and the piss pools from 12 beer fueled animals. I walk to the gate. It's getting easier.

“Where are you going?”, Fox leaning against a cargo container asks.

I reply, annoyed, but coy with him, “For a little walk. Alone”

He ignores me walking off and follows.

“Gooch got the babies.” Fox says as if it were a deal.

“Great we're all dads now”

“You know what this means.” Fox lacking any funny bone, says coldly.

“Baby spines aint going to heal this damage. I’d say you should throw me out, but my aims getting pretty good. Could be the next sniper.”

“Hawk is all we need” He says almost offended by my sliver of hopefulness.

“Didn’t really do me no good, when I needed him”

“That battle was bigger then you Wolf. We lost men.”

“So that’s where Snake and Buffalo went.”

“Snake is still on recon, but Buffalo..” He says matter of factly. I don’t care that weak Animals died, but the fact we lost and suffered more than them, pisses me off. I lash out, “What the fuck happened Fox. It’s as if they knew we were gonna raid em. Theres no way they could have assembled all those men, so quick. There was a fucking rat Fox.”

“You know, that’s the only Animal we don’t have.“ Fox says assuredly.

“I fucking wonder, man.” Going against instinct I want to believe him.

“Wonder is useless.” He says like a fucking criminal sage.

A silence pervades, as I lean against wall. He’s so goddam edgy, but I love him. In weird ways.. yeah. Probably daddy issues or some shit, but I’d join a cult if he was leading it. Hmm guess I already em. I can get behind his doctrine. Kill or be killed. A little more complex then I usually like it, but it pays. A lot.

“Fight me.”

“ Ha! What am I gonna do against you. I hardly beat you on a good day.”

“I will train you. Fight me!”

“You’d be wasting your time. May as well train Mouse or... ha Coon.”

“That wasn’t a question.”

He comes up from behind, grabbing me. Throwing me to the ground and punching me in the gut. The pain distracts from the rest of my body. His violence and command turn me on.

“Why the fuck is everyone hitting me??”

“Animals devour their weak. If you are weak, I will consume you here and now”

“You can consume my cock Fox.”

I strike my cane into his shin. He lets me have the hit, though it seems useless. Not even a flinch.

“Don’t go easy on me dammit!!” I yell at him.

He says nothing, as he kicks my cane with his right foot, dodges my punch and kicks my face with his left. It pushes me a foot or two into the dirt.

“ I will train you everyday at this time. The animals will continue to test you. You have one month. If you cannot kill me. I will kill you.“

I aint gay or nothin’. But my dick got really hard, as I hurled my favorite Rambo knife straight for his throat. He grabs it with such ease. Throwing it atop the warehouse roof.

“Go fetch.Wolf!”

He walks off. I cant wait to kill him.

## Chapter 8

# Festival of Blood

## Eclipse

Pulling myself together after seeing no bone hanging out of my leg, I limp towards the lake house. Looking back, I see Bidem staring down from the window. Watching. I can only imagine he enjoys the chase.

The lake was always my safe place. Sis would read me holy texts and scary stories, under the willow tree.

The adrenaline wears off and the pain shoots up my leg. It becomes too much for me not to scream a little. Tripping down, I check once more to see if a bone is broken. There's a large bump in the middle of my shin. It's not sticking out, but it aint far. I crawl quickly, only a 100 or so feet from the dock. Checking quickly behind to see if he was near, but I'd seen too many horror movies to feel much comfort. My leg cools into a frozen numbness much like wrist. It helps in defying the pain, even if it is'nt much better. I manage to get back up at the dock, the lake house could hide me for a minute, but he'd certainly find me. I had to run into woods.

“Honey doll!! Mary! Where are you??”

It was father. Finally or was it. Paranoia sets in and I cant trust anything.

“Mary!!”

It sounds like him, but where would he have gone. Did he leave me with that monster or is this really just a nightmare.

“Mary! I'm starting to get worried!”

He yells out. It seems genuine, but Father has been snake like recently. Extra violent towards Jason and cruel to everyone but me. He's protective and scary. Abusive and adoring a subdued version of his family.

I ignore his calls and creep slowly passed the fishing shack

“MARY!!! Where the hell are you??”

He sounds desperate. Why is he..

“Hush now, if you want to live.”

Long thin fingers cover my mouth and a knife brought to my neck. I recognized his voice immediately. The tall thin creep. He speaks again. Not whispering, but speaking softly.

“There aren't choices. Only moons.”

He forces my head upward towards a opening in the woods. An eclipse revealed. He whispers in my ear, “I loved your sister Anna...”

There's no way Anna would love him.

"We were in love in the winter. In secret. There's much I can't tell you, but if you trust me. I can save you from your ill fate. Don't speak, just nod."

I can't bring myself to trust him either. His voice different. Everything about him seems different than at the dinner.

"Mary!! Daddy is getting angry!!! MARY!!!!", He yells from afar. I nod after hearing Father go into a rage.

He Releases his knife and hand and guides me into the woods, until he sees me limping. He picks me up with relative ease. He seems stronger than his skeletal frame would lead.

He's dressed nicely and smells of Juniper berry. Could Anna really have loved him. I'd think he was albino if it wasn't for his pitch black hair and his yellow eyes, so far apart. He's not hideous, but he's creepy. The sweet scent masks a blood like odor. He's done horrible things before.

We walk for about a mile, eventually reaching a small stagnant frog pond. The yell's of my father far in the distance. The northern pasture isn't so far.

"When?" I want to know everything he knows about my sister. Could he know where she is? Could he be the man in my dream? The missing key to saving her..

"Christmas three years ago. We were young. I am, younger than I look"

He almost sounds vulnerable. Anna, could it really be him?

"I worked for security for an event where she was at. She was reading Sun Tzu's Art of War. One of my favorites. We talked, until your father intervened. He was furious thinking I was much older than I am. I could'nt prove my age so I left, but not before slipping a playing card with my name and number into her book."

It seems like the truth.

"What is your name?"

"They will call me Jonathon, but my name is Snake."

"Your real name is a nickname?"

"It's not a nickname." He say rather annoyed.

“Do you know where my sister is?”

He’s silent, so I ask him louder.

“Where is my sister??”

He looks away. He knows something. Could he be...

“Did you kill her??? What happened to her?”

“QUIET!!”

He sets me down next to the pond. The eclipse shines a ominous glow all around. He paces for a quick second and leans against a tree smoking a long cigarette.

“I loved her.. But I couldn’t protect her.”.

The vagueness becomes infuriating

“What the hell happened to my sister!?”

A look of fear appears in his eyes. He takes a heavy drag and a heavier exhale. Then looks at the Eclipse.

“The first rite. Your Father belongs to a powerful organization, one with ancient ties to magick and ritual. Your sister Anna. My lover, she was.. Sacrificed”

“Sa-cri-fice” This must be a dream.

Images flooded back in, of her mangled tortured body. Thoughts of father doing the damage. Watching his daughter ruined by those creeps. Is it happening again?

“Is this the second rite?” It all sounds crazy, but it’s one of the few things that seem more then real. So many pieces come together.

“The third. I left for another mission during the second, but I’d assume it had to do with your mother.”

This could’nt be true. Why does it..?. He has to be lying. Father might be ambitious and intimidating, but he couldn’t be such a monster... Could he?? And the others..

“Why could’nt you save her. Was your mission to see her dead?”

He looks as if near to tears, but I wish It was blood. How dare he say he loved her and she loved him, but he could'nt even try.

“I didn't know how.. How far we could run, before they caught up. How much worse it could be for her, after they kill me. How to defend her against those.. Those demons.”

“Bidem and the gargoyles?”

“Lesser demons, but yes. Your father sold his soul to them in exchange for the unlimited power the group holds. He sacrificed everything for his ambition. It's how things work at the level. ”

“This cant be true! Why are you telling me this??”

“It's likely I wont be able to protect you either. Figured you deserve the truth before you succumb to the dark fate of the eclipse.”

I stare into it, as it nearly covers the moon. The shock of everything hits. It seemed as if I'd known for a long time. Even talking to Anna. It was like she knew. A dark fate awaited. We are daughters of the devil.

“Through the woods as you might know, is a barn. There you'll find a backpack and some cash. At that point, you're on your own.”

“Why are you helping me?”

He puts out his long cigarette and lights another.

“I made a promise.”

“Anna”

“She knew what was to come. She was special. She... Was..

“Why?”

“I don't know.. she tried to explain It to me one night. But it sometimes felt like I was talking to an alien. I could hardly understand half of it. ”

He smiles slightly, as a tear runs down his eye. I hate to agree with him, but she seemed to lapse into some sort of hidden language. She always called it.

“The Alchemists Tongue”

We say at the same time.

“We should get going.”

No more echoes from father. No sirens either. As we walk a half hour to the old Millson Barn. Me and sis used to play there, like one would in a haunted house. Sis was always obsessed with summoning a spirit there or opening some sort of portal. I always believed she could.

I think about the possibility of being on the run. About “Snake” and Anna in love. Then creeping dark depths of the ugly truth, about Father. About demons. The thought of a fate...

..Damned!

Damn...

## Chapter 9

Kill Killer Kill

“You’d think the rich and powerful, would be powerful. Ha”

The Judges left hip shatters with the swing of the steel bat. He screams through the mangled thing he used to call a mouth.

“I cant hear you! Speak up!! STATE YOUR CASE!!! HAHHAHAHA”

I bash him in the other hip. The knee and his hands. He faints from the pain. A pretty resilient old geezer. I smash one more for good times sake... And another.

Feels strange to hold back. Keep em half alive. Gives me blue balls. Theres only so much you hurt these rich cunts, before they die. Oh well. One more.

According to Fox, it's good training and good business. Guess the rich fear being vegetables more than dead. Can't blame em there. He's good at the fear game. Ruthless, but elegant. You'd think he was a saint, if he wanted you to. He's better than I. Seems to really get off on the revenge stuff.

Guess even this Judge was part passion part mission. Some sort of pedophile who silenced victims on behalf of the Catholic church and a few government fishing buddies. Few hundred randos too. Can be pretty blatant with the corruption these days. Fox said his death will send shivers through the kid rings the high power is so bound to.

I can see a thrill in it, but I can care less about justice or redemption or kids or nothin'. My revenge is on the world and soon.. On Jackals nasty black ass and every fucking other Asshole Animal.

Back at base, only Gooch and Mouse are kickin'. Gooch working on a new prosthetic. I'd be thankful, if he didn't enjoy it so damn much. The guy is a real miracle worker. Oh baby those stem cells did wonders.

"Judging by the bat covered in blood, I'd say the case went well."

"He was a judge. Not an executioner."

"You were just saving that one all day weren't ya now."

"At least I don't use puns."

"Cuz you're always goin' for them low hangin' fruit. Pun's are thinkin' man's joke"

"I aint a comedian. I'm a.."

"Killer?? Yeah we know.. Man! you can be really cliché sometimes."

"You wanna fight me. That'd be a funny joke."

"I don't fight with my fists. Guns and pills. Got this new one, I've been workin' on. Think I might be on to somethin'"

"Gun or pill?"

"both, but the pill man. Its..."

Mouse speaks up, "All this training and fighting. How come you've never asked me to spar? Huh Jack?? "

“Because you’re child sized”

“Yeah Jacks like 7 foot. You’re a fuckin midget.”

Mouse grabs a pool stick and approaches me.

“Eh listen Mouse, I aint a cripple no more and I aint gonna go easy on you.

Mouse jumps into a dragon kick. Knocking me back, as he lands with a Chinese Crane stance.

“I know Kung Fu Jack!”

The little fucker can kick. I go into kick his head like a football. He catches it, grabbing my leg and punching me in the nuts. He sweeps my other leg with his grubby little sausage fingers and throws me down to the ground.

Gooch hollers. Attracting Jackal and Elephant. Jackal lights up with joy as he invites some local Blacknights to the fray.

“Yo niggas get up on in here. The midgets fuckin fightin’.”

The Blacks pour in and begin gambling and making calls. I get up. brush myself off of feral cat hair.

“I’m not gonna go easy on you either, Jack!”

Mouse changes stance. Where the fuck did he learn this shit.

“You’re pretty tough for a little cunt.”

I take him slow, measuring his defense. Normal tactics wont work on him. He’s too small. Can he really be.. This powerful? I test it out. Trying to grab him. He’s wily and fast. Each time I get close, it almost seems like he’s oiled.

“Get over here ya little piglet”

“Fuck you Jack!” He slides through my legs, as i lunge to grab him. He climbs me, I catch him with a couple elbows, but he’s resilient. Taking both his chubby arms and choking my neck with his grubby little fingers. I try to grab him but he’s too damn small. He grips harder, forcing what little air I had out. The crowd goes wild, as bets are somehow already being won.

“Give up Jack. I will kill you! If you don’t Yield!!”

“Fu..ck You.. Fuckin.. Mid..get!”

He tries to break my trachea. His grip isn't the worst I've had, my neck is pretty big, but his position is almost impossible get to. My muscles are too big. I back up through the growing crowd. Smashing the little shit off my back, then again into the corner. I miss and fall on him. He pulls harder. It hurt, but it has to be all he has. He's breathing hard. I roll over getting up, a crowd member kicks me in the jaw.

“Blue ass mothafuckin nigga get up. I got 20 on ju.”

I get up halfway, as an old injury in my thigh acts up, “Fuuuck!!”

I power through at the thought of killing mouse, Jackal and a few blacks in the same hour. Trudging towards the pool table. I grab a pool stick and use it to wedge between mouse and myself. Plying his body against mine. The lack of breath takes half my strength, but its enough to get free of his grasp. He release and runs to the other side of the pool table, grabbing a pool stick.

“AHH SHIIIT!!!” The Blacknights roars as he jumps on the table, gaining a high ground. Wielding the stick as a katana. I ain't here for a show. I go low and lift the pool table. The little fucker is nimble. He jumps as it flips and lands on the edge. He jumps once more crashing his stick against mine. His stick breaks, he wastes no time stabbing my side with the jagged remnants. The suddenness of his moves stuns my own as I look down at his hands holding the piece inside me. I smile. It sends me into a fury. Finally, a little blood.

Using the pool stick in both hands I swing around him, giving him no space to dodge. It catches. I pull him up as he twists the stake in my side. I break the stick quickly with the force I squeeze him. I stab him in the cheek accidentally, I meant it for his temple. The boys rush in as I punch him into the ground. Holding his little body with my heavy knee. Raising the sharp end. I strike down at his head and then things go black. I can hear the sounds of the crowds wash in and out like static. Only one person could end me so quick.

I wake up next to Mouse who lays unconscious on a sex chair turned into a medical chair. I can hardly remember fighting him. Just trying to kill him. My neck feels like its been broken.

“I gave you a compound fracture in your cordial neck muscle. It'll heal in a month if your lucky.” Fox says as if doing me a favor.

“Of fuckin course.”

“You’re lucky I didn’t kill you Wolf”

“You’d be lucky to.”

“Says the man in waking from his 12 hour coma.”

“You caught me off guard you piece of shit!”

“As did you with your second murder of a target, we wanted alive. Why??”  
Fox says as he grips my wounded shoulder.

“I don’t know. For the children. There ya happy!”

He reaches slowly towards my neck, pressing a finger on a pipe I didn’t even know I had. Then two fingers on the side of my head, with his other hand. The combination paralyzes me in extreme pain.

“The first was meant as a ransom to topple one higher than him. Draw him out. You ruined that. The second was meant to be in our pocket, not a bunch of child profiteers. Do you not trust my instincts? Do you question my strategy.” He raises his voice slightly, near the end. A rare occurrence.

“I.. trusted my instincts to kill, simple as that..” I struggle to get the words out.

“Why are you here?” He says angrily. Another rarity.

“Because you did one of your stupid pressure point bullshit!”

He punches me in the face knocking me off my medical table.

“Why are you here with us? If you want to kill, go join the army. You don’t need us.”

I want to tell him the truth. About some sort of family psyche bullshit. About how they’re my brothers and he’s my daddy. I want to tell him it’s kind of gay, but not really. I want to tell him I’m sorry. What the fuck is wrong with me.

“Fuck you Fox!”

“You have one more month. You touch another of my brothers, I’ll kill you dirty. Fast, silent and painful. You fuck up again, I’ll exile you to walk blind In the sewers. You understand. You’re not even worthy to kill at this point.”

He presses his fingers deeper into my flesh. Almost penetrating flesh. It blurs me in and out of consciousness. Several nerves reacting. It's as if the Juggernaut was fingering my ravaged butthole, but in my head and neck.

“I fuck.. I fucking understand!!”

He punches me three times more. They're strong and precise. Enough to leave me barely lucid.

“You are mine to destroy. My piece in the game. I am king. You are a pawn. Not even knight. As you are. You are useless. Stupid and brash. Desperate and annoying. You are pathetic Jack. I wonder often why I have you here. Make me regret those thoughts. Defeat me in one month. Kill me jack. And maybe I will teach you how to truly fight. Maybe I'll let you fight for me. Die for me.”

“Fuck... Yo...”

He strikes me once more into a deep dark sleep.

Chapter 10

# Anna

“Oh sweet sister.

Where have we gone?

But to the underworld

Our refuge

Oh brave sister

I'll walk with you

In the darkness and fire  
Of heaven and hell”

Oh dear sister  
Be strong and free  
For the damned  
Are coming for your love”

The omens are everywhere. An instinct akin to a dog hiding far away, in it's days of dying. Animals going haywire before a disaster. Apocalyptic visions at every sight. Every poem is cryptic and tragic. It's made me paranoid, but that can't be presented. Not today. Not ever.

It's Marys birthday. She turns 10. So young and bright. Gifted just like mother and I. Though she seems to be more interested in the pulp, rather than the nectar. She sits on my bed reading The Dark Tower. My gift to her and one more.

“You get to the lobster part.”

“Yeah! That was weird!”

“It gets weirder.“, Mary looks worried. I sit close to her.

“Got you something else. It's a surprise.”

“I don't like surprises..”

“Well it doesn't have to be for much longer. Come on”

“But The Man In Black!”

“You've got a few chapters before he shows back up.”

“C'mon. Before Father comes home.” I grab her soft little hands. She's such a oblivious child. As if she's half in another world, I wonder if she can go there too. She stares confused at the woods, every time we walk through them. As if she sees something I don't. We stop before the forest, for the real surprise.

“You remember when the boat broke here”

“Yeah.. Those damn holes!”

Those damn holes. She laughs at what. I don't really know. I lead her into the fishing shack.

“You like fishing Mary?”

“No”

“C'mon”

I go to fish for Mary, casting an imaginary pole. She looks confused as I start to reel.

“I'm not a fish! Anna.”

“Guess you're right Mary. Fish don't have fingers.”

I pull a ring from behind her ear and put it on her finger. A breeze blows into the fishing shack. Mary looks at the blue ring.

“It looks like water inside. Is it moving?”

“The ring is always moving.”

“Is this the surprise?”

“It's one of them. Come.” I lead her to the lake. We stand on the sandy shore. I get low towards the water and look to Mary. She does the same.

“There's a old norse saying,” that a ring isn't a ring unless you bleed and sing: In chains that bind. Threads of the golden dream.”

“I don't get it” Mary says naiively. What a little lamb.

“Me either, but I've always wanted to try it.”

I reach behind Mary's other ear and pull out a second blue ring. A strong wind thrusts our black hair against the wind, causing small waves on the fishing pond. The birds go silent. Trees swaying wide.

The dogs bark, Father must be home.

“Ok now hold your hand over the water.”

No easy way to jump into a ritual. I hold my hand out and pull out a dagger I got from a dear friend.. I do hope Jake is safe.

“What are you going to do with..” She says worried. I cut my hand swiftly and deep.

“Sis.. Why did you.. sis! She reaches out as if to stop what has already been done. The blood seeps out and drips into the lake.

“We could be sisters forever. Bound by the rings of fate.”

“I don’t know.. Anna I don’t..”

“Trust me Mary.”

“It looks painful.” She looks down scared. I hate to see her this way, but I know this is for the best.

“It’ll only hurt for s second. See! I’m not hurt!” I show her my hand and reach for hers. She’s silent but looks at the blood hit the lake, then to the ring as the blood starts to trail around it. She looks at me doubtful but trusting. The thought of hurting my sister pains me, but I know it’ll help protect her from a pain deeper. The ring must be unbroken.

She nods in agreement. I take her tiny hand and make it quick. She whimpers but handles it like a champ. Biting her lip to keep from gasping.

“Here. Hold my hand and sing along”

Oh how the winds come blowing in  
From the ides of the underworld growing  
Dragons won’t stand upon the grounds of these hands  
That bleed for the Above below the sea  
Rise oh ye. Who hold the black key above the whitest sky  
To open the red doors of joy and glory  
Light shine upon us in dying fight  
Deliver us beyond death and the throes  
Of Heaven and Hell

Peace Love Magick  
Here thy ringing bells  
Upon the Ides of our days  
Unto eternity may we unite  
To bring the life that dreams were made  
Sing this song once more

The blood seeping from our holding hands slow. As the rings vibrate and our flesh feels as one. She looks to me with a hurt smile. I couldn't expect her to understand. As long as she remembers.

“Girls!! Girls!!! Daddys home. Dinners almost ready!!”

Father seems to have come back early. Damn, there goes a little time to teach.

“Here, let's bandage up and go up to our room.”

“ok..”

I bandage her up and think of excuses for both of us having bandages on our hands.

“Sis.. Does this mean, you'll never leave me?”

She looks at the ring and then to me. Can she sense my impending absence.

“I'll always be there to protect you Mary.”

“Always and forever?”

“And forever more” I embrace her tight. Mary sniffles with big girl tears. I cant help but shed a couple too.

“It still stings.” She says loosening her grip.

“Rings sting haha” She gives me a pity laugh for that one.

“Alright lets get going. Try to keep your hand a secret. If anyone asks, we got it playing in the barn. We both fell. Here just to make it a little more believable.”

I slice up my leg and punch myself in the face.

“ANNA STOP!! PLEASE!”

I think of it as training. I’ve seen the visions. Pain is a path that can only be beaten by more pain. It’s healing.

“It’s ok Mary. I’m stronger then I look and so are you.”

“I don’t like to see you hurt..”

“This is the last time.”

“You promise?”

I can’t promise her that. God I hope there’s another way. The darkness is..

“Promise me Anna! I don’t like it.”

She tears up and I find it hard to hold back mine. She thinks it’s for her and I think she’s right. My head swirls with dark prophecy and dim hope, but I have to be strong. I have to protect Mary. I see so much hope in her. A power to change it all. Damned fate and a dark wicked world. I make her a weak promise.

“I promise that I’ll never hurt myself in front of you, ever again.”

She accepts it reluctantly and confused as to my apprehension. She holds me tighter and we hug for a long while. Looking down at our reflection in the water. No more blood.

## Chapter 11

### War! What Isn't It Good For!

“Absolutely everything. Say it again!” I break his fingers, his wrist and slowly twist at the elbow, as he screams.

“Everything about you needs to be killed!” I say almost romantic.

“NO!! PLEASE STOP!!! I HAVE A FAMILY!”

“HAhahah I know about your family. We do our homework, Dean. We're not the idiot assassin criminals of the past. We're intellectuals.

“if you know then please. Stop this. I beg of you!!

“Oh I know! I know you raped your daughter at the age of 10. Beat your wife twice. Once when pregnant and another when she tried to stop your fucked up fathering. I know you use your privilege as dean, to rape and fuck students. 10 accounts that were well suppressed. Everything well suppressed actually. So many secrets. Had to squeeze em from your judge friends. So many officials just love you. Such a prestigious school.”

I snap his arm at the elbow and move on to the next arm. Fingers, wrist and elbow. This one seemed weaker. He screams til his voice box starts to go out. Such a beautiful noise. He starts to blackout from the pain. I can't have that. It's been a week since my last mission and though the Dean and his security weren't tough, they were nice enough to test out my new abilities. It's amazing what three weeks and baby spine fluid, can do.

“Why are you doing this?? Money?? Fame? Justice? Did you know one of them?? Did you know my daughter?? Who are you!???”

I smash him in the mouth close to ten times, pushing through his teeth and stretching his lips, mouth and throat, far more then normal. He quits talking and starts gargling. Much fuckin better.

“You ruined my motivational thinking.”

As I was saying. It's been a pretty good month. Turns out the high profile killings yield high profile news stories. That's right. TV baby! Never thought I'd be much into that, but the thought of others learning and even being entertained by my killing, is pretty cool. Adds to the high. Even this vigilante shit, is kind of fun. The look of terror as you rub there crime in there face, is just something else.

Still fun killing the occasional innocent security guard or cop, but eh. New hobbies. Apparently training, according to Fox. Never taught me any moves, just tells me to go kill and torture a bunch of rich pedos. Not sure if its working towards his plan, but it feels good or maybe it's the drugs Gooch gave me earlier. They make me feel damn good. Some sort of stem cell mushroom ecstasy meth. Killing on it is almost religious at times. Like I'm a god of Death and judgement or some shit.

Pretty great.

“Daddy. Daddy is dead!”

“What the fuck did you do to Harold!! Who the hell are you??”

“Harold is not dead. He is dying. Thus the gargles from his disfigured spasming face and the nerve of you asking me questions. Now let me ask you questions. You fixin' to die? You think you can intimidate me? Get to the bottom of this?? Ha! I kill women. Children too. So shut the fuck up and go near Harold. Sit real close to Daddy Harold.”

They dilly dally in a terror, that's finally in them.

"Good! now close your eyes. It'll make it easier."

"Please don't do this. I didn't do anything." She answers the question too perfectly.

"You're right you didn't do anything. Why didn't you do anything?"

"What're you talking about?"

"You know what I'm talking about. She knows what I'm talking about." I point to the frightened shell of a daughter and approach her with my knife.

"I don't understand. PLEASE!!"

Her daughter sits still. She understands all too much. She didn't express sadness when she saw her disfigure father. It was a dark relief. I remember that feeling with an old psycho step dad, that got shot up by a Simoan drug dealer. There's a relief. Maybe girls are different though.

"Eh kid get out of here. You don't want to see this part."

"No please don't kill me. NO."

"I want to see... She hurt me too"

Fucking monsters. Shit like this that makes me think I could be a good guy. I hand the kid a heavy paddle I got from under the Deans desk. It was pretty ideal for smashing someones legs and face.

"Remember your dads still alive too. He's twitching, but he'll still be able to feel everything."

I tie up the mom nice and tight, while the daughter thrusts the handle of the paddle into Harold's beautiful little academic eyes.

I leave with a weird fuzzy feeling in my heart. Probably the drugs.

Gotta head back to the base, train and sleep. The big fight is tomorrow and I don't intend on losing.

The boys are gone, out on some other mission. The base smells like cinnamon rolls for some reason. I walk towards the bathroom, farting on Jackals

bed along the way. The bathroom door is locked. I take a shit on Jackals bed and up to the roof. Seems to be the safest place to get some uninterrupted sleep. It doesn't take long before I conk out.

*ZZZ*

Thank god! No dream..

Mist dampens my clothes at dawn . Looks like it might pour. I stroll down the roof window down, a rafter and to the floor. Acrobatics have been comin' back. In fact, I feel better then ever. Strong and ready to kill. I go down to smoke some meth and drink laced coffee. I'd take one of Gooch's miracle pills, if I hadn't tried to O.D. after Jackal surprised me with shit in my mouth and a punch. He's weak but fast and elusive. Like a shadow. Fucking ninja ass shit nigger. Guess it's only fair. Whatever. I can't wait to kill him.

I go down to the kitchen and grab my stash from the far left ceiling panel. A dead rat drops, along with a bag of moldy cheese bagels. A couple of em should do.

"Not bad."

As I make my way to the courtyard to smoke, I notice a body at the front gate. Who could it be? I look around to make sure it's not a trap. No one around. Looks like a woman. I roll her over. She looks carved up, with occult scrawlings.

"She was my lover" Fox says approaching from behind as he often does. Only difference is a sense of actual emotion in his voice.

".. Didn't know you were one of those killers" I say snarly, hoping he'd attack me, so I could kill him.

"... Didn't kill her. I tried to save her. She died on the drive here."

"What the fuck did you get into?" I say a little disappointed in the lack of fighting.

"The high power seeking higher power."

"Sounds about right."

“...”

“.. Well, better not use that as an excuse. You’re gonna die by my hand.”

“... I loved her Jack.”

“I don’t give a fuck. We’re killers not lovers. C’mon. Fight me.”

“I forfeit.”

“You fucking shitting me!!??”

“I know you cant understand..”

I see a tear run down his eye. The same eye I’ve seen more vicious then even my own. The eyes of death. Now they fuckin cry?

“No! You fight me today. By midnight, I don’t care!! Get over this bitch and fight me!!!

“Do you love me Jack?”

The question strikes a chord I’ve never wanted to feel, maybe it’s all the drugs, but I feel something. The idea of love isn’t new. I love killing and drugs and general destruction, but for someone. A man at that. I don’t know.

“Fuckin’ faggot. Yeah maybe.. I don’t know!”

The affirmation sends a warm shiver through my cold muscle bound body.

“I’ve never asked you for anything.”

That’s bullshit

“I need you to be by my side.”

“What part of “I am going to kick your ass TO DEATH”, don’t you understand??”

“You can kill me at midnight, but I need to avenge my love... and I need your help Jack.”

I’ve only worked with him a handful of times, but this one feels different. It’s personal.

“I’ll help you, but afterwards, you die dammit!”

“It’d be my honor. Thank you.. Jack”

“Whatever.. So what do you got in mind? Just gotta kill occultist and bury her body?”

“She was the daughter to a very influential French diplomat. Son of a banking family. Met as apart of an elite infiltration mission. I didn’t need to kidnap her. She wanted to run away, but.. I couldn’t take her far enough.

“Great. So we kill the French guy and a few others. Lets get it over with, so we can fight.”

I pat him on the shoulder. Still seems I’m a useful ghost.

“The family is a part of the group we’re trying to attack. Old money. Old beliefs. The ritual I broke up seemed to be a part of a bigger thing. From what another operative told me, it’s called the festival of blood. A week long killing spree every 3 years. 3 times a century.”

“Sounds up my alley. Though it sounds a little soft.”

“You need children for this. It’s a festival of the Father.”

“Bet my dad would have loved that.”

“Daughters are the most valued, though I’ve gathered intel that boys are used in other rituals. They use this decade of terror to blackmail the next leaders of the higher powers. Filming the rape and satanic torture of pure and innocent souls. Summoning demons to possess and guide the new leaders.”

Fox’s eyes are dry, as if a fire burnt the tears. He seems pretty bothered by all this. Fuckin pussy.

“I know this stuff might be hard for you to understand now, but until you see... See what they are..”

“Don’t need to see what they are. Just need to see them die. Now lets go to this little festival.”

“I’m still having trouble reaching my operative”

“Snake?”

“Yes. He’s been on a case for a few years now. Deep undercover, as I have been as well, as you should’ve been, if not for your mental retardations.”

I clench my fists ready to end him here and now.

“You wanna go??”

“Youre a useful retard. Much like Jackal. Both immune to emotions and empathy. As I thought I was, before.. Elise.”

Fox kneels near the corpse. Holding her carved up head. No tears fall from his face, but the ashes of a fire do. I still wanna kick ass for comparing me in any way to Jackal, but it sounds like a mass murder of fathers might be in order. Finally some fuckin fun.

“Speaking of Jackal, we will be taking him with us.”

“Fuck no we will. It’s a gaggle of old cultists, how hard could it be.”

“They’re the kind of old cultists with private armies. Security detail with the newest technology.”

“I don’t give a fuck. Just distract, duck and destroy as dirty as possible.”

“Those tactics might’ve worked before, but not here. We will also take Elephant and Mouse. Gooch will provide radio and transport points.”

“You gotta be fuckin kidding me. We’re gonna risk our pack for this bit.. woman.” I hold back. It feels weird. I feel dirty.

“I’ve already talked to them and this isn’t strictly personal. With this order massacred. The power vacuum left behind will finally lead the Animals to the city thrones. From there, the World.”

His eyes light up and I remember why I follow him.

He wants to kill. Kill the whole fucking world.

## Chapter 12

### Festival Of Blood (Eclipse)

MARY

We finally arrive at the barn. An ominous fog creeping only a couple feet from the ground. The eclipse is in perfect sight as the trees start to clear.

“Alright. Just gotta grab the backpack and cash, then we’ll part ways.” He makes it sound easy. Just picking up and going. How do I know, this whole ritual thing is going on. Maybe it’s all just a misunderstanding. Maybe..

An owl flies onto the perch of the wind compass on the top of the barn. It watches from afar.

“C’mon they’ve likely sent the search party.”

“What other choice do I have?”

I’ve wondered how many choices I’ve been given in this world. What I wouldn’t give to be free and go. But where? Far isn’t a place I’ve ever really know.

He leads me into the old decrepit barn, using a flashlight attached on to his gun. The eclipse glow shining through the wooden cracks, makes it almost unnecessary. We walk across the barn to the stairs. A screech. Some sort of rodent running across. A feeling of being watched pervades every step. The feeling was there in the woods, but heavy hear. As if someone was behind me. My ring glistens in a foggy ray. I wonder if it could be sis.

“If you could do anything in the world. What would you do?”

The question surprises, both because he hasn't asked me anything this whole time and because I've never thought about it much before.

“I'd find Anna.”

He's taken aback, as he lights another smoke, stopping just before the stairs.

“You never lost her.”

The visions of her butchered body flood my mind. How can he say that. He couldn't even save her!

“Why couldn't you save her?”

He takes a long drag and ignores the question, walking up the stairs. I follow him up into the 2<sup>nd</sup> story and ask again, “Why couldn't you save her??”

He continues walking towards the ladder to the loft.

“WHY?”

He stops before the ladder.

“Some of us... Are born damned.”

His answer shouldn't have made as much sense as it did. My sister talked about it and I, tried to believe it was the one thing she was wrong about. He begins climbing the ladder

“Some of us can break the curse. Some can break free, Mary.”

“If anyone could have, it was Anna!”

“You're right.”

He comes out after not too long. With a backpack.

“I think she could break curses. I think she did break free. Like she might still be out there, waiting to come back. I hope you find her, wherever you’re going..”

He throws the backpack down and begins assembling his gun into some sort of sniper attachment.

“Where do I go??”

“Follow the fence line down to the creek. Then to the old fire station nearby. There you’ll see a sign and a road to the next town. I recommend you get a hotel and make some phone calls. Whatever you do, don’t call the cops.”

Asking why seemed like a dumb question. The picture seems clear, but who could I call. Names circle around in my head. Anna becomes the most prominent one.

“and what are you going to do? Why can’t you escort me to town?”

“They’re coming to this barn. My earpiece says as much. I’ll be up here ready to protect. If I went with you, bad bad things would happen and not just for me and you.. These men are evil and the ones that govern them are worst.”

A dozen questions come at once, but I know I can’t think of the right one to ask.

“Say hi to Anna for me.”

He smirks sincerely. Still creepy nonetheless, as he goes over to the window to setup shop. I pick up the dusty bag and quickly look through it. Some old rations, a rain jacket, cigarettes, a moldy journal and a bottle of water. In the front pocket, I find a photo of Anna and I, taken in Egypt. Giza in the background. I flip it over.

“Happy Birthday Mary! Surprise 😊”

Her ring is taped on. This must’ve been hers. Did she see this all coming. Could that vision just of been a nightmare? Hers?? Maybe she is still alive.. But why would she leave her ring?

I put it on and head towards the stairs. I feel like I should thank him, but the idea of him being alive and Anna being...

“Hey!!.. Thanks for carrying me through the woods.” I say earnestly.

“It wasn’t for you. Now get going.“

I can feel her phantom touch all around. As I put the ring on, I can almost hear her breath with mine.

I realize halfway down the stairs, that I don’t have a light. The eclipse should illuminate my way to the Fire station. I take the stairs slowly, holding the wall for balance. The downstairs is filled almost completely with fog, Pale blue rays of light coming through the cracks of the barn. I hold the wall going towards the gate, tripping slightly over some wire fencing. I progress further, noticing what looks like a silhouette. Standing at the exit. I hide and watch for movement, but I see none.

Could it be father or a goon or someone else. I half expect it to be a ghost, half expect it to be a demon.

**JACK**

We saddle up in Goochs old hippy bus RV. Smells like shit on account of Jackals gassy ass. I light up another cigarette to clear it away. Creating a chain of Gooch and Mouse to light up. Elephant and Jackal share a blunt. Fox drives sober and stoic.

“Daaddy how much fuckin longer. I’m getting carsick.” I say playfully. Excited for a mass kill.

“2 more hours Wolf.” Fox say unamused.

Never been this far out of the city. 5 hour fucking ride, you’d think these rich fucks wouldn’t live in the middle of nowhere. I think about the shit Fox told me about these high power guys. I wonder if Fox could ever be one of them. Sacrificing his daughter for power. I wouldn’t blame him, but I wonder just how far he’d go to soothe his big ambition.

After another half hour of smelling stink and listening to retarded debates on who has killer, fucked or amassed more money. I ain’t in the mood for talking and

the meth I smoked earlier really keeps me from napping. I stare at Mouses weird midget forehead for awhile and move to Elephants fat rolls. Zoning out for a few long minutes. Jackal crawls up to the front, in-between Gooch and Fox, “So how many country club cunts we killin’ cuz. Got enough men and weapons to take out a hick town PD.”

Fox answers coldly. “As many as we need”

Gooch questions a bit. “Naw I thought you said we had targets Fox. I aint gonna risk my fuckbus out of some sort of revenge. Unless its to avenge my country or fellow Animals.”

Mouse squeezes between Jackal and Gooch, putting a hand on Goochs shoulder out of some sort of gay solidarity.

Fox retorts Jackal, “We have our targets. There will likely be six of them, according to intelligence. They will align themselves in the room. My operative will give us the go and we’ll take them all out.”

Jackal bends his head like a confused dog, “How the hell we getting’ paid off this.”

Gooch adds on, “Not to mention the heat from all these high profile murders.”

Elephant speaks up, “13 ain’t easy try. Psychics they can buy. The worst kind. Killers they will die. In Eclipsing eternal night. The festival lights shine. The red eye watches.”

Jackal looks back, “Nigga took too much acid. Cant eat dat shit like funyons, gotta chub on otha shit. Hit dis” He hands Elephant a blunt. The big lug passes. He has a unusually worried look on him. Elephant trances out.

Fox speaks up, “After these kills, their war will end and ours will begin. We’ll take our seats on the City Throne.”

Jackal still not convinced, “How we know all dat? What if they niggas got billions. Keep comin’. Make Gangs a priority. Then our war end before it even began. We live in harder nigga.”

Fox grabs Jackals mouth, “Our war is eternal. The Animal Kingdom will rise. We just have a few more battles. If we die, then that is the sacrifice. For we are powerful. Only when the chain is followed.”

Fox grips Jackals mouth tighter. The sound of something cracking is heard.

“Is that understood Jackal??”

“Nya nig-fuck- cant-breath”

Fox thrusts him back to his seat. “We will taste glory. Only if we have faith.”

I wanna make a religious joke but it seems to easy. The Cult of Fox ha. That motherfucker. Not sure if it’s the bumpy road, Foxes words or Jackal getting beat down, but I have a raging boner. I hump Jackals demoralized shoulder. Howling like a wolf.

“ANIMALS!!!”

Jackal tries to push me off, but to no avail, “Fuck off Jack. Nasty faggy ass bitch.”

I press him against red shag wall, “C’mon Jackal. What do you wanna get payed? Huh?? You whore!!”

I hump him hard he tries to fight back, throwing a hard punch into my rib. I restrain him shortly after. He knows he’s shit at tight quarters combat. I punch him in the face. Square in the mouth that was squeezed. It almost makes me cum. He doesn’t deserve it. Fuckin slut.

“Why the fuck I even roll wit you niggas?? Damn..!!” Jackal steeps defeated, slapping Mouses hand from nearing his shoulder.

The animals are silent. Seems like a dumb question given his 2 dimensional pursuits of riches. Greedy nigga. His whining reminds me of Fox’s questions. Of why I’m here. I forget what I told him, but I wonder. Why I shouldn’t just kill each and everyone of these punks. Why I serve in missions, instead of serve myself. My ultraviolent tendencies. Maybe this just makes it easier. More options for killing. Gangs certainly kill more then any serial killer and military would end with me in a prison... Maybe. Hmm.. Regardless, an Animal army, the one Fox preaches. The one we prowl. That could kill every gang and killer in the land. The idea and former friction of the humping, cause me to precum. At that moment, I know the answer to Jackals question.

“Because you’re weak.”

I expect him to react. Try to fight me or give a sassy response at least. Instead he gives me a look. There's a resilient fear in his eyes, as if I struck a chord in his dim dark black hollow brain. Mouse speaks up for him, "We're all weak, that's why we're here. If we were so strong why would we need anyone. If you're so strong Jack why do you need us."

The little fucker has a point. I ramble something. Worried the drugs are gonna make me say something stupid, "I don't need you or anyone or anything. I just want to kill with other killers.. Gets lonely on hunts. Real lonely." I wink at Jackal, who looks in disgust.

Gooch turns up the radio, some sort of crunchy country station, "Goddam homosexuals. Ruining our country!!"

Listening to songs about romance and cowboys, puts me into a deeply uncomfortable sleep. I try to get out of it, fearing another stupid dream, but the next song about an ex wife, finally does me in.

"Another stupid fucking dream."

I find myself in the same field as before, but in the winter. A cold air blowing through a barren white patched field. The tree once lush, is now black and withered. It's even more disgustingly beautiful as before. I take a hard glance for the giant black eagle. Seeing nothing for seemingly miles away. I approach the tree to see if the nest or weird baby bird was there. Nothing, once again. A cold wind blows, penetrating deep inside of me. There a mist that crawls slower in. I walk around looking for something to pop out or anything at all. Nothing pervades except the freeze of the barren field. Would be a pretty nice dream, without the cold. Yeah, I could get used to this. I lay against the tree waiting for the dream to end. Waiting what feels like hours, until the ground starts to shake and tremble. The frozen grass, starts to soften and split. The ground breaks, swallowing me into a dark abyss.

I wake up, the RV bouncing to a fucked up gravel road and Gooch yelling. "Eh slow down Fox, the fogs getting thick. The Fuck Bus aint easy to repair ya know." The RV shakes violently, as Fox quietly drives with a mission.

"Gooch.. Please stop calling it that." I say with disgust. The thought of that old hick porkin' some porker disgusts me.

"I'm just saying. Shine a black light, whole place will glow! hyelp hyelp!"

We hit a large pothole. Gooch returns cautious anger, “Seriously fox slow down, gonna pop a suspension.”

Fox changes the channel to some opera bullshit, “We’ll be there in 20. Ready yourselves beasts. We make history tonight.”

A haunting ominous song plays.

## MARY

The shadowy silhouette stands unmoving. I don’t feel much like finding out what or who it is. I go back, hesitating passed the stairs, wondering if I should go back to him. Did he not see anyone entering the barn.

I go towards the back slow, as to not trip on anything, turning around to see the figure still there. Wondering if it already sees me or is looking out. I cant tell and don’t want to think about it. I don’t want to think about any of this. I just want things to return to normal. Even the shitty normal of the past three years. As I start to overthink. A board creaks loudly. I turn back immediately to see the figure gone. I look around to see if he went inside, but the fog seems to be thickening by the second. Every shadow looks like it’s ready charge forth and attack. At long last, I make it outside through a stall leading to a side pasture. The mud and feces is deep, as it swallows my left foot. It hurts pulling it out and leaves a loud slurp. I pull tight to the side of the wall, where it’s walkable. Sidling towards the back of the barn. Looking back to towards see any foggy silhouettes, only seeing a still white horse. Anna’s favorite; Alastor.

After about 20 feet, I reach the back. Peaking around the corner. Seeing the dirt road. I run to it and look back at where Jonathon was stationed. Could he see me? Could he be dealing with the figure? I haven’t heard anything. A sharp stinging sensation hits my thigh, could it be bees. I turn away to march up the dirt road. At least enough to where I could cross the next pasture to the correct fence line.

The hill though small seemed endless as I limped along. Slouching and tired. This should be far enough. I try to climb the wooden fence, but trip after the second peg, falling to the ground. I can't keep conscious. Am I allergic to bees? I check the spot, a dart. They got me. Damn!

The black fade I've gotten to know so well today, tunneled into my right ring. It glistened as if a star in a deep black sky. Bright, then fading. Then darkness. The same abyss I remember from the dream.

Why am I still able to think. It's as if my body and senses turned off, but I'm still wide awake. No fade away. No stillness, as the space twists and lifts. My body shifting along. A second star lights up or maybe it was the same one. A weight set in. Then a voice.

"Hello sweet maiden! Asleep and dreaming. Is it of me, sleeping beauty?"

The star shines and sways. A second blueish light ring with a bell like echo.

"The ritual needs a virgin, but Uncle Bidem can still have a little fun." He declares excitedly.

I can feel my neck grabbed by those leathery hands. No.. Not him! Please God! No! NO NO NO!!

"HELP!!!!!" I scream to Snake. To Jason. To.. No...

The lights rumble and supernova, the darkness burns my retinas almost entirely with penetrating black light. I'm sent soaring into my body, my shirt half taken off and pants in the process of being pulled down. I see him glare his demon eyes, as I struggle against his tightening grasp.

"What the heck kinda tranquilizer is this Billy??"

A bald man, who looks like a Billy, comes over and slaps me with the side of his gun. It feels as if it went through me.

"Grab her Billy!! Uncle John wants to play!"

Billy leans in to grab and hold me down. His bald head shining, in the red glow of the eclipse. I wondered if I could grow that light on his head, with the light of the two stars circling my daze. He grabs ahold of me and throws me down, staring drooling, as I stared at his hairless face. No eyebrows or lashes or even a stubble. It was a robust head. Looked heavy and tight. I wonder how tight.

“Ah fuck!” Jonathon recoils holding his tight bald head. He leans against a nearby brick pillar. “You deal with her. I think I drank too much.

“Do I gotta do everything around here.” Billy yells. He reloads another tranquilizer. Billy grabs me with more force throwing me down. He then goes to grab my head. I try to grab his.

“Awgh!!” He yells. Continuing to try and reach for my very close head.

“If you cant beat a little girl what the hell are you good for?? Tom!! Get over here. Billy cant even wrestle a girl.”

I try to pull Billies head. I could feel the grip as if I controlled the air. It was heavy and I was lite. The cold I felt earlier numbs and burn me. Swells like fire around me.

“AGHKK KGH BOSS MY HEAD!!” Billy screams like a child.

“Tom get over here! What the fuck is going on. ” Jonathon yells still holding his head. As I still feel the tightness of his head.

My vision becomes blurry, as the cold leaves the core of my body. Revealing a empty warmth. His head started to give way, as his eyes pop bloodshot, his jaw cracks and his ears leak blood.

“BOSS MY HEAD!! BOSSkhn myHK HEackd!! OSS EHdk Khk!” Billys skull cracks. He writhes and screams incoherently, as Bidem just barely out of distance, takes notice at the struggle. The child he’s with tries to hide, with him distracted..

“Tom we got an medical emergency!! Get your fanny over here!” Bidem barks over the radio.

Tom comes just in time. I feel the tearing of Billies neck. I pull down into the center and outward. His scalp spreading and pulsating. His screams divide into a gargle and a belching. The pressure in his hard pressed brain, releases with a upward spray. I can see the two blue stars glowing and exploding, in a fountain of Billy. The hands of another, cold and full of wrath pull further. Trying to divide downward through the spine, but the release of Billys head, seemed to release the cold high into the air. I feel a floaty numbness. Tom yells for backup as a couple garbled voices yell near the barn. I’m grabbed.

And then the fade.

Damn!

## **The Animals**

The RV parked, Fox stretches out a large detailed map of the Governors Grounds. He begins the plan “Gooch and Elephant, you’ll be supplying logistics, planning and backup from the backroad. Jackal you’ll wait in the woods in-between the road and RV base”

Jackal snaps, “Why the fuck I ain’t in the action.”

Fox addresses, “We’ll likely be pivoting from house to barn. You’ll be there to intercept from either side and assist. Only if you are given orders. This could be our last mission before greatness. Everyone listen and don’t fuck this up. Is that understood?”

“We wont need backup with me. Leave Wolf to do cleanup?”

Fox glares at Jackals backtalk.

“Me and Wolf will strike the Barn, where intel says the ritual will take place. Mouse and Hog, you’ll take the house. Strike only personell, not property. When the house is clear, we’ll steal the safe.”

Mouse looks like he wants to ask a question, but nods instead. Hog looks disappointed and puts away some dynamite.

“It’s 11 now, we strike at midnight. Reconvene at 2. A slow calculated strike. Caution must be high for their security is highly trained and will be out. We must not alert anyone of our presence. Silent kills will lead us to bigger kills.”

Wolf speaks up. “Well, lets get to the killing.”

Fox responds. “We mobilize now. Ready in position and strike at midnight. The Animals will take the kingdom.. Tonight!

And so the animals grabbed their gear and left. Wolf and Fox to the barn. Mouse and Hog to the house. Elephant and Gooch on the road. Jackal in-between.

### Wolf and Fox

“You’d think after our recent jobs, we’d be able to afford more four way radios.” I say snarkly. Moneys been tight, though the work has been long.

“It’s fine. We only need one.” Fox says trying to focus.

The woods are damp and foggy, I wonder how Fox is able to navigate through it all. The tight ass certainly is gifted.

“Copy that” He responds via Earpiece.

“At least put it on speaker phone.” I say demandingly. I deserve to know too.

“Take em out, take the two as hostages and retreat to the lake. Await my instructions after that.”

He switches calls to Elephant and Gooch, “Any eyes on the prey?”

Some sort of chatter only he can hear. It doesn’t matter to me, as long as I can finally test myself against real motherfuckers. These guard better be worth the money they must get payed.

“Copy that. rendezvous that with Mouse, then pull up back a mile.”

He switches channels again.

“Hold position. Pull in 10.”

Ha! Jackals nasty ass already gotta pull back. Probably got caught.

“And what after this? After revenge and the power vacuum. How do we know, another gang wont step over us? Our numbers are low and funds even lower. Targets seem a little high.”

“How long have you known me Jack?”

“Long enough to know your head is bigger than your hands.” I say trying to dodge a direct answer. I don’t fuckin know.

Fox seemingly pleased by the remark looks back, “Just answer the question.”

“I don’t know 3 or 4 years.”

“8 years Jack. You were 13, I was 19.”

“You feelin’ nostalgic or some shit? Is it our anniversary?”

He looks off and says something more human than I’ve seen him. He must’ve really loved that girl, “The Animals are my family. I think of each one of you, as a son.”

“Gooch is way too old to be your son?” I have to laugh off the personal stuff. The drugs and pre murder endorphins make me emotional.

“I never beilieved in love or home or belonging. Much like you, I was born in the underground. Wasn’t as lucky though..”

“You ever been to the fuckin’ sewers?? How the hell do you know what I went through.”

“I know the rapists you killed were weak, the murderers stupid and the prey sickly. You were lucky.”

He wasn’t wrong.

“My rapists were strong. My torturers smart and the only prey around was me. I was sold for as long as I could remember. Beaten, fucked and always serving the same master. Those in power. Those who abused that power.” I always figured he was born strong and killing. He was... fucked?. I try to consul him or something gay as shit.

“Just because someone has power, doesn’t mean they’re strong. I mean just the other day, this Judge..”

Fox interrupts and continues.

“I learned quick, not to hate, as it made the pain all the worse. Getting any emotion involved only hurt more. Hope was the worst. I succumbed to the best of my ability. Joyous just to be in the presence of such power. The kind that can ruin someone. Even a child, just for fun. They attempted to discard me one day, after my screams weren’t loud enough for a clients liking. I felt betrayed, as I learned to love my abusers like a family. Even as I was thrown in the pit, like mangled trash, I blamed myself and wondered, how I could still please them.”

“Where the fuck is all this comin’ from man?” All the touchy feely shit, makes me soft.

“It was a rainy month and the cell sprung a leak after a little carving. The water kept me sustained for the two weeks, I was starving, but never hungry enough to eat the other children that were thrown away. No. I learned the importance of death. Not as food, but structure.”

Fox stops just before the last trees of the forest.

“I used the other children stacking them 12 high. I got creative as I bent and broke them into taller pieces of my climb. I learned to even love them. The dead and the damned.”

“I take it, you got out of the pit and killed the lot of em?”

“You weren’t listening Wolf. I loved them. Like I loved Belle. Like I loved..”

Theres a uncomfortable silence. He wants to tell me about some sort of childhood bullshit, I want him to shut the fuck up.

“Alright, alright whatever, enough talkin’ about love. Lets get to killing millionaires. Revenge right?”

“I love you Jack.” Fox says suddenly. The first time he’s used my name.

“I..” A million thoughts flood my brain.

I back away slightly repulsed at the words and in that moment. My chest explodes. A silencer hides the far away shot. Was that my heart?

“I always loved you Jack. Like a son and a brother.” Fox says holding me.

I cant help but puke a blood from deep inside, crumpling to the ground. He follows me down still holding me. He smiles.

Is my heart bleeding?

Fuck..

## **Mouse and Hog**

“So this is how the other half lives!”, Mouse caresses the marble countertop. Hog helps himself to the fridge, “The other half should probably invest in better security.”

A large explosion hole near the large extravagent kitchen reveals a couple gaurds with broken necks. The Moone family mansion dark and empty. Hog grabs some fancy mushrooms and begins eating, “Should also invest in some more food. All vegetables and fancy drinks”

Mouse walks through the lavish house, ignoring Hogs devouring. He enters the living room dreaming of a life outside of poverty and ridicule. Imagining the christmas’ the family must have. All the presents they must receive. The easy life. One without pain or struggle. A good life.

He continues into a second living room with a large fireplace. Family photos decorating the area. Mouse examines a few. He continues to daydream. Picturing himself as Father of the house. Playing with the kids and traveling to exotic locations. Decorating the house in a nice Oriental décor. Married to a tall beautiful woman.

Mouses melancholy reflecting on a reality never his, turns to anger. He grips his fist thinking back on all the ridicule, powerless and defeat. His fist lashes out at a ornate vase. Staring intently at a smiling Governor Moone.

Then a smile. He remembers the stakes at play. If Fox is right. Mouse could live the life he only could dream of.

“Are you my fathers friend.”

Mouse startled at the voice, jumps back to see Rem. Hog yells from in the kitchen, “HEY MOUSE!! WE GOT COMPANY!”

Gem and Hog approach Mouse and Rem. The twins unite and gem Gem asks annoyed, “What did you guys do to the kitchen? What was that noise?”

Hog looks to Mouse, not quite anticipating having to kill a child.

“There was a gas leak in the wall. Erupted before uh.. We had a chance to fix it.” Mouse says stoically nervous.

Rem worried, “Where is Father?”. Followed by fierce Gem, “I don’t believe you!”

Hog pulls out his gun and points it at the two. Rem hides behind a frightened Gem. Mouse lashes out at Hog, “What the fuck man! Put that shit away!!” Hog confused, lowers it a little bit, “Well what the fuck else we supposed to do? They seen are faces and this one wants to be hero!”

The twins tremble in fear.

“I don’t shoot kids” Mouse says half assured.

“I never have either, but... I don’t know. Fuck!! This seems bad Mouse!!” Hog hardly assured at all, says sweating profusely.

“Don’t fucking shoot the kids” Mouse screams, clenching the trigger.

Suddenly from behind, Jason swings a bat firmly at Hogs head. Smashing his jaw and a few teeth.

“Ah PHluck! MY UghGHK” Hog slams into cabinet full of colorful china.

Jason rushes at Mouse, swinging the bat downward. Mouse deflects and slides behind him. Jason quickly swing backwards, then forwards. The second hitting Mouse in the shoulder. He retaliates, pulling out his large revolver, “Knock it the fuck off! I don’t kill kids and neither does he!!”

Hog struggles on the floor grasping at his jaw. Jason holds steady fast gripping the bat, ready to swing.

“Back the hell away from my brother and sister.” Jason says with naive bravery. Mouse holds his ground, “Yes that’s fine, but put the fucking bat down.”

“Put the gun down.” Jason shouts swinging the bat into the air athletically.

Mouse looks torn and considers what Hog was saying. He imagines the deep shit he’s already in. Looks around the house and sees the dream fading. Imagining a life worse than what he’s already had.

Prison.

“Of course this would happen”, Mouse thinks about the power and authority the governor would command. How many cops are already on the way. Mouse sinks his head into his hands. Without a seconds notice, Jason goes in for a swing. A gunshot going off at the same time. Hitting Jasons chest as he falls bleeding and confused. Mouse looks to Hog suspecting he shot him, but sees him retreating to the kitchen crawling. From the dining room a man in black fully concealed military garb approaches and takes aim and shoots Mouse clean in the thigh with a dart as he runs away. Instantly sending him into a seizure.

“Culprit #1 shoots victim #1 after altercation over victims #2 and #3. Victims #2 and #3 were then violently stabbed by culprit #2 with a knife from the kitchen.” The assassin pulls out a long kitchen knife and approaches the frightened twins.

“You can struggle if you’d like.”

## **Gooch and Elephant.**

Can never run away from the dark

No matter how many shots  
Sparks or days or time spent from the start  
The Heart will never escape  
Forever change  
On the run

Gooch touched by Elephants long poem. “That was beautiful man. Reminds me of my exwife man. I didn’t want to run away, but she did. She did... That fuckin bitch!!“

Elephant smiling in a joyful moment of confusion, “You misunderstand, but that’s alright. I don’t always understand either.”

Gooch convinced his interpretation, “Yeah I know what it means. It just reminds me of her ya know. Love and shit. All this work and crime. I didn’t want to do it. I was born into it. Love made me feel reborn ya know. “

“We are reborn everyday, if we choose to.” Elephant says comfortingly. A large hand on Goochs slumped shoulders.

“Ha maybe with how high you get! Start birthing yourself in the future or some shit. Hyuck!“ Gooch says trying to lighten things up.

Elephant a little annoyed by Goochs underestimation, “It’s not really like that.”

“Yeah I know! I know!!” Gooch says in joyful agreement.

Then blinding light.

“POLICE!!! OPEN UP!!” Suddenly a spotlight shines on the RV from the woods about 10 feet away.

“Where the fuck did he come from??” Gooch say wide eyed.

“He came, but why!” Elephant says hardly surprised.

Gooch starts trying to clean the front of the RV staring nervously at the back. “I open the truck. A DUI gonna be the least of my worries. I got drugs in categories you don’t wanna know about!! That eh you don’t even know about. THAT I DON’T EVEN KNOW ABOUT!!” He yells.

“This has all happened before..” Elephant says introspectively.

Gooch prepares a small gun under his wheel. A second light from the other side penetrates the RV illuminating much of it. Elephant notices a red dot on Gooch’s forehead and tries to de-escalate the situation, “Lets tread lightly, maybe it’s all just a misunderstanding.”

“Seems like a pretty gottdamn aggressive misunderstanding.”, Gooch rolls down his window and hollers out, “Can I help you officers with something?”

“Hand up and exit the vehicle. Slowly” A shadowed officer yells from nearby. Gooch is blinded by the light. He tries to joke, “Slow is the only speed I go.”

Gooch wonders if he should play retarded or not. It’s worked before, but the tone of these guys were much harsher.

“I’m.. c.. c.. comin out.” He says with a slight stutter. Gooch exits. The silhouetted officer blinds him with a brighter light.

“On your fuckin knees!!”

Gooch confused, as he half complies. He sees a nearby light approaching. Two other figures. “I feel as though we have a misunderstanding officer.” He says concerned and overwhelmed

The officer rushes him. Yelling violently as he approaches with an assault rifle aimed. “ON THE GROUND! HANDS WERE I CAN SEE THEM!! DOWN!! DOWN!! DOWN!!”

Gooch senses something direly wrong. He wonders if all his crimes had caught up to him. He wasn’t the best at covering his tracks, but he was certain any evidence was at least destroyed.

The officer finishes cuffing Gooch

“Officer! Please! Give me a second to speak!! I..”

A gunshot goes off and a spatter of blood in the RV covers the window. Gooch watches in horror. Hoping it wasn’t Elephant, hoping he grabbed the modified shotgun behind the seat. Hoping these guys were just criminals playing cops. Terror strikes as he remembers the target in this crime. These weren’t just bad cops. These were well payed politically backed bad cops.

Three more shots from the front of the RV. Gooch knew it wasn't a shotgun. They killed Elephant. They're gonna kill him. Gooch yells in fury. The cop throws him to the ground, knee in the neck and prepares some duct tape to seal Gooch's mouth.

The cop radios in, "Targets apprehended. 10 minutes for scene and sweep."

A bit of chatter on the other end, "Understood. We'll meet with Squad D to corroborate."

Some more static chatter. Then an end, "Over and out."

Gooch sobs. He knew the other Animals would be taken. He knew this was gonna happen someday, he just figured it would be this soon.

"C'mon man! We're relatives of the Governor."

The officer radios on a different sounding one. Gooch could tell the difference. "Suspects are in custody. Backup has arrived and will be conducting investigations." A deeper fear sets in.

Some chatter.

"In firm." He responds coldly.

Some more.

"No need. Over and out." He ends the call and marches back to Gooch.

Gooch lays defeated, as a vehicle approaches. No sirens or lights though. He knew the engine. A government transport van. The officer kicks him hard in the ribs and drags him into the back.

## **Fox** *And The Childerens Tower*

The children were stacked as high as they can go, a separation of about 5 feet to clear the 20 foot pit. The surface was near. Only one more child needed to be thrown down.

Little Fox looked down at the bodies, one still twitching. He wondered if there were any more ways to stretch the height. He could try jumping, but it'd likely topple the child tower.

So he waited, three more days, his stomach tearing him apart. He eyed the ass of a fat boy, but it was part of the tower. The fox could not eat of that. Though just one slice, he thought. Even if he'd escape. What then. What strength would he have.

It'd been 16 days since he'd been thrown away to the hole. The rain had stopped for 3 days. The little fox was thirsty, starving. Staring at the tower that could be his. To heaven or hell.. or both.

Echoes of footsteps ring through the hallway above the, spiral stair case. Then the steps down and thuds. Two of them. The fox did not smile. Did not hope. He just hungered and thirsted. He crawled quickly and quietly into the pile. The fat guard or as Fox knew him, the creepy uncle. He mumbles something about a dumb little bitch and how big he was. He stops at the top. Shining his light down. He shines it around and to the tower. Pulling out a gun, he shoots down into it. Three times. The blood of the upper layer soaks the little foxes head. The first blood, he'd ever felt. He tried desperately not to taste it on his lips. He tosses the bodies down at the top. One sticks, the other tumbles down beside the weary fox. Uncle then goes to grab a 20 foot ladder, dragging it lazily down the pit. He grabs a small drum of gasoline, pouring downward. He throws it down and begins descending the ladder.

The little fox did not account for this.

“I know one of you is still alive. Smart little shit too. You escape. I lose my job and I.. I love my job.” He reloads his gun. Fox sweats, thinking about his tower of children, reduced to ashes. He climbs towards it’s center.

“I’ll give you a chance to grovel if you want or I can just burn you out and shoot your FUCKING HEAD OFF!!!”

Uncle lights a match and throws it onto the pile. It lights up surprisingly easy. The smells penetrated the young fox, but he only breathed from his nose, as to not breathe through his mouth and taste the blood.

“Come out you little cannibal. I wanna have some fun!” Uncle shoots three rounds into the pile, which burns slow, but hot. Suffocating the Fox. He crawls deeper towards the wall. Getting stuck on a tangled piece of the infrastructure. The tower tumbles at several bodies. Dissipating a good amount of the tower. Nearly revealing the little Fox

“ahh you gotta be fucking kidding me.” He shoots the tower twice more, a bullet that soared through the foxes scrawny juttred out ribs. The Fox bit his tongue, trying not to scream. Uncle leaves for the ladder, “Only 5 more bodies to the top once those burn! Harha aha! Uhh lil fuck! How the fuck do you expect to get out??? Escape to where?? Just make it easy on yourself and..”

The ladder pulls and twists, felling uncle nearly 18 feet. He lands with a heavy thud breaking at least his leg. The fox runs over with a jagged bone made with an especially injured girl. A girl, Fox knew well. He ran to the injured stunned uncle. Grabbing his gun first and readying for a stab. Uncle looked.

“Hey I remember y..” Fox jammed the bone deep into uncles throat, uncle struggled trying to grab the fox, but he was to small and nimble. He pulls out and thrusts into uncles eye. Then the gut, pulling and twisting, with uncles dying hands. He stabs the head three times, putting him out enough to move. He drags the fat spasming body, struggling with little strength, but eventually getting to the fire. He drags an especially well lit teen over to the now writhing body. Setting the fire on the ass of uncle. Fox stabs the head again to further hinder movement.

Before too long. The little fox grew big and fat, but still he was hungry. He was thirsty. So he climbed the ladder and stood before the pit. Looking down at the tower. He made his first wish. That he could take them with him. Make it higher.

So high, it reached the heavens. He'd take them all there. He'd take them away from here.

## Mary

A dream of Anna. A reality repeating. This chain of suffering and sacrifice never breaking. Purity doomed to be consumed by power and evil.

If Anna couldn't stand up to it, how could I?

I feel conscious again, but still can't see. I think I'm blindfolded or covered in dirt. My body is heavy and hollow, like a brass casket. Whispers come to the surface, as my senses follow.

Unscented incense smoke fills the area and a silent chanting is carried along the fog.

I remember everything. The phantom powers. Could it really be your hands? Could it truly defeat demons in the flesh? Can it break the chain?

My eyes can't see the ceremony, but her's can. She's seen it before. The symbols, the yellow robed men, the 100 candles, the betrayal and the damnation of her God. The hand of evil grasping her soul in divine retribution. Some eternal inescapable nature beyond mortal understanding. The darkness manifested, from the destruction of the brightest light.

I could see six figures in the upstairs of the Barn, three in a corner communing. Two at the center, preparing bones, cameras and various metal implements of an elaborate ritual. The other figure at the top loft, looking out at the

Eclipse. No sign of Jonathon or Father or Bidem. There are four girls lined like a cross. One of the two setting up, take a rag, dip it in some sort of blood and draw a line intersecting us. In between all of our heads, an altar with a blue flame. I can see one of the stars in my dark dreams, deep within the fire.

Four more walk in. Father, Bidem, one of fathers friends and someone fully hooded enter in from the front. They congregate near the three. The fully hooded one stay at the entrance and watches.

Could it be? But why? Why didn't he protect me? What about the promise to Anna? Why did he help me at all?

He gave two names, Jonathon and Snake. I give the feeling neither were real. Was any of it real? Anna? The backpack? His plan? Any of him??

I try desperately to wake up from a nightmare I know is all too real. I see the fatal outcome and fate that succumbs me and all other daughters. I can see the chain reaching to the eclipse. Visions of ancient rituals of old. Greek, Chinese and Egyptian. I see settlers and catholic clergy. Businessmen and bums. Sacrificing to the blue flame. I see the carving and chanting. Burning and dismemberment. I see the feast and drinking. I see the Festival of Blood. Each and everyone of them.

A small bell tolls from atop the loft. The cult lines up around the girls, brandishing swords and waiting silently. The bell knolls 12 times, ringing like nothing I've ever heard. The man at the loft, begins singing a low pitch latin song.

“Filiis et filiabus cum flentibus canticum mundos.”

Anna tried teaching me latin, I hear son and daughter from the chant. He repeats the verse thrice more, then the group joins in.

“Patres vestry ut matres juramento.”

They repeat it three times.

“sacrificiorum in veteribus sacrificiis”

Another three.

“Sanguine crescit temporum metis.

A final three before joining in a hum. Fathers friend, who had a name like Richard approaches the flame, he reaches the sword into it.

“All my sons. Any daughter.”

The group of cultists chant repeatedly, as the man timidly holds the sword glowing hot in the fire.

“Surrender. Surrender. Surrender.”

He reaches over to a blindfolded blonde girl on his right, still asleep. Grabbing a chalice and pouring it down her throat. The liquid looks thick and milky. She chokes waking up, struggling against her binds. Coughing up whatever fluid was in the cup. She’s scared, but speechless. The man with the sword and chalice plunges the heated blade into the girls womb. She screams a struggled anguish. The guttural gargle of blood fills her mouth and a desperate scream fills the room. One of the younger girls, perhaps a little younger than me, stirs up and begins yelling for her mom. One of ritual preparers stuffs a cloth in her mouth, muffling her yells. The blonde girl tries to grab the sword, burning her hands in desperate struggle. Richard pulls the blade downward, the gore being too much to bare. I try to close these new eyes, but only avert them towards my father. Wondering how he could have become so possessed. So corrupted he’d do this to me. To Anna. To mother undoubtedly. I try to destroy him with psychic hands, but nothing. Just an angered focus, thinking about all the pain of the last few years. Thinking about the dad I used to have. Was he always evil?

After an unbearable 10 minutes of ritualistic torture. Her screams fade and one of the cultists next to father approaches the table she’s on, turning a crank underneath. The table lifts upward, the lips on the ends of it keeping in most of the blood. Her spasms cause a bit of it to slosh off. It raises about 7 feet, at which point another one of the setup crew, throws a blue shroud over her. The third and last of the setup crew, takes a key from a large set and unlocks a small hatch. The hole drips a stable stream.

Richard approaches the fountain and fills his cup. He kneels.

“My angel I give. For the mountain of heaven. Be mine.”

The others reply in verse.

“Lord Satan raise us above man. Above God.”

He drinks the unholy death of his daughter. Could power really be so appetizing? That they’d succumb to such levels of darkness. What fruit is worth the tree?

Bidem leads one of the men in the corner, a senator I'd met years ago. His daughter, the youngest girl, a tiny brunette. He seems nervous, perhaps even reluctant, as her muffled screams and writhing remind him of some latent humanity in him.

Bidem tries to consul him, as the others chant the former latin incantation, "Do you want her or do you want the world?"

The man trembling, as one of the ritual preparers hand him the sword.

"Cant we have both?" The senator says in obedient questioning.

Bidem whispers close in his ear, "There is no power, without sacrifice. You wanna be at the bottom or the top? C'mon man!"

"I just.. I want... I.." The senator looks hesitant. Bidem glares down angrily. "you can have others. She aint so special. YOU are special!"

He grabs the sword and holds it weakly in the blue flame, staring at his terrified daughter. He drops it, knocking over some cups and other implements. Bidem grabs his shoulder hard. "Quit being such a damn pansie man and do it."

The senator holds onto her crying. Frightened. "She's my baby girl. I raised her when she was sick, I.. i.. don't know if I can. I'm sorry. Please!!"

"It's ok. It's ok." Bidem injects him with a syringe. Rubbing his back as he collapses on his daughter.

"Get him out of here. Guess I'll have to be her daddy."

He eyeballs her like a lizard to a fly. Caressing her hair and whispering something in her ear. Her screams silence slightly. A defeated quiet. Bidem picks up the sword, setting it into the fire.

"Oh maiden oh maiden, sweet young maiden. I'll be with you soon and always. After death, deep inside. Oh maiden sleep and dream of me."

He pours the cups of milky liquid down her throat, she rejects it and Bidem hits her swiftly.

"C'mon little girl, don't you fight back against uncle Joe.

He continues forcing it down, then lifts the blade with a smile, plunging it into her. The screams tired and crying. Bidem seems to enjoy every minute of it.

He's handsy and I can only assume what he might do with the corpse after all is said and done. He takes his time. Nearly thirty minutes of whispering in her dying dead ears, feeling her every inch and reciting his creepy maiden song. I couldn't help but watch the most evil things imaginable. Flinching away for minutes only to find he was just getting started. Some of the others seem perturbed, whispering amongst each other. Demons scared of the devil. Only one of them it'd seem. What a wicked fucking world.

At last he finishes. Dragging the body of her father under the lifted corpses. He open his mouth.

“Thank you Joe. I'm too weak to be what I am.”

Blood pours in a long crimson thread, just as before. The incapacitated father unable to drink. Bidem massages his throat and tilts his sleeping head to force it down. He then grabs the cup and fills it, drinking a bit.

“MMM”

He passes the cup to the rest of the golden yellow cloaked men. They drink and Bidem, sets it back down, looking to the third Father. The process is nearly the same as the first, except for this one, perhaps the oldest of us damned daughters, remains silent and unmoving. As if this abuse was normal or she saw an escape from her miserable life. Midway through the ritual violence, my psychic vision begins to fade. Only the sounds of chanting and occasional bell rings remain. The hellish visions put me into a near slumber. I don't fight it. I know I'm next.

## **Jackal**

“Hello!! Come in! Fuckin Jackal for the tenth fuckin time nigga!! Come in!”  
Jackal paces around, checking settings and changing channels.

“Yo!! Jackal! Do anyone copy me??”

He gets pissed as he swats a couple flies surrounding landing off and on his face.

“Yo what the fuck! This shit broken or are y’all just retarded.” Jackal hits the radio, taking the batteries out, blowing on it, then swapping the batteries.

“Fucking whack ass shit. Kill and pillage millionaires and cant even afford a goddam workin’ radio!”

He paces around, looking towards the van and back towards the barn. He checks a small topographical map.

“Fuckin’ Wolf out there prolly gonna fuck it up. Stupid ass Fox, don’t know me. He don’t know me!!”

He punches a tree, chipping off bark.

“Strong as shit! Aint no one know how strong I am. Beat anyones ass. I oughtta start a fuckin gang. Goddam!! Black Knights!”

He punches the tree twice more, breaking bark

“Gotta do everything around here. What the fuck!! Aint noone give me respect either. Mothafuckas don’t know Jackal. Fuckin Bo Diddley Jr.”

Jackal smashes the radio against the tree. Cracking it.

He sprints with incredible, but unserious speed. Taking 6 minutes to run the mile to the dirt road. He looks around, finding Goochs favorite beer can nearby, as well as Elephants half burnt out blunt roach. “Where da fuck they go??”

He grabs the half smoked blunt and lights up. Investigating the nearby area. He sees deep tire tracks that look spun out. He then observes two other motorcycle tracks and a van track coming from the road leading to the barn.

“What da fuck happen here??”

Jackal puts out the blunt and runs off to follow them. Sprinting the road for about a half hour, going passed the farm in a heavy fog. He gets to a paved road splitting.

“Fuck!”

He looks back at the faint light coming from the barn. Then at another one off in the distance. A car light far up the road. He figures it must've been from the mansion.

“That aint part of no plan. What the fuck goin on round here”

Jackal runs up to the road leading to the split and lines some cantrips along it.

“Ninja nigga shit. Jackal savin the mothafuckin day.”

Jackal sets his pack in a nearby bush and undresses.

“Skin so black. I am the night. Black Knight shit nigga.”

Jackal puts on matte sunglasses to completely blend in. He waits for the car tires to pop and they do.

The car makes the turn and the tires swerve. The car stops. Two figures exit. Jackal creeps nearer, trying to be stealthy. He whispers.

“Lion of the fuckin iron jungle.”

He wades through the thick fog and listens.

“This one of our guys?”

“If it was he woulda radio'd it in.”

“What about the new guy?”

“WHAT ABOUT THE NEW GUY??” The officer gets very defensive. The other defends his suspicion.

“Just because he's family, don't mean he's a good bad cop.

“You doubt my nephew again. I'll make you a good dead cop.”

“You fuckin threatening me?”

”It's a fucking promise.”

“Ya gotta be fucking kiddin me. You on the sauce Ed?” Ed goes quiet.

“What the fuck it matter Harry?”

“You made a promise and c’mon ya know what it does to you.”

“How about you quit fucking worrying about me and my nephew and every fucking thing else and worry about yourself.”

“This isn’t you man. Sheezus, I actually believed you when ya said you were 10 months sober. Fuckin A.”

“Oh what a couple drinks and occasional hit, make me evil. I am evil. Drugs or not.”

“Evil and a prick.”

“I kill people and rob them. Then claim I’m the hero. A few shots and lines and all of a sudden, I’m the bad guy.”

“It’s not about that. You got kids man. You made a promise to your mother. Don’t let your job define who you are.”

“Spoken from the man who killed a child because he saw what you did to his mommy.”

“We really gonna bring up the past. You know that was a bad day. I don’t let those define me either.”

“Well you should. Join the fucking club.”

“I’ll join the club who cares about their health and well being.”

“You gotta be fucking kidding me. Watch one movie and all of a sudden you’re Mr. Mother fuckin Teresa.”

“That doesn’t even make any sense. Are you..”

Jackal pounces from in the shadows. Leaping nearly 7 feet horizontal. He immediately plunges a knife deep into sober cops spine. With a lightning speed, Jackal kicks him toward Ed and rushes Ed. Ed readies his gun, but Jackal already behind him grabs for a arm lock, breaking the arm swiftly and switching to a choke. Ed resists but futilely. He grabs the hand with the knife at his neck, but Jackal forces the knife in. Sawing it against the struggling Ed. Jackal gets a few inches in and hears the gasps, like music to his ears. He wastes no time, jumping back into the bushes.

“Shoulda called me fuckin Puma. Fuckin Jackal. The fuck they even do?”

He waits for any ruckus from the car. After about a minute he slowly goes to check on it. He leaps into the back from the open front. Nothing except some cases and fast food garbage. He investigates the consul and glove box, finding a couple wallets. He finds a couple badges and multiple IDs. He throws them out of the car towards the bush with the pack and looks around to make sure no ones near. He listens carefully, hearing what sounds like a muffled gun shot far in the distance.

He continues searching the car, finding a few envelopes and weapons. He examines the bodies and robs them. He goes to his bag and looks back.

“Ha! They gonna love dis!”

Jackal arranges the bodies like the two are fucking. Struggling to actually make them do it.

“Little ass flacid dicks. Gay ass fake cops. Fuck you even are.”

He hears chatter on the radio about apprehending the target and a rendezvous. He picks it up and answers.

“Little dick ass niggas!”

Jackal laughs as he breaks the radio.

“Ah shit, I guess I coulda used that. Still got this one though.”

He twirls the other radio, dropping it. He grabs it and packs up. Some backing from the car is heard.

“Ah shit the trunk. Forgot to rob that too.”

He goes over and pops it. Mouse leaps out ready to kill.

## Snake

He watched as his mentor and only friend, hold the woman he loved, the only one he's ever loved, in the palm of his hands. Snake saw Anna in Elise. He saw her everywhere. Remembered her embrace. Her smile. Her fear. He remembered the hate he felt for Fox, for taking his one chance at love. He remembered the promise.

Fox plunges his tongue down the heiress' mouth. Elise grabs his lower back and pulls his head in. They try their hardest to merge into one being. Snake tries to escape the RV he's trapped in. Escape the memory of longing and unobtained romance. Gooch turns back, "Eh no fuckin in my RV! Just got it cleaned.."

The RV hits a bump, spilling a small pile of booze and spit bottles.

"Dammit!" Gooch yells frustrated.

Mouse goes up to help clean it up. Jackal pulls his pants down. Revealing a juicy midget ass.

"Hey fucker, I'm just trying to help." Mouse lashes back annoyed. Jackal meanwhile sways his hips seductively, "Just wanted to see that tight little ass." Jackal spanks him. Hog chimes in. "Jackal don't know the meaning of being helpful" Jackal playfully and irrogantly explains, "I help myself, you hick mothafucka. Help myself to this ass." Jackal shakes Mouses butt, trying to spread em. Mouse goes irate trying to fight him off, "GET THE FUCK OFF ME!!"

"C'mon let me finger that fat little ass!" Jackal tries to slip a finger in, Hawk grabs his hand and pulls it behind him, using his other arm to choke him.

"Fuck nigga, you about da break my.. AGHK FUCK!!"

Mouse pulls his pants up and punches Jackal in the balls three times, then his nose, easily breaking it and maybe a ball. Jackal sags in extreme pain, but propped up by Hawks firm hold. Buffalo, a massive native American man puts his hand on Hawk. Hawk looks to his brother and relinquishes his grip on Jackal. He coughs in a higher pitch voice.

"I was just.. Fuck... Tryin to have some fun." Jackal says in a hurt high pitched voice.

Fox releases Elise from his caress. She gently gets off him. Looking briefly at Snakes averted gaze. She knew he'd been passing glances.

Fox looks to the other Animals, pushing Elise ungracefully away, "Alright. We just passed 5th. Ready your weapons and recite the plan."

Mouse, "Cut power to warehouse 3."

Buffalo, "Distraction reroute of police, on 4<sup>th</sup>."

Jackal "Take out Bald base on the east. Then.. ow fuck my balls.. Damn.."

Fox, "After taking the West Bald Base, you'll rendezvous with Buffalo at East Café."

Jackal "Yeh, that's what I meant. Think my left ball in me."

Hawk, "I'll perch on the 5<sup>th</sup> Ave rooftops. Provide eyes and lines on the 99ers."

Hog "Demo the vault wall and high tail it the hell out of there."

Fox kicks a sleeping Wolf. "WOLF!!" Wolf half wakes up.

"Yeah.. I'm here to kill."

Fox nods at the accidental answer and looks to a despondent Snake. Snake lost halfway in a daydream looks to Anna who read him a book on metaphysics, three years prior. He remembered the road trip, they took. He remembers Fox using Anna just as he used Elise. That day haunted him. Her fortunes to the Gang. Foxes prophecy. The terror she had after her nightmare. The promise Snake swore to uphold. He remembered the secrets, the betrayal, the powerlessness. Every word.

He remembered Fox taking her from him, before he even had a chance. His chance at love and his beloved. Instead it was Fox and Anna, Fox and Stacy, Fox and Elise. "Barely an animal" Snake mutters in a stupor, "You're a fucking mons.."

"Snake, you on trance duty?? What is with you weak pests!" Fox yells as he wacks him one something fierce.

Snake lost in a silent fury, ponders a alternate timeline, where she fell for him and grabbed his butt. That was her fortune to him. Three years later still alive

and still in love. Married and making out in the RV. Fox jealous and alone or dead. Snake could lead the Animals. A whole new gang.

Fox kicks him with such force, his head nearly tore off, “SNAKE!!”

He hits the back of his head on the van and snaps to with a sorrowful cold look. Fully feeling each pain, but not accepting it. He responds to his boss. His enemy. His death or kill.

“What?”

Fox deeply frustrated, but measured responds to such casualness, “Is there something on your mind?? other than the mission, Snake!”

Snake unaffected, “No just thinking about how to infiltrate leadership and split forces to uh... the bottleneck zone.”

Fox pulls out maps, “Shouldn’t have to think about it too hard. Here lets go over it again.”

Snake eyes him down like prey. An invincible prey.

### Mouse and Jackal

- Jackal saves mouse from the same fate as Hog.
- The two meet a strong foe.
- Juggernaut?

### Hawk

= Hawk saves Mouse and Jackal. Reveals the betrayal.

### Jackal

“Stupid ass weak ass nigga bitch.”

Jackal stood above a dying Jack. He injects him with a Gooch serum, sending PCP and stem cells deep into his fading body. Jack convulses and foams, as he springs up. He awakens to a fowl scent.

“Goddam you best live to see dis revenge. AHA!”

A thick shit rolls from Jacks face.

“Mothafuckin’ fried chicken and watermelon you racist piece of white trash ass cunt bitch ass dick suckin’ lil pussy faggot ass mothafucka.”

Jack spits some out and gives Jackal a look he never expected. One of alliance, one of being betrayed. One of hurt and resisted vengeance. A look of lowly respect. He didn’t know who shot him, but he knew who pulled the trigger. He knew who saved him. He knew nothing anymore. Nothing except..

“what the fuck you lookin at me so stupid?? Where the fuck Fox at?” Jackal yells at a disturbed half aroused Jack. In that moment, jack felt something. An emotion so powerful, the thought of the kill, sent a shiver through his bloody body and a boner in his murderous soul.

“Fox... Fox is fucked!” Jack says hyperfocus. Jackal looks cofused, “Whatchu mean Fox is fucked?? Lets go so I can save his weak ass too.”

Jack looks at Jackal and tries to hold back laughter. A evil grin ear to ear. “You wanna save him, you’ll have to go through me.”

“Nigga you was dead 5 seconds ago.” Jackal says bewildered.

“Where are the other Animals?” Jack asks ready.

“Bitches ain’t pickin’ up. Found Mouse in a trunk though. Prolly some sex thing.” Jackal says slightly concerned.

“Fuck you Jackal, I told you.. oh my gosh! what the fuck happened to ya Jack??” Mouse sees Jacks large chest wound. Jack looks at him with a smile. A true friend. Jack had never considered such a thing. Instantly a deep nausea and floaty feeling in his heart, flutter. Then wrath.

“He tried to kill all of us!! Where are the others??”

“What the fuck you mean?” Jackal getting annoyed by Jacks vagueness. Mouse interjects, “Jack is right. We’ve been setup.”

“It was fuckin Snake wunt it? I fuckin knew it!! It in his goddam name! We ain’t got rats, but WE GOT A FUCKING SNAKE!!”

Jack with a suppressed rage, “It was Fox.”

The three are silent, as they piece everything together, wondering why. Wondering how. Wondering what the fuck was really going on.

“Well first things first, lets get that wound bandaged.” Mouse goes into mom mode.

“It’s fine. He was always a shitty shot. Just give me more of that baby spine drug” Jack says brushing off the bit of gore around his body. He slightly falters.

“I don’t take that stuff.” Mouse says dissapointingly.

“I used my last dose on your weak ass.”

“Wheres the RV? Wheres Gooch??”

## Anna

She’d taken a liking to the gangsters. Most of em at least. She sensed something great about them. Their leader Fox, a young revolutionary with a keen instinct for fighting. His right hand man, Snake and his desperate attempts at romancing the young Anna. The youngest, Jack. An evil and powerful young man. Hawk the silent, Jackal the loud and Elephant and his prophetic poems. The groups of murderers and thieves, became her only friends.

She met em after a group of boys tried to have go at her. The leader beat em so bad, death would’ve seemed like mercy. Jack putting one out of his mercy. She was delighted to meet the tides of change.

Anna had seen glimpses of them before and when she finally met them, she finally knew. They weren't just thugs, or gangster trying to make a splash in the city. They were the movers of the new world.

She was delighted to be invited on a roadtrip with them. After a baseball trip excuse and some help from her brother Jason, she was on her way.

A weekend with the Animals.

The way to Mountain Crest Lake was pretty uneventful, Snake trying his hardest. Jackal trying to jerk off the midget. Fox telling everyone to shut up and pay attention. Anna knew the roadtrip was hardly for leisure. Fox had a scheme in-between every action.

The group arrived at the Lake.

## JACK

The cops protecting Gooch were loud, but still just cops. Well armed and good at arresting. Not so much killing.

Gooch traumatized and silent, patches me up pretty good and drugs me up with the good shit. Elephant was no where to be seen. No time to check ditches. Shame about Hog. He was a racist rapist and complete piece of shit, but other than that an alright guy.

Thinkin about it all more, I wonder if all the other fallen animals were at his hands. I knew Fox was evil, but fuck. Using us as pawns on the last big job, killing us in this one. Offering us like lambs. Not even a fighting chance.. And to who? For what? Power?? What could they have, that we don't. We're killing em. We've killed before.. Havent we. What do they have that I didn't. What did he mean when he said..

Jackal runs up with his naked dick swinging in the full moon light.

“Yo niggas we got company. Full division and some fancies.”

Never expected to rely on the Amazing African Anus. Nor have to give a gay ass speech. But for Fox. Anything.

“Lets move out and stalk. None fucking escape. Our mission stands. We kill all those that try to control and destroy us. We prove to their controllers. Who has the power. The Animals will never be tamed! The animals will forever kill. All that oppose us. Starting with Fox..”

They look at me different. Cant say I enjoy the look.

“That’s me nigga shit boy.” Jackal raves to no one behind him. Gooch puts a hand to his chest.

“America”

Lastly Mouse stands on a small hill and pumps his fist into the air, “No matter how small. We stand tall!!”

Jackal pulls Mouses pants down. Mouse strikes back, but Jackal dodges easily spanking him as he tries to pull them up. My body shakes with steroids, meth and the taste of Foxes blood already in my mouth.

“Let’s kill!”

Doesn’t take long, getting to the Barn. The fog is dense and the moon light illuminate it like a concert smoke.

“Gooch, you know the drill.”

He used to be the getaway driver til he killed his wife in a car accident. Hell of a driver, even in a RV.

“Roadtrip right out of here., Gooch justifies it with redefining. Glad he’d talking even if he never makes sense. Stubborn old cunt.

“Mouse and Jackal, you gas up the parameter and take out any sentrys. When the barn burns, you take the back. I’ll cover the front. We take em all out. Any alive, we torture and display.”

They agree and the plan begins. I prowl the area in front of the barn. 9 cars. All luxury. Don’t know shit about em, but they look nice. One in particular looks armored. Must be high ranking. A soldier that looks like a fuckin storm trooper

marches with a red light and blue laser. Full night vision and an assault rifle that looks like it shoots fucking lasers. These guys are well armed. They even move like killers. I keep my distance until flame. Another two cars arrive. I hide beside the armored one. A man and little girl in both come out. One of the cars with a chauffer. Some fuckin' pedo shit, no doubt. I knew Fox liked em young, but shit, they had to be 9 years old.

These fucks must be as bad as Fox. Wonder if they're even worse. A boner pops up at the sight of the children being lead to slaughter. This concept of revenge surges through my blood. Have I really gotten so soft, that vengeance gets me off. Who cares. Fox and his den, will burn, bleed and yearn for death after I get my hands on them.

The chauffer from the most recent car exits after the pedos enter the barn. He wanders through the fog to the left pasture. As he pisses, I position myself for the kill.

He shakes for what seems like an entire minute and comes back whistling some sort of Dixie bullshit. He enters the car, sitting back and checking his phone. No scream if you can cut 2 inches deep into the throat. A different whistle, sprays from his neck, splashing the black leather upholstery in red. I hold him still as to not shake the car too much. The mercenary light from behind, along the car illuminates in heavy fog, a few yellow cloaked figures pass by the car with a large ornate trunk. The merc shines a light on the still death spasming driver still appearing to be looking at his phone. The merc looks away disgusted. The chauffer stops spasming.

The merc leads the two cloaked into the barn. He comes out and patrols around the cars and up the road, then back. His armor is thick, but I could slam the car door into him, work him to the ground, ply his helmet off and get a cut in that thick ex marine neck, but an alert could risk everything. Fox could escape or worse.. Win.

I wait. More patiently then I ever have for a kill. Many many minutes pass. Could it be an hour? How long does it take to burn a barn? Could they've been caught? Dammit I'm overthinking it. I'm worrying about them. What the fuck is goin on???

A final car arrives, an old school black muscle car sitting idle. The merc decides to investigate after a small while. He knocks on the window gun drawn.

Surprisingly quiet for a army tard. No yelling or nothing. Must be pretty tough. They speak for a small while, until the merc enters from other side of the car. They drive off, as if it was nothing.

Surprised these high power pedophiles only had one guard at the front. Couldn't be a trap. Shit would be elaborate, but then again this all seems a little elaborate.

Fuck..

Should check on the others, but first. Make sure none of these fucks leave. Time to pop some tires and lay some traps.

I deflate a couple before I start hearing a bell and chanting coming from the barn. Sounds like its begun. Figured they'd be catholic or some creepy shit. I go back to cutting tires and setting wires, while waiting.

## MARY

Father holds the cup in his hands. He approaches me and recites what sounds like Latin. He brushes my hair back and holds my trembling chin. Forcing the liquid in my still paralyzed body. I can taste and feel it slide down my throat. It was no wine. No milk.

My senses start to dull to defend against the moment. The vision fades with my father. The man who used to call me princess, gripping the ceremonial dagger and approaching. No apparent second guessing what he's doing. No hesitation. No love.

Fears beyond fears start to creep in. The concept of true evil. Hell. Demons. The devil. Could it be, that this dark end doesn't end with a karmic heaven afterwards?

I was never evil. Hardly bad, most would say. I always did what I was told and tried to help in any way. Kind, patient, you name it. Did any of it matter, if this was my fate. Mourning for years til my sacrificial torment.

The knife pierces my skin. The psychic abilities awaken and I can see it fully. My father plunging the knife into his one and only daughter.

He's calm. He's done it before. Anna. Anna. ANNA!!

I try desperately to blow his head up. To no avail. The knife sinks in another inch. The chanting and bell envelopes me into a religious escape. Hell couldn't be much worse then this.

I just hope wherever it is. Anna will be there. I hope she was truly happy. She was so resilient, even she could be happy in hell. She sure knew a lot about it. Never wanted to believe her then and now...

Suddenly another noise breaks the ethereal sounds resonating in the cold foggy air. Car alarms from outside.

Voices murmur near father. One of the men in the corner go out to investigate. My father relieves the knife from me and speaks to another man nearby. A minute passes. The cloaked investigator doesn't return. Many of them worriedly whisper and start congregating. They begin yelling shortly after a small bit of pacing around. Some make calls while others look for any sort of safety.

"Where the hell is security??"

"The intruders were already apprehended!"

"What is going on??"

"You gotta be fuckin kidding me!!"

The head cultist, blows a horn from the top of his perch. It silences the men immediately. He speaks, "A devil is in our company. Everyone prepare your..."

A small man appears suddenly from behind him. He leaps against the wall and then jumps at the head cultist, thrusting a hook into his head and a sharp kick to his back. He descends passed the rope connected to the farming hook. Plummeting 20 feet down, impaling his belly on a candle holder

Could it be?

... A Cherub?

## JACK

Should've known the armored car, would have a hell of a car alarm. The tire doesn't even pop, what kind of UFO shit is this. It goes off and loud. Well, so much for plan A or B or which ever fucking plan it is now.

A cloaked man runs out. A simple wire trips him. I meet em on the ground with a strong kick to the back of the head and a knife in the throat. I'm not always that creative. Sometimes an easy kill is a good kill. I lift him back up and up passed my head. I thrust him onto a metal post nearby, pulling him the rest of the way down. impaling him thru the upper gut. I try to pull him by his feet. Rip up to his head. Only get about a half way there. Still a bit weak from the damned...

I hop into the car I killed the chauffer in. Only one unfucked one. The door opens to a small waterfall of blood. Guy must've been pretty healthy.

The car revs up fast. Havent driven in awhile, but this ones easy. Never been in a car this nice, not with all my grand theft autos. Probably a lamborghini or some shit. A beautiful sight ahead.

The glow of fire.

"Time to fuck shit up."

I turn on the radio expecting a badass tune. Only to find Eric Clapton.

"Fuck that."

90.7FM Death Metal.

"Fuckin' commercial C'MON!!"

I punch the radio. Smashing it into the classical station.

“Whatever”

Not the first time I’ve killed to an orchestra.

A quick circle in the small lot to build speed, then right through the front doors. It topples one of the large barn doors on top of the car as it powers through tools and hay and dust, slowing down to a halt as it hits an altar with some kids on it. At least one man bump a few feet away. Popped like a fat cherry.

Coulda been another kid too... Better back up to find out. Yep, it’s a creep. Fat boy too. As I back up, I land just on top of the culty pedo as he pounds on the car screaming. Revving the tires through him. Debris and blood drizzled tire smoke fill the air, as one of the cloaked men runs out the front. I turn on the brights and jump out.

“I’m gonna fuck you fucks until you die!!”

The cloaked man hits the tripwire too. What a fucking classic. Falling to the ground. He lacks the struggle of the last one, instead of getting up, he worms away. I get a good jump and an even better stomp on his head. Gets him screaming an inch into the dirt.

Takes three to really get the Gallagher effect, but Goddam that man was juicy.

I can hear firepower up ahead and the flames start to creep up the barn back door. Of course one of em would be packing. I run back in a as the dust settles a bit. No shots fired as I slide to the car and take cover.

I can see Jackal hop down from above onto the man with the gun. He breaks the mans arm and thrusts him against wall. The man kneels and begins to beg, “PLEASE!! I’ll pay you whatever you want. Millions. BILLIONS!! PLEASE!!!” Jackal half interested, but more skeptical responds, “Don’t suppose you brought your wallet full fo millions now did you nigga?” The cloaked man grovels at Jackals feet, “Please! I can wire you the money. I know a guy, very discreet, he can . I swear!”

As the man pleads, Jackal notices a pitchfork. He grabs it and thrusts it into the man, as he screams. He continues to pierce the groveling man yelling,

“Yeehaw!!”. His begging turns to bumbling, as his face and torso are torn apart. Farming equipment looks fun.

I fail to spot any others, especially Fox. I quickly notice some stalls that lead to pasture. Didn't quite think of that. They seemed to dissipate quickly and with not many numbers and here I was hoping for a big billionaire bloodbath.

Mouse yells from above, “COPS!!”

Fuck! Already. What a fuckin loss. Only 4 satanic shits slaughtered. What a fucking waste and what about Fox? Couldn't see him being the kind to run away.

“We got less than a minute.”

“FOX!!!! FIGHT ME YOU COWARD!!”

I approach the center of the barn near the altar of dead girls. Looking around for any survivors to interrogate. One of the girls stirs. Her body not nearly as fucked up as the rest of them. Her body naked and c'mon Jack.

Ughk what the fuck is wrong with me. When did I start feeling. Anything for anyone.

She struggles to speak, and shakes with terror. She looks blue and almost half frozen. A man runs up behind me with a sickle landing it in my side. Tearing some of the bandages off my chest wound. It opens slightly. He backs off thinking it should've killed me. You'd think all these rich and powerful types would know more about killing. I take the sickle out and push it up to his nose.

“Where is Fox?”

He looks in just not enough terror “I don't even..”

The nose slices like a mushroom. Almost looks like one too.

He reels and I grab him to hold him steady. Sticking it now in his mouth, he freezes and panic cries.

“WHERE IS FOX??

He murmurs confused. Guess Fox probably wouldn't go by his gang name in this circle. To think about. I never really got his birth name.

I plunge the sickle down his throat and dig it down and out of his lower neck.

“WE NEED TO GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!!” Mouse yells with urgency. Cops must be close. No Fox, no interrogation, no closure or nothin. Just a few cheap kills and some new wounds.

“Fuck!”

What a goddam loss.

“Nigga I’ll meet you fags at the hideout.” Jackal yells as he dashes out. Mouse disappearing just after his warning. I look around to see another cultist hiding behind a crate. Not worth my time. He’ll prolly burn to death anyway.

This girl though, maybe she knows something or someone. Festival of Blood involved close sacrifice. Maybe she’s important. Couldn’t hurt. Worst case I just kill her as a warning.

“What will it take to kill you?” Fox’s voice comes from behind. He says it almost laughingly, “Twice now. Figured you would’ve been able to guess the first time.”

I turn to face him, flames rising from the walls. Words cant sum what I want to say. I use my knife to speak. Lunging with all my might towards him. He sees it easy, grabbing my wrist and sweeping my feet. I topple down scrambling for the next attack.

“Guess third times the charm eh Jackie boy!” He kicks my chest hard. Hard enough to open the wound a bit more, but the drugs kick in. Baby spines are a hell of a thing.

He goes for a stomp on my head, as I still scramble to get up. I grab his other leg as the stomp into the ground quickly turns to another swift kick, still to the chest. Fuckers targeting my weak spot.

“COWARD!!!! I push with all my might managing to lift him up and into the wall. Fire tinges us both. He comes down with a series of strikes to my head and shoulders. Head could take it, but my right shoulder wound comes back from Juggernaut. Could he really be attacking all my old injuries too. I release his leg and back away. He slowly composes himself.

“I didn’t have to fight you. Could’ve just let you die on your own, but I meant what I said earlier. Figured you at least deserved to die at my hands.”

The sirens blue and red light illuminate the burning barn.

I yell in a growl, “Why the others?”

Fox chuckles snidely. A first seeing him laugh or hardly smile.

“Well well well. The Wolf suddenly cares about other animals. Saw you even considering taking the girl with you.”

Why the fuck does he look so happy. Why do i..

“I wasn’t and i.. Just...”

I couldn’t think or speak. Just rage. I lunge again moving towards him, he kicks my thigh where the baldie struck me with a crossbow bolt. How could he have even known about that one.

“Just what Jack? You care?? You love them? You want justice??”

Fox strikes me with a fist to the chest. Going slightly inside. I can feel my heart rumble and my body go weak. I try for counter but weakly hit his side. Fox laughs again. A scarier sound than any anger I’ve heard from him. He kicks me down to the ground again. I find it much harder to get back up.

“You were always a fool, but now. C’mon. Get it into your THICK SKULL.” He kicks my head, this time cracking it. Vision fading. The front part of the barn collapses behind me in deep flames.

He keeps rambling, “You were always meant to be mine. My pawn. My killer. My killed.”

The brain damage shoots a dose of retard strength through me. I shoot up with an uppercut. Missing. Then a wide swing at his anything. Catching his shoulder. He goes for my chest again. Predictable. I grab his hand. He laughs.

“You really think you can grapple me.”

I swing a pair of handcuffs from the dead cop Jackal killed. Locking him in. He looks surprised. I look at him with a bloody smile.

“You’re pretty good at dodging, but pretty shit at taking a hit.”

I strike him one good in the side, as he spits blood still laughing, “That’s it. HA!”

I strike him again in the face, he blocks it with his hand. Gripping my wrist and twisting his body in a way, I didn’t know bodies could. He positions himself

and throws me down. The force of which cuts his wrist, but somehow releases him from the cuffs.

“Been arrested so much, I’d think you’d know your way around cuffs.”

How the fuck would he know. He’s never been arrested and he ain’t no magician.

He places his boot into my chest wound digging in. Completely opening it. No retard strength or baby spine can get me through the pain surging through my entire upper half. My brain goes numb from the pain. Static and black, but I’m not turning off.

“Theres a reason you’re down there. I’m up here. There’s an order Jack. A holy order to things. Do you believe in God?”

I can hardly register his words, but I bet they’re insulting/ I spit blood at him, he pushes down harder. My heart beats wildly, struggling not to get crushed.

“God made me, over you. God made me, over the world. Its not just, what happen to these girls or to me or you. You can’t make it just, you cant deny order. You can’t do anything, but accept. Accept your God!!”

I can feel blood pooling inside. My body spasming at a loss of control. I can hear a bell ring, but not the toll.

“Do you remember Annas vision?”

Anna... I can hear that. Why would he..?

“You will be devoured by the Animals. Torn limb by limb. I will rise on the tower of those ravenous beasts, all the way to the fucking moon.”

Anna..

“You are food and I am the hungry, JACK. I will eat. I WILL EAT. I WILL FEAST AND FEAST AND”

ANNA!

I remember her vision. I remember her as one of the only people, I couldn’t kill. Not even a thought. She was hardly pure, but she was good. Not that I wouldn’t kill good, but she was different. She was kind. Not that I wouldn’t..

Anna.. I remember Anna.

“Anna..” I let out with some phantom breath.

“So you do remember. Ha! I remember you telling me, how she made you feel, feelings. Just little wolf pup in love. Hahahah! I made sure to take her that night. She fought and you lost. I remember you saying you couldn’t imagine killing her. I made sure, you never could. “

He killed her. He’s been here before. He’s been here all along.

“You.. Killed Anna.”

A power the which I’ve never experienced. Burns from in me. Feelings beyond feeling. Could this be vengeance, could this be love? Hate?? Drugs? Baby spines?.. God?

I grab his ankle, crushing it with a machine might. Breaking bone. He silently witnesses the pain, he was never the type to express it, if he even ever felt it.

He says in psychotic anger, “What the hell are you doing?? DIE!!”

He presses down with all of his weight. He was always strong, never heavy. I manage to lift him up and throw him to the side. Fox catches himself as gracefully as he can with a crushed ankle. The flames consume the area, but I feel cold. A deep cold.

“Why.. Did you kill her?” The words come as if I were a puppet.

Fox seems taken aback but my movement. I know my death is near, the blood pooling from my chest. Runs down to my feet. I have to know, before the big unknowing.

“Why.. Did you kill Elephant? Hawk? Hog??”

Fox lunges out with a swift three jabs to my torso. Either he’s gotten a lot slower, I’ve gotten a lot faster. I bat them away and punch his chest with the might to throw him 10 feet into a burning wall.

“Why did you try to kill us? WHY THESE GIRLS?? WHY THESE MEN?? WHY FOX??? WHY!?”

He gets up perplexed by such a punch. I have no time to be confused by it either. Gunshots and engines revving outside mask the sound of popping wood and raging fire in here.

“What the fuck are you?” He asks me with a fear I didn’t know he can muster. He runs up and strikes with weak punches. It’s in this light and closeness, I can see him up close. He looks terrible, blue and veiny, as if I’d been choking him this whole time. As if he were already dead. I strike him once more, in the chest. Feeling his rib cavity break and his innards roll.

I want his live beating heart.

He continues to attack my weak spots. With technical grace and weak strength. He feints in front gasping for air and clutching at his head, which looks enlarged and full of pressure. The roof begins to collapse. I can let him burn in flames. Dead by the God he thinks destined him over me. But my body moves before I can think. Striking him once more in the chest. Shattering what ever bone was left. The flesh is soft and his insides. Why are they cold. Everything around. Freezing. Could I be dying? Fuck Am I dead?

... Heaven?

I lift the heart pulling pieces from inside him. Surprised by how easy it was to take out and how much was attached to it. I lean to his whimpering wheezing face. He looks at me no longer with surprise, but anger. I place his beating heart on his forehead and ask again.

“Why?”

He looks furious at this answer. As if it were the dumbest question I could ask. His fury then turns to laughter. A chunk of the roof collapses on to my back. The flame burns but a cold one. I stand up, pushing it aside, as more start to crumble around.

“You’re not even worth it.” He didn’t deserve my death or my kill. Seems to sting too. He looks hurt the most at this.

I look around and see no easy exit. Both gates crumbled with flames and guarded with cops. I see the girl still bound and about to be torched. Could do her a favor and put her out of her misery. Do one good thing before dying.. Hell, maybe it’ll hurt Fox more. Maybe I do care or maybe..

Why the hell does she remind me of Anna?

Who cares. Fuck it!! For now she’ll make a damn fine ransom.

I throw her over my shoulder. Every wound new and old hitting at once. I drop her, coughing blood on her defeated blindfolded body.

Some gunshots outside. Place is undoubtedly surrounded. Wonder what they could be shooting at.

Barns roof is about to fall.

“Only one way out.”

I drag the girl into the car, she’s freezing, but maybe that’s because my face is fucking melting. I kick the altar away and throw some rubble off the car. Struggling to breathe in the smoke blood filled air.

I hop in the car. Trying to start the car.

“Fuck”

Must be overheated or no.. Fuck! I don’t know.

The girl whimpers something, but I can’t hear it. I try the key again and a hotwire Gooch tried teaching me. Still nothing. I punch it, breaking a chunk of the dashboard. It finally turns over.

“Finally!”

The girl whispers something slightly more audible, “..Man in back..?”

“Shut the fuck up! I know they’re at my back!!” Too much noise, too much blur. Gotta pay attention. She’s still blindfolded anyway. What the fuck does she know.

“Quiet!”

I think I’m fucking dying. I go for the radio, as a giant chunk of roof falls beside the car. Opera, Mexican, talk and finally. Motherfucking goddam metal!

I try to yell a hell yeah, but more blood comes up from my lungs or somewhere. My feet though. They can go petal to the metal. I back out hitting a piece of the fallen gate and rev forward towards the front of the barn. Spinning out at the front gate and building speed towards the broken back gate.

The car soars, as if this is what it was built for. A goddam chariot of the sky. It hits the gate piled on some rubble. A god given ramp. The car hits the top of the entrance breaking the wood trim and spreading the fire on the car and embers into

the air. It soars a good 10 feet in the air and lands into a cop, ripping him in half and spattering blood all over the windshield. The girl smacks her head on the dash something bad. Seems to wake her up. The barn explodes from whatever oil drums or fireworks were in there.

The car struggles but gets back up to speed. The axel wobbling and some popping noise coming from the hood. I turn on the windshield wipers, but it only smears the blood. I drive half blind, half red. Right into a fucking cop car. I bust the window out and take a look. Two cop cars and a road beyond. A gun shot blows the left mirror out. I hop back in, as two more shots hit the left passenger window and the car side. I back up, three shots in the windshield. One of them right in front of me, must've just missed. The radio starts to glitch the song repeating in a strange warped tone.

My foot falls on the pedal, I barely have the strength to press my foot down. I still slam into the cop car on the right, but narrowly bounce between the two. Unfortunately missing any cops. Several shots hit the car, but none hit the tire. I try to break the windshield thinking it'd make it easier to see. It just cracks around it, obscuring it worse. Don't have the strength to completely shatter it.

“FUCKING FUCK!”

I fucking hate driving. I hate this weakness. All the wounds and injuries and FUCK!

I throw my head out the window and accelerate fast. The sirens are moving and they're not far.

The road hits a split, I take a left and veer into the ditch on the right. The car chugs along janky like. Getting close to the woods and country roads. Just a little more.

I feel a freezing cold touch on my chest, by the weird girl. In retaliation I go to strike her, when suddenly weightlessness, then falling.

A crash, broken glass, a smashed tree and back to black.. Again.

What a shitty fucking death..

# CHAPTER 13

## Jack And Maryanna

*Mary*

And suddenly I can see. Through my own eyes.

The man in black. Blonder than I imagine. Less gothic and more covered in blood. He's near death. Driving a broken down car fast. The windshield is cracked and bloody. My head hurts. Its bleeding. No way I can influence a car or can I just...

The car crashes.

Once again outside myself. This time. I must be dead.. The man in black launches outside the windshield, shattering it entirely and smashing into a tree. I fly out further, headfirst into a shallow pond.

I start to sink. Deeper and deeper into it. I turn around to see the surface. The blood from my head leaving a thread above. I try to swim up, but I'm being pulled. Deeper into darkness.

This must be death, but why can I still think. There's still a monologue going on. I can still see.

And that's when it happens. The imagery from the dream. This time like a dimly lit play. No static or television screens. Its all so vivid. I can smell the actors. The colorful lights flickering in and out of visions. Each of them happening almost simultaneously all around. Of war, and burning wheels, and authority and a city covered in blood. A circus, a long road. I see him reach out. The man in black. I see him tortured and mangled. Still reaching, as if I can save him.

I see chains intertwining along every moment. Well beyond the dark abyss outside, I can see bars. A cage. Suddenly the chains softly bind my wrists. My neck and waist. Wrapping around like a snake. The visions start to blur and change

color. I can see Anna. My mother behind her. They look happy, but somethings behind them. Some sort of monster. Behind it, a picture of my father happier then ever. Holding the world.

The chains tighten. I try to turn towards the ground, but instead get pulled upright. I'm suspended in the air. I look below.

The man in black struggles up a tower of corpses. He'll never be able to reach me even at the top. Could he?

He finishes the climb and lays a body on top. Sobbing over it. I want to cry, but nothing comes out. I look above and see the black sun. The Eclipse at its fullest. Glaring down like a vengeful God.

I look forward at the corpse ridden horizon and feel myself floating forward. Towards my gaze. Far beyond.

## ANNA

I float in the muddy bloody pond. A misty morning rain falls around. I feel my head. Mostly dry blood. Must've been out for awhile.

I'm cold. The kind of human cold I remember. It's almost refreshing. Soaked and shivering, I force myself up, slipping in mud on the way to my feet. My head feeling like its about to explode.

I remember the man in black falling just up the hill. It'd be a miracle if he was still alive. I see the car above in the ravine, crumpled into the tree. Got to be careful of broken glass. The hill is muddy, but the bushes provide good grip. I climb up to the car and look down. Trying to spot him. Could've swore he hit the second tree down. I climb down to it. Blood, but no body. He must be alive. I follow the blood for a few feet, until I hear voices from the road atop the ravine.

“You couldn't see the fucking skidmarks, Gordry!”

“Rain + Night. What do you want from me??”

“Wanna competent employee”

A third voice, “Shut the fuck up and follow it down. They couldn’t be far.”

Damn! Would’ve thought they’d think me dead in the fire. Unless they put it out or.. No..

One of the men wastes no time as he slides down the hill a mere few hundred feet away.

I tread lightly down to the main forest near the pond. Further forward I can hear a creek ahead. No signs of any goons. I begin picking up the pace, even if the movement splits my head in two.

I arrive at the creek after a couple minutes. Turn around still no goons. No time to rest either. I look for an easier crossing and in looking to the left see The Man In Black sprawled out, in a bush off the creek. Looks like he was trying to wash some blood off. He wont be hard to track, leaving a trail like a bloody snail. I can hear murmurs of goons echoe. It wont be long. I go to pick him up. His body much large then I thought. He has to be almost 7 feet. I manage to drag him slightly more into the bush. He stirs slightly. His blue eyes open with a pale bloodshot look to them. As if he’s undead. Undying. They stare in a confusion.

The voices are close. I can hear their footsteps. No easy hiding places, They’ll find him too. No way to fight them either. Maybe I could.. No.

“They’re over here by the creek!”

No!

“Shoot em and bag em boys”

No!!

“Hey I found the girl!”

NO!!!

“NOOOO!!!!!!”

My head explodes into a cataclysm of nerves breaking and neurons crashing. I grab Jacks knife and rush the Security officer, plunging it deep into his gut. He pulls his gun and explodes. The entire body spattering around. I see the second

man approaching oblivious to his buddies death, gun drawn and aimed at me. I pull the gun from his hand and the head from his body. Then my own head feels gone. As if its no longer on my body. My senses mute. The third man approaches.

“Gordry! Anderson! Where the fuck did you..? Hey, Come here!!”

He sees me and I try to move, but my body is frozen. Not the refreshing kind either. I feel my head and all its pain. None of my body. Just a cold empty.

He grabs me throwing me into the mud. Pulling his rifle to my face to fire.

Then suddenly The Man In Black thrusts over at his leg. The man topples over not expecting it. He fires a shot missing him and reloads.

“What the fuck! Goddam zombie!!”

The Man In Black mangled burnt body climbs up the officers body, wrestling him into the creek. Another shot, this time hitting along his back. He grabs onto the rifle barrel. I can hear the sizzling flesh of this.

The Man In Black gets on top of him limply. He seems to be using only half his body. A resilient half.

“Get the fuck off me! No!!”

The officer shoots again, missing. He then releases the gun to try and get him off. The Man in Black lets go and bites his face. The Officer screams, as his nose is torn off. He thrashes trying to get him off. Eventually throwing the man in black back into the bush. The officer pulls a knife and stabs into The Man in Black. I grab the rifle and wing it at the officer. Not knowing what else to do. He launches up in anger, as I get a good thrust into his face hole. He reels in pain and slips in the mud. Grabbing at the wound.

The Man in Black then worms his way towards the screaming weezing gargling officer. He gets back on top of him and swing his fist down into the officers face. He quits thrashing. Another punch. He stops moving entirely. Another punch. He starts twitching. Another punch. Another punch. Another and another. Until the Man in black collapses on top of him or whats left.

The creek flowing immense amount of blood in it.

Can I even save this man? There surely will be more men coming to investigate. Men, more evil then him.

I get close, but stand fearful of touching him. He seems more beast than man.

He looks so familiar. As if we've met outside of dreams.

## MARY

I splash a little water on him. The officer spasms a little bit. The Man In Black remains still. His thick clothes make it hard to tell if he's breathing. I splash a little more. Nothing.

I load up the rifle and pick up his knife. Trying to nudge him with the rifle, I realize it's too short for comfort. I grab a stick to poke him with. As I give a first nudge I realize the stick still seems a bit short. I grab a longer stick to prod him with. One poke in the side reveals an apparent hole in his side. He shoots up like a rabid animal and glares growling at me. Ready to pounce.

I can't say I didn't expect this.

"I'm uh.. I'm Mary. I'm.."

His eyes once pale are completely bloodshot and dilated. He slouches and crumples getting back up. It's then I can see the full extent of his wounds. He shouldn't be alive. Neither of us should be. He lashes out threatening to strike. "Fuck.. Off!!" He yells. I try to get alert him to the situation, "There's more men coming after you.. Us."

He looks furious but mostly at what is probably hitting him now. I wonder why, "Why did you save me..?"

"You dumb bitch! I kidnapped.. You.."

He says coldly, hacking up blood and falling to a knee, still eyeing a kill in his stare.

"I have nowhere to run to." I say with no other options.

I drop the knife and try to take initiative, “We need to find somewhere to hide.”

He stares befuddled. The glazed paleness returns to his eyes, as he drops back into the creek.

“Fuck off!” He says weakly, but fiercely.

“My sister taught me some forest medicine. I can help.. If you don’t kill me”

“Fuck you! Fuck your forest!! I'm fucking fine!”

“Can I at least..

“FUCK. OFF!”

He begins coughing up more blood. There's no rationing with this man. Why would I even help my kidnapper anyway? What a Ass!

“Fine! DIE then!!”

A bit dramatic, but hopefully that’ll get the point across. The rain starts picking up as the mist and morning fog fade.

I walk off to find cover. Just up ahead a large pond. Frogs begin croaking. My shoe get stuck in the mud on my way around the pond. Wonder if it’d be easier to cross barefoot, but sticks look sharp. I get around the pond and into another clearing. A strange gnarled tree that looks like two intertwined hides a small cave. I remember Anna telling me there was a cave nearby. It’s small but cover. I crawl in and take my shoes off to dry. Looks like it goes on for a few more feet. I crawl further in and shiver freezing. I wonder if that car has any spare clothes. May as well go back.

On the way to the car. I stop by the creek. Jack has rolled back into the bush like a dying animal. He shakes hard.

Up ahead I see the corpses of the men. Should probably hide them, but how can they ever think it was me. I make it to the car. Looks precariously positioned. Any wrong tilt and it falls from the tree. I open up the driver's side to find a lever for the trunk. Takes a minute, but I find it on the door. The rain really picks up, as I carefully grasp the side of the car for grip and head to the back of the car. The trunk seems blocked. Shocking the driver side door wasn’t.

Inside a duffle bag, a couple grocery bags, a bone saw, a bunch of ropes and a car toolbox neatly organized. The duffle bag had bunch of cleaning products. Towels, rags and various wetwipes. The grocery bags have some cleaning chemicals and painting material.

Get the feeling I know what this car was for. Not ideal but it should work for now.

The duffel is heavy, I pull it out as it snags on the car. I pull it out, but the weight tosses me back, slipping in the mud and sliding below the car, down onto the tree. I'm glad to catch myself but getting back up seems a lot. The tree breaks and slowly falls releasing the car which careens to the right until hitting a stump and rolling down into a thick brush patch. I slide down tumbling into the branches.

The duffel bag rolled just nearby. Takes some careful branch climbing to get to and out of. The rain goes into a full downpour. Deep puddles start to form, the bags weight is nearly too much. I remove the bones saw and cleaning products out and under the tree. Hauling mostly towels. Still dry. I haul em over to the creek. I see Jack still trembling sitting against a nearby willow.

“I found a cave nearby and some towels.”

“Good.. for you.” He says with a heavy chatter and weak raspy voice.

“Not a very good kidnapper are you.”

Guess it's not so bad I'm not trapped in some hideout. Jack looks annoyed by my mere presence.

“Fuck off!” He says bluntly.

“Not a very good person either.”

He's silent at this one. I want to leave to make a point, but the look on his face was so hurt. Maybe he..

“I'm just trying to help. Thank you for.. Kidnapping me back there.”

He's still silent, but I half expected that.

The pond before the cave is flooded out. The detour takes a bit longer then I expected. In a swampy spot, I lost my shoe. At least a foot into some deep mud.

Finally, shelter. Warmth. Dry feet. The inside of the cave is slightly raised from the ground. Dry with bits of small rocks and soft dirt. The rags dry me off well enough and the towels are less warm then expected. But it's better then nothing.

An exhaustion hits from everything. An overload of sense, mind, body and soul.

I sleep well into the night, with no dreams. Lightning wakes me up and makes me worry. Why should I care if he lives or die. I just have to get to a neighbors house and call for help. If there is such a thing. I can do this on my own. What am I gonna nurse him back to health so he can traffic me. C'mon Mary.

Then again. What would Anna do? So easy to know her footsteps, but so hard to follow in them.

Always feels like you're right around the corner. Right behind me.

But still.. Far.

I'm so sorry for what you must've experienced. I hope you didn't have to do it twice.

I cant help but to think about him. He's so powerful yet pathetic. What he did in that barn. Was I really even helping or was that just him.

I hope he can at least make it til the morning. I lay awake trying to figure out new ways to maximixe heat between four towels. Even at one point throwing damp rags over certain parts. I lay awake thinking about everything. Rem, Gem, Mother. Mother, what do you know? What happened?

Anna..

## ANNA

The rain lightens back to a misty sprinkle. The morning sun is bright, but masked in dark clouds. Outside the cave is lightly flooded. With no shoes it doesn't seem so bad. I walk through water and mud with the duffel bag filled with a couple towels and rags.

My stomach rumbles on the way. Havent been hungry til just now, but it has been a few days.

I arrive at the creek, which has filled in much wider since last night. I rinse my muddy legs in the creek. Its cold, but still refreshing.

I see The Man In Black slumped down. On closer inspection he looks dead. Soaked and blue. His stare despondent. I start to towel him off. After drying his head and shoulders, I notice his eyes move towards me. I use some clean rags and rope to seal the wound from infection. Tightening that, makes him tense up. He's alive, but barely. I can sense he wants to lash out, but barely has the strength. After drying him off and treating some wounds. I check out the upside down car in the bushes. A lot easier to explore the nooks and cranny. Found a few snacks. Some sardines, pepperoni and cashews.

“Wonderful!”

I dig into he sardines, hard inhaling them out of the can, spilling fish juice on me. After a couple cans I eat a handful of cashews. Th car is surprisingly dry. Just smells like dry blood and motor oil.

I return to the creek.

I approach him once again this time with a fat pepperoni stick. I poke him slightly with it in the face. Then tuck it in his mouth. He chews reluctantly.

“I have more food and a place to get dry nearby. C'mon”

I try to pull him up. He stares in anger, but his body is to dead to fight. I drag him.

His body is cold, the dead kind. He shivers fast but softly. Trudging his feet along. I figure the car would be easiest. I set him into the car where he curls up. Looking almost ashamed to receive my kind of help. I feel embarrassed too. Angry. So powerless I'm helping my kidnapper. Anything to get away from...

Thinking back to the injury on my ankle from the other day. How it have healed so fast. Could these abilities. Could they.

I place a hand on his chest and try to do the opposite of exploding him.

He glares down in fury and slight pain. His arm trembles towards me with a half clenched fist. He lightly moves it to my face. He shuts down defeated realizing, he cant punch. He can no longer fight.

It seems for the first time in day, he falls a sleep.

Time to get to work.

# JACK AND MARY

At long last, after a day of rest and nursing by Mary. Jack awakens with a mumble, “KILL!!!”

Mary backs away at the violent first words. Jack stares back at her with a confused and primal gaze, “Who the fuck are you?”. Mary answers back, “I’m.. Mary.”

Jack tries to recall, “Mary who?”

Mary goes to explain, but wonders if he forgot about the kidnapping.

“Mary Moone. You uh..”

Jack looks disgusted, “No way I tried to fuck you. Ain’t into kids. Unless..?”

Mary looks repulsed, “I’m 12 and no.. You..”

Jack unapologetically, “Ya never know, but no way I tou”

“You didn’t.. Hurt me.” Mary says slightly abashed.

“Where the fuck am I anyway.” Jack goes to stand up and immediately reels in pain at his chest. Falling right back to the ground.

“Fuck..” He coughs some blood.

“You crashed your car over passed the creek. I brought you to this cave to uhm.. Recover.” Mary explains.

Jack looks at his battered half naked body, “You didn’t try to touch me did you!?”

Mary looks horrified, unable to even dignify an answer.

“HA!! I’m kidding. But serieously who the fuck are you and am I.. UWAgk” He grasps at his chest again. Mary rushes in with a bloody dirty towel, “You’re greatly injured.”

“Wheres the animals??” Jack says shoving her aside and managing to perch up against the cave slightly and hobble outside.

“Wait” Mary hollers at him as he rests on a nearby tree and composes himself in the feint foggy sunlight. It’s then Jack memory starts to return. He remembers Fox’s betrayal. He remembers leaving him to die. He looks back at Mary, trying to remember.

He remembers Anna. “Was she there? Could she have been there?” Jack wonders half aloud, “He killed her right?... Fox..”

Mary looks confused at his mumbling. Slightly scared of his now mobile rantings on murder.

“Wheres the creek?” Jack asks Mary. She gets up and looks north “Sure. Give me a quick sec.”

She grabs the rifle and pistol, from earlier. Jack looks impressed. He pats his body checking for his trusty knife.

“It’s in the car.” Mary says as she heads out, grabbing the duffel as well.

Jack tries to catch up, but struggles. Feeling his leg, his shoulder. Pressing a finger through a towel into the chest wound.

“Fuck.”

He remembers the fight. The ritual. The mission. The car. Superimposed over all of it. Fox’s laugh. Jack had never seen that side of him. Almost happy. Jack wonders aloud, “Musta been a hell of a club.”

Mary looks back from 15 feet ahead, mishearing him, “What???”

Jack looks annoyed.

“I take it you were captive of that creep club?”

Mary thinks back at the memories she’s been trying to avoid. She’d put herself fully into healing Jack for that reason. Trying to repair a blackhole, to avoid falling into worse. The trauma was deep.

“I…” Mary says with the faintest of breaths. Jack looks to her uncaring, as he takes a piss, “Yeah I don’t really give a shit. Must’ve had some rich folks or something. Definitely worth kidnapping.”

“So you remember..?” Mary says inquisitively.

Jack eyes her like a valuable breakable object, “Could probably get a million from you? How much do you think you’re worth?”

Mary half flattered, half pissed turns around snarkily, “Remember who has the guns.”

“You couldn’t kill a goddam fly.” Jack says confidently. Mary is silent. The two arrive at the creek. Jack sees a nearly dead body and smells out another. He examines the two, looting empty handed. Human shrapnel littering the scene.

“I already looted them.”, Mary says while gathering water into a bleach bottle. Jack looks frustrated by this, “Well pony up little girl. Guns and everything else.”

Mary looks disappointed in Jack, “.. It’s back at the cave. Under a rock.”

“That’s what I thought.”

Mary wants to lash out but bites her tongue. Jack examines the scene. Picturing how it must’ve went down. A favorite past time of his after gang wars. He comes to the mans head ripped off, a few minutes more he finds the head. Jack had tried many times to rip another mans head off, but always came up short. He looks intrigued. The second body he sees in the creek. His face mangled and bashed into pulp.

“Classic!”

Jack smiles and walks around a bit more, noticing the chunks of body and blood spattered all over the area. “What happened to the third?” He asks looking at Mary.

“I don’t know. He just kind of exploded.” Mary says with a smirk, cleaning a rifle.

Jack puts his hands on his hips proud, “Yeah, wouldn’t be the first time I’ve done that.”

He’d never done that, but had always wanted to. He looks confused and second guessing, “Who else was here?”

“No one.” Mary replies.

“hmm.. Weird..” Jack looks perplexed as he makes his way to the car. He braces himself on a tree, hacking up blood and clenching his chest.

“FUUUCK!!” His yell echoes through the forest.

Mary approaches, “There may still be people looking for us.”

Jack disturbed, “You’re way too young to be into this kidnapping shit.”

Mary looks growingly agitated by Jack arrogance and disrespect. She wants to lash out or blow up a limb, but cools down. “I’m not remotely into you or anyone. I just.. I just want..”

Oh my gosh! Wah wah wah. I WAS JOKING!! Calm down.“

Mary finds a branch above him and snaps its base with a psychic cunning, dropping it onto Jack.

“AGH FUCK!”

Jack lashes out and punches the tree with great force. Breaking a little bark and rocking it slightly.

“Goddam tree.” He walks off pissed and pained. Grabbing at his shoulder. Mary smiles and pulls out a chocolate bar leftover, eating it stealthily.

“What a prick!”

Jack makes it to the car and rests in the driver seat.

“Finally some goddam peace and quiet!”

He tries to turn on the radio. It’s broken. He goes to slam it broken, but realizes the extent of his injuries. He turns on the lights which flicker on. He rips

the rearview mirror off and begins checking his wounds. Noticing herbs and towel bandages holding in a lot of it. Most of the bleeding had stopped, but damage was there.

“Ah this ain’t so bad. I just gotta find Gooch... No way he’s at the hideout. Bar might be crawling... Trailer park?”

Jack thinks and stings in pain, at the trying to remove the towel for the chest wound.

“That one ain’t great..”

He sits back and thinks about everything. Life death killing. Friends and even family. He looks from the busted out windshield, Mary shoots a squirrel with her rifle.

“Not too shabby.”

He reclines the seat all the way and kicks his feet up on wet dashboard.

“I hope they got out alive. Mouse, Gooch, Elephant, Ja... Nah.. Fuck Jackal.”

Jack looks over annoyed but almost tearful at the memory of Jackal saving his life and also shitting all over his face. The memories of the time with animals burns, in the eyes of the one that betrayed them.

“Fox..”

Jack looks a bit concerned.

“No way he could’ve.. Why didn’t I..”

He remembers his agony at the remorse. It gives Jack some hope. Jack tries to think about the rituals and esoteric nature of the ceremony. It’s beyond his paygrade.

“Fuck that shit!”

He looks out at Mary gutting the squirrel and readying the meat.

“Who the fuck is this bitch!”

Jack looks uncomfortable watching her.

“Great, I'm stuck babysitting some senators daughter. Better be worth at least 50 thousand.”

Mary from a couple hundred feet away, “WHAT??”

Jack looks surprised by her hearing.

“I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING!! Dumb cunt...” He mumbles.

She yells back, “OK!”

Jack gets angry, “I KNOW IT'S OK. I SAY ITS OK. OK???”

“OK.. I mean.. ALRIGHT!!”

Mary smirks and Jack grits his teeth.

Mary eyes the kill and amount of meat. She thought about sharing, but after hearing a little bit of Jack. She decides to head to the cave early. Jack watches her leave with annoyed curiosity.

Back at the cave. Mary starts a fire, with a lighter and a gasoline soaked rag. She burns up a little log. While staring at the flame, she wonders if she can control flame. Focusing on it and watching it dance. She thinks for a second she controlled it jump, but it could've been coincidence. She reflects on the nature of magic for hours. Recalling all the things Anna told her.

She puts the squirrel on a stick and begins roasting it. She tries to suppress the memories of what she saw. What fate was ahead or her situation now. She thinks towards the future.

“If I can just get to town. Call Jason and Aunt Adelle. Get everyone out and away.. But can we.. really run from hell. From that. How can I.. Can I ever escape...Flee the shadow that took Anna. Could you still be out there? Could you of escaped? Into the darkness...”

The squirrel catches fire. Mary shakes on it and blowin.

“If you can only see me now. You're little survivalsis...”

Mary thinks back to the death she caused. Guilty even over monsters.

“.. A killer. I.. I had to. It was.. I'm a killer now..”

Jack pops in suddenly. Rambling towards the smell of food.

“Conspiring to kill me huh? Good luck! You’ll never escape me. Wherever you run, I’ll be there!!”

Mary looks shy at this. Jack grabs her arm.

“Now give me that food.”

Mary looks pissed and pushes him off, “Get your own! Don’t you know how to hunt??”

Jack says looming over her, “I know how to kill”

“So do..” Mary stops, considering all the options. Thinking strategic.

She takes a big bite and passes it to Jack. She got most the good stuff anyway, she thinks. Jack looks broodingly suspicious at her. He begins chewing on it. Irking with disgust, “It’s burnt.”

Mary gives him a look.

Jack finishes the burnt meat, “You should go hunt some more. Make yourself useful.”

Mary looks at a way to hurt Jack she tries to spread the fire to him, but cant seem to control fire.

“You’re a real jerk! You know that??” Mary proclaims, readying her sleeping area. Jack trying to have the last word, “I’m worse than that. Way worse!” Mary unaffected and inquisitive, “What’s your name?” Jack once again uncaring at her attempts of getting to know him, “You talk too much. Go away.”

Mary gets a little emotional, “You know you wouldn’t be alive if it weren’t for me. I..”

“You’re stupid too, ha why the hell would you help your kidnapper. Go plot my murder or something. Out! This is my cave now.”

Mary gives him a stare that manages to even break through Jacks defenses. He looks away slightly intimidated, almost bluffing strength, “Get out!”

Mary with innocent fury, “You can at least give me your doggone name!”

Jack looks impressed, but indifferent.

“It’s the big bad wolf, now go get me some food, before I get hungry.” Jack says laying on the area Mary setup and ruffling through the gear.

Mary draws the rifle on him and exclaims, “I was vice president of the rifle team. I’ve killed 5 men in my life. Any hope I had after my sister was stolen, was robbed by my Father and a bunch of Fu-Frickin’ Satanists. A wolf would be nothing to me. Now tell me DAMMIT. Your Goddam Name!!??” Her anger reverberates the cave and drops the temperature dramatically.

Jack taken aback by the level of confidence of this little girl, sizes her up. He could tell she wasn’t bluffing. There was something to her. She was a killer too. He asks her genuinely curious, “Who the hell are you?”

Mary lashes out, “WHAT IS YOUR GODDAM NAME????”

Mary cocks the gun and aims steady at his head. Jack tries not to smile. A strange feeling of respect from his captive. He goes back to be gruff.

“My name is Jack. Now quit fucking yelling and fuck off!”

“Jack What??”

“Just Jack.”

“That’s it???”

“Gang calls me Wolf. Mom called me retard and Dad called me dead. There you happy. You can call me killer.” Jack says almost expectant of a reaction.

Mary leaves with a blank.

She whispers once far enough away from earshot.

“The man in black... Jack.”

Jack leans back in the cave, checking under the rock, he finds some trash and what smells like piss.

“That nasty bitch!”

He throws it outside and looks around for his stuff. After a minute, he punches the cave wall and notices another rock in front of him. Behind it, he finds his knife and clothes. Most of his gear. Though mostly torn and cinged by flames.

He dresses with what he can and grabs a towel plus stick to make a turnequete for his shoulder. Failing.

“Fuck!”

In the process he stretches his chest wound, reopening it.

He lays back woozy and bleeding, examining the ingenuity of the towels and rags attached like bandages to his various injuries. He sees many blood soaked ones nearby. He tries to process his victim helping him. The thought sends a shiver up his spine. Strange thoughts through his head. He looks towards the sun light glowing outside the cave.

Mary walks over to the creek and up the road. Taking a look. She knew town wasn't so far. A 10 minute drive. A few hour walk. Perhaps at night, there'd be no detection, Mary thinks to herself.

A car approaches and she ducks into some bushes. It looks like one of her fathers.

She heads back down and takes a nap in the car. Thinking about it all and trying magic or whatever powers circling in her head, to stop her from thinking. She found it harder to manage then snapping the rear view mirror in half.

Jack hobbles his way around the area outside the cave, struggling in the mud and hills. He makes his way to the creek and sees Mary in the car. His reopened wounds hurting more then his pride.

He approaches the car. Mary finally asleep, he pokes his head at the broken window, “Hey.”

He pokes her with a stick. He eyes his knife and then to her throat. He was never much for killing children or women, as much as he'd make others believe. He wondered why.

“Killing has gotten so complicated.”

Jack eyes the blood from the interior of the car, the hood and the bodies at the creek. He wondered and tried to count.

“Fuck that.”

He sits next to the car, gripping at his wounds. He counts the amount of times, he’s nearly been killed. Everytime, brought back by another. Whether it was Mary or Gooch or Jackal or Anna or Fox or...

“Fuuuck that! Fuck!”

Mary rolls over in the car.

“Are you just going to sit outside mumbling profanity?”

Jack punches the door, severely denting it and stirring Mary. He wondered if anyone else talked to him like this. He’d kill em if they’re lucky. What about her? He asks himself. Why not just..

Mary looks over to Jacks direction, then away at hearing him stir.

He looks to the door and climbs up, staring into the car. He grips his knife and shoots with extreme pain. Trying hard to hold back the scream inside. He coughs hard. “Uhuck Fuck Uwachk!!.”

Mary tired and annoyed, “Did you need something?”

Jack thought about what he truly needed. If healed up then what. He’d rolled so long with Fox, he forgot what he really needed. What he really wanted. His urge to kill even weakened.

“WHO AM I???”

Mary grows concerned and grabs the rifle readying it quietly. Jack holds back an urge to cry. He mourned the man he wanted to kill most. He missed the simpler times. He missed his body and the scattered remains of others. Jack slams the ground again. Mary grips the gun tighter.

“I’m tired of thinking! We’re leaving now!!”

Jack stands up and lurches over the car.

“What about you’re wounds?” Mary says hiding the gun from Jacks sight.

“I’ll be fine. Been through worse.”

“Where are we going?”

“Quit asking so many FUCKING questions..”

Jack walks off towards the road, yelling back, “C’mon”

Mary groggy cracking the door open, “What about the stuff in the cave?”  
Jack stops and grabs his side, “We don’t need it. Just gotta get into town and make a call.”

“We should still wait til night or early morning to avoid detection and heal up.” Mary says concerned.

Jack bluntly, “Why the hell would I take advice from a captive??” Mary offended at his stubbornness, “Because I... I’m just trying to help.”

Jack steps towards Mary waving his knife in the air, “Take my advice. Quit helping, try to kill me or escape, then fuck off and c’mon.”

Mary opens the door and steps out rubbing her eyes, “You’re a really shitty kidnapper you know that?”

“Better at killing. Now hurry up!” Jack crawls up the hill.

Mary snaps to and grabs her rifle and bag. Slightly cranky and groggy she follows up the hill. Jack Leans at the tree looks right and left. No cars. He carries on limping.

“You seem a bit more spry.” Mary says tiredly following a dying man. Jack looks back, “I don’t even know what that means.”

“Your injuries seem to be healing better.” Mary says optimistic

“Yeah crusty ass rags are really helping.”

“I bet. It’s a few hours up the road.” Mary says neutrally. Jack restless, “I know you said that already.” Mary says slightly hopeful. Cheerful even, “A restaurant, when we first arrive in town.. It serves burgers. I’ll “fuck.. Off” if you just buy me one. I don’t care what happens after that.”

“For one, don’t say fuck off ever again. Two, I don’t have any money. Three, fuck off!”

“Not very original are you?”

Jack stops and confronts Mary.

“What part of I will kill you don’t you understand?? Know your role!”

“You would’ve killed me already, if that was the case. Or I would’ve killed you.”

Jack is taken aback by Mary's boldness. He wants to hurt her, but he can't even muster a vision of her blood.

"I plan to kill you after the ransom is posted."

"Why?"

"Because it's easier that way. Quit asking so many questions!"

"Why does it matter? We have time."

"Maybe I don't want to spend that time, listening to a little girl go why? Why? Why? WHY WHY WHY! ?

"Why not?"

Jack starts walking away. Mary smiles to herself. She relishes in this small joy. She watches him walk leaving a trail of blood. She wonders how much blood this guy has in him. How he's still walking.

"I can check your injuries later. My sister trained as a nurse."

Jack is silent. He considers it strongly, but doesn't want to concede in any way to her.

"Don't give a shit about your sister. Your folks, now there we go. Who's your daddy? Who're his friends?."

Jack considers destroying everything Fox abandoned him for. Everyone he worked with and for. Whatever he was working towards. Jack salivates at the thought of destroying any legacy Fox tried to have, any power he sought. Jack looks back still waiting for an answer. Mary looks down in trauma. Jack remembers that look, while passing by a sewer runoff. He thinks back to capital city sewers. The day all manner of innocence was lost. Jack looks at her with a vague level of sympathy. A new emotion to him. He continues on.

"finally some goddam silence." He says half playful.

20 minutes later, a truck up ahead approaches, Jack looks to Mary slightly on edge. Mary still lost in those moments, contemplating the levels of evil that exists. Her powers. The dreams. Everything Anna ever said about magic and perseverance.

The truck passes by. Jack sighs relief and then hears it stop behind him. He looks back, and sees them turning around up ahead.

“You gotta be fuckin kidding me.”

Jack just struggling to walk, wonders how he’ll take on mercenaries or even the most out of shape cops at this point. He hopes it’s just a dumb redneck, he figures he can maybe take one of those out..

“Let me do the talkin’.”

Mary doesn’t respond. She recalls a moment with her sister walking up this same road, after a particulirly violent fight between their mom and dad. Anna entertained her the entire way up to get ice cream. Telling her mythological stories and things she wanted to change in the world. She talked about conspiracies of evil elites and how they’ve been defeated before. Anna said she dreamt of justice coming to the world again. She told Mary she’d tell her when she’s older. Promised she’d be a part of it. Mary wondered if she broke that promise. She wondered if she could fulfill it.

The car finally pulls up. A concerned wormy man opens the window.

“Hey guys! Are you all alright?”

“Jack looks at him and sizes up a easy kill. A knife to the temple, pulling him half out the window and breaking his back. Then he remembers his broken body, toppling down to the ground grabbing his chest.

“Ya’ll need a ride to the hospital.”

“Our car crashed and we just need a ride into town.”

“Yeah, just hop in the back. I’ll take you to the hospital.”

Jack looks to Mary begrudgingly. She shrugs subtly. The grubby lawyer looking man lowers the tailgate for the two, as they pile in.

“You can sit on the cooler or tool box if ya want.” He says with a worried smile.

“I think he should probably just lay down. Keep his head stable.”

“Smart girl. You don’t look too bloody, if you wanna sit up front?”

Jack gives her a disapproving look. Mary who was gonna stay in the back, looks over to Jack and then back to the grubworm.

“That sounds nice. Do you have any food?”

“Yeah c’mon.”

Jack feints in exhaustion, into some hefty trashbags. Mary hops in the truck and it sets off. The grub turns down the sappy country love song.

“So uh if you don’t mind me askin’ What happened?”

Mary on the spot tries to think fast.

“Deer”

The grub laughs.

“Out here! Wow..”

Mary looks annoyed and hopeful of no more questions. She’s tired of thinking.

“So you comin from up the couldesac? Comin from the city? Or the hills?”

“Just visitng family.” Mary says slightly confused. The truck driver continues his questions.

“He your dad..? Your brother?”

Mary slightly annoyed and just wanting to sleep. “Neither.”

“Oh... A little old..Dont you think? Ha” He says joking but concerned.

‘It’s not like that.. Just”

Mary boils, regretting riding with him.

“Ok...” He says while drinking some coffee from a mug.

An awkward silence pervades, as a low volume peppy country jingle jangles. Jack hacks up blood in the back. Followed by some more silence.

“Is everything alright?”

The grub asks extra concerned, Nary almost asleep again.

Though it's that care Mary missed, she can't help but be annoyed by his. He puts his hand on her shoulder.

"My brother in law is a cop. You can't tell me, if.."

"EVERYTHING... Is ok? Alright?"

"ok.. wow.. Alright.."

Mary thinks about killing him. What a dangerous power, she thinks. Remembering back on her sometimes shakey temperament.

"Sorry. It's just.. I didn't mean to"

"It's ok. Probably been through a lot."

Mary freezes again, everything trying to remind her of what just happened. She recognizes a song playing.

"I like this song."

She tries to turn it up, but tunes it to a different channel, "Dangit"

The grub slaps her hand in a anger, "HEY!! Don't you DARE touch anything, while I'm driving! OK??"

Mary looks at him a bit surprised. "Fine!" She retorts annotated.

"It's safety! Can you understand that?"

He asks condescendingly. Mary's eyebrow twitches as she imagines grabbing the wheel, after spattering his concerned brains all over the radio, "I said fine." She says answering his stupid question.

"Ok.. Geez!" The grub says trying to change the channel without hardly taking his eyes off the road.

Mary keeps an eye on him, then looks back on Jack. He sits looking out at a approaching car. Appears he's doing a little better. Mary thinks. The grub jumps in again.

"I'm just worried, is all.."

"Yeah, me too."

A black car comes racing close behind. Mary hears Jack scramble back down. The grub changes the metal to country. Mary remember the song, but not

the artist or name. It was her mothers favorite. She used to say it reminder her of her own mother. A pretty important person in the family. One I never met:  
Grandma Maryanna

The black car becomes present. A cop.

Mary sweats slightly knowing most around here are probably bought out by her Father.

“Should I flag him down, to help you?” The grubby man asks rolling down his window. Mary tries to cause a pain in his ass. The man adjusts himself in the seat.

“Well??” He asks uncomfortably.

Mary as unworried as she can be in all the circumstances replies, “We just need to get to town.”

“You want me to call an ambulance for him?”

The cop car passes the truck and speeds off.

“We’ll do that once we’re in town.” Mary says annoyed by his insistance . The grub reaches for his phone, “Somethings wrong, I just know it.”

Mary looks at him paranoid of what would happen with the authorities. What would happen when returned to her worse captor. Captor to captor.

“You’re going to be safe.” The grub says waiting on hold.

Jack springs from the window behind the grub, shattering the glass and grabbing him. Mary in a panic grabs the wheel as she sees the truck start to veer into another ditch. Jack pulls him out of the seat into the back. The grub attempts to yell for help, but it turns to a gargling yelp, as Jack stabs his neck primitively. Jack struggles with little strength to put him out of his misery. Cutting and stabbing and sawing. A very amateur murder. He yells at Mary.

“Pull it over!!”

“I DON’T KBOW HOW TO DRIVE!!” Mary yells mback worried. Struggling to control the truck. She tries psychic powers, but a splitting pain in her head triggers. Too much to take on, she thinks. The truck skids near a deep ditch.

“Press on the middle pedal!! Hurry up!” Jack yells at Mary, as he continues to stab the mess that is the concerned mans neck. Mary scrambles onto the drivers seat full of broken glass. She hits the gas pedal on accident, skidding on the gravel next to the road and then hitting the brakes.

The truck spins out and comes to a sketchy stop on the side of the forested road. A far out house illuminates the left of the road. Mary looks back at Jack struggling to move the mangled body. Getting her wish, but feeling an injustice. She once again contemplates violence, “He was annoying, but not worth killing? Or was he?” Mary thinks darkly. Her instincts telling her, he had alterior motives.

Jack finishes one last cut into the grubs neck. He gets up and rest, before jumping down from the truck bed. Mary still tries to process the level of violence around her.

Jack opens the door and hops behind the wheel, “Well at least we don’t have to go into town anymore. Straight to the city.”

Jack looks to a silent and ignoring Mary.

“C’mon.. Cheer up. We don’t have to walk anymore.”, Jack puts the petal to the metal. Searching through the radio channels. He finds the punk station, “Fuck yeah!” Jack says excitedly.

Mary listens intrigued. It sounds familiar.

“Can’t beat X.” Jack says excited beating his knife on the dash rythmically.

Mary remembers Anna playing a vinyl of theres. “Los Angelos. She was always so obsessed with that place.” Mary reminices in her head.

The two drive to the sounds of 80s punk night on 90.7 The Speed. Jack howls as the DJ does. Mary eases a little more then when Grub was driving, but she couldnt get over the impulse for death. Could she have been so desensitized and what of Jack: The Man In Black. She wonder if he might just kill her.

If that’d be so bad.

The truck starts to pass near town. Jack checks the tank. Almost empty.

“Fuck!”

Mary looks to Jack, “Theres a cop at the gas station.”

“Fuck! Ya gotta be kidding me.” He looks at her slightly surprised she could see that far, “Looks like it’s fast food time.” Jack says with a oddly pure smile.

Mary looks a little puzzled. Jack coughs a small but concise blood clot from his innards.

“Finally. Been trying to cough that up all week.”

Mary smiles slightly at the disgusting stupidity of him. Like a dumb mangled dog trying to play. Still trying to hunt.

Jack looks at her annoyed, as he arrives at the order window. Skidding against the curb and yelling.

“Yeah hello!”

A silence.

“Hey Fucker!”

A static disjointed, “We’re closed”

Jack looks at the open sign flashing neon.

“Sign says open you cunt. Give me a fucking GOTDAMN BURGER!!”

A broken up apathetic voice reurns, “Sorry for your inconvenience. Have a beefy day.”

Jack boils and Mary wonder how she can possibly prevent what was about to happen.

“I have a child!! Give me a burger!!” Jack says trying for the first time, diplomacy.

The employee trying to get rid of him, “Their should be a Cluckers nearby.”

Jack struggling with even just trying to talk, “I don’t want chicken. I want a double bacon grilled onion with cheese. No pickle..”

Jack starts hacking up again, he hacks hard and sits slumped drooling blood.

“Jack.. Are you ok?” Mary asks almost touching him, but reconsidering at seeing his feral dying animal of a look on his face.

Jack swings the car door repeatedly against the order com. He steps out and pushes against trying to break it. To no avail, his strength a fraction of what it once was. It drives him into a frenzy. Desperate to prove to himself. To feel power. Any semblance of strength.

He takes the key out of the ignition and goes lifts the seat, searching storage. Mary looks back worried. She thinks fast.

“Theres pizza next door to Cluckers. They also have milkshakes. I don’t know. We’re closed.”

“Fuck Cluckers! Fuck you and FUCK this MOTHERFUCKER!!!”

Jack finds some handcuffs, a gun, duct tape, rope, tarp, Asian condoms and a tire iron. He takes the iron and gun and walks over, stumbling slightly. He gets to the window and looks in. A fat young black man mops the floor.

He thrusts the iron into the window and stares in.

The kid slips on the wet floor and trembles backing away, “Whoa man. I don’t know man. HELP!!”

“If you run and keep yelling. I'm going to gut your fat black angus ass and cook it on that there grill. With double bacon, cheese, grilled onion and no pickle.”

The kid intimidated, nods and struggles to get up, slipping slightly. Then sliding as he gets up. Mary gets out of the car and approaches Jack, “Jack, cops are going to be on there way. We need to go.”

Jack lashes out defensive, “Get back in the car or I’ll kill you too!”

“I’m trying to help.” Mary says earnestly.

“If you wanna help go help Keenan in there make a double bacon cheeseburger with grillen onions and FRIES!!”

Jack screams the last part at the kid.

“The curly ones!” He yells again.

Mary gets frustrated with Jacks stupidity, “Do you even care if we end..”

Jack interrupts her, “If you’re not going to help cook, go be helpful in the trunk.”

The kid says worriedly, “S..sir, we only have joe joes.”

Jack boils.

“We’re also out of onion.”

Jacks world collapses into a eternal inferno and his murderous rage turns inward wondering if he should just kill everyone nearby and then himself. He thinks back to what Mary just asked him, before he interrupted her.

“Do you even care?”

Jack wondered why it would even matter. He’d get off on the murders, but what next. His sense of purpose fleeting with his weakened body and dead friends. Would it be worth it to make these his last kills. Jack stares at Mary with a confused look.

Mary shakes him out of his overthinking trance. Coming to sirens and lights far off.

“Jack we need to go.” Mary says with urgency.

He panics slightly. If he gets locked up, how could he..

“I don’t fucking care.” He says muddled as he jumps into the restraint cutting himself on broken glass and spooking the kid, who backs away towards a fridge.

“Hey man! It’ll be done in just a minute.”

Jack looks around for hiding places, not seeing much. He looks to Mary who looks around nervously, “Hey little helper, come in and hide or you die.”

Mary considers it as he’d said it slightly kinder this time. She tries to climb up, but cuts herself on the broken glass. Jack stares down the kid and then the food. He sees only a single burger patty on the grill.

“Earlier, you said you were sorry for the inconvenience.. Did you mean that?”

“What do you mean? I don’t even..”

Jack lunges at him and slips on the freshly mopped floor, landing flat on his ass. He grips his chest. The kid nears the diner part of the retaraunt and looks at Jacks mangled body, scared.

“What the hell are you? What happened?”

Jack struggles to gain his composure. Holding his chest wound dripping down on the once cleaned floor.

Mary looks back at the siren growing very close. She considers running away and hoping for the best. “There had to be good cops too.. Right?” She thinks to herself. She could stay with a aunt or a foster family.

She takes a step away, the second step she considers Jack. The third she wonders what she owes him. He may’ve saved her, but he intends to kill her. He’s an asshole, but it could be worse she thinks. But what could be worse. She contemplates with four more steps, then hears a woman scream.

Jack stands over a plump rosey cheeked redhead.

“You called the cops didn’t you?”

She shakes her head and screams again, “PLEASE DON’T KILL ME!! HELLLLLP!!!!”

“SHUT THE FUCK UP!!!!” Jack smacks her across the face with a tire iron and grabs her by the hair and drags her towards the friers.

“You’re gonna make me some fucking curly fries or I’m going to take your curly hair and fry it off of you and eat your fat fucking ass!!.”

The woman cries a blubbering sob and struggles trying to escape. Jack grabs her hand and plunges it in the frier. Keenan as Jack aptly named him, goes to defend his shift manager/girlfriend with a cast iron pan, Jack takes the blow and grabs it from his hand. He screams and tries to get away. Jack swings against the back of his head. The kid screams for help. Mary yells from behind Jack, “Jack!! The burger is done.”

Cops arrive and the lights flood the half lit closed store.

Jack walks over to the burger and stares angry, sad and desperate. He throws it on a bun with three pieces of cheese and fills up a coke. He leans against the counter and begins eating.

“Police open up!”

A cop knocks on the glass door just nearby.

Mary holds the woman's hand and tries to heal it. The bloody mess and insanity of the last few days make her wonder if she even could. The hand melted to bone, how could she ever.

Jack eats half the burger and approaches Mary, "Here's your fucking burger. Now fuck off!"

Mary looks at him confounded.

"POLICE!!" The cop kicks the door open.

"HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM."

Two more cops storm the lobby. Jack looks annoyed by them, Mary stands confused and chewing, with half a burger in her hands. Trying to finish the half cooked burger.

"Hands up where I can see them!"

Mary raises hers and looks to Jack. He speaks, "I was just trying to get her a burger. Then this fuckcunt lied to us."

The police perturbed continue, "Come out and get on the ground! Hands where we can see them."

Jack does a jazz hands, "Am I being arrested for being a good fuckin' person? Feeding a hungry little girl??"

Jack waves his hands, getting theatrical. He drinks some of the extra large cola.

The cops proclaim, "You're under arrest for the kidnapping of a minor and murder of several high ranking government officials."

Jack looks offended.

"Those guys? A bunch of satanic pedophiles. They're government, c'mon??"

The left cop, a bald thick squinty faced man, radios in, "We got a confession. Cut the first part, last part evidence." Jack recognizes the man as a member of the Bald Brotherhood.

Jack pulls out his gun and shoots the bald cop. The one on the right shoots Jack in the already wounded shoulder. Mary shoots the cop that just shot and the

only other cop goes for his weapon. The two shoot him at the same time. Mary in the head. Jack in the chest.

The three cops fall and the woman and man start screaming in terror. Jack shoots them both, and hops the counter towards the fallen cops. Grabbing the keys off of one and each gun from them. As he sifts, the manager moans in mortal pain. The bald cop Jack shot, gets back up going for his gun. Jack punches his face twice with his good arm, breaking his nose off. He looks to Mary, gripping his fucked up shoulder, "Make sure they don't go anywhere!"

Mary looks mortified at the prospect of hurting innocent civilians. Crooked cops, mercenaries. She accepted their deaths with almost sick glee. A rush she's never felt. A power she's never had.

"I'm not going to hurt you. There's been enough hurt.. but.." Mary says to them melancholy.

Jack slowly stalks out the door. Checking for more cops. He eyes two cars.

"Gotta be one more. A lot more, probably.."

Jack hears a shot from inside.

"Entered from the back."

He seems indifferent to the gunshot and checks the cars. Checking keys irradically, getting lucky with one of them. He runs back inside the restraunt, yelling to Mary, "Lets go! Lets go!!".

Mary stares at another body. One she pulled the trigger on. She looks to Jack blankly. Jack hurries her along, "Do you wanna go back to live with those sick fucks! Or do you want to die by me."

The option seemed so easy. Mary didn't intend to die, however the shadow of her father and his connections loomed a dark shadow in Marys scrambled, but instinctive mind. At least Jacks kill would be instant. Maybe even painless. Maybe he'd even be her killer. Killer her Father. The thought sends a erotic feeling deep down inside her.

More sirens echoe in the distance.

She jumps over the counter and sprangs her formerly injured left ankle. She grimaces and limps over.

“Hurry the fuck up!” Jack runs over and grabs her, throwing her over his shoulders.

“Goddamit!”

He crumples even at the weight of a slender Mary, but limps slightly faster, exiting the blood spattered retaraunt. The employees look at each other bleeding, but alive and cry. Hugging.

Jack moves towards the cop car to the right, “Haven’t driven one of these in a hell of awhile.” Jack sets Mary down and opens the door for her, then quickly skoots haphazardly across the police car hood.

“Can you be any fuckin slower!” Jack gets in the car, annoyed by Marys injuries. Not so much her slowness, but the fact she was hurt. He felt protective of his prey..

“Fuck.”

The two drive off. Jack, wasting no time putting the pedal to the metal. Looking back at cops arriving at the scene. He smiles.

Mary holds onto a rail nearby, gripping it tight as Jack races through the curves of wet country roads at night.

“Enough gas to get out of the city and enough bullets to shoot our way there.” Jack says looking to Mary. She reflects on the unexpectedness of everything. Jack looks back to the road.

“Whatever..” Jack turns up the police radio and listens for anything.

“When will you kill me?” Mary asks calmly.

Jack looks at her like a poker player with a bluff, “Whenever you’re worthless to me..”

Mary looks half pleased that she had worth and worried what that entailed. Jack goes on.

“Or maybe whenever. I don’t know. Whats it fucking matter?”

“I don’t want to die...” Mary opens up with riveting honesty, with a wrathful look in her eye. Jack looks at her intrigued.

“I want to..”

A bright light shines on the cop car. The radio flairs up audibly. Helicopter hum above.

“suspect located heading southbound on highway 8. I repeat. Supect located..”

Jack hits the wheel and then slams the dash, “Fuck! FUCK!!”

Mary worries slightly having just felt a strange toxic safety. She eyes around for ways to escape, ways to defend.

“how the hell do I take on a Helicopter??”

Mary tries to think of a way, “Maybe the big city.”

Jack dismisses that idea, “They’ll be on our ass way before that! These fucks have any heavy fuckin weaponry?”

Mary looks around and goes to open the window part separating cop from convict. A pale hand slams against it as it opens. Mary screams startled. Jack looks over frustrated and sees a hand grasping around outside the window. He reaches over and slams the window shut, crushing the hand. The pale man in the back speaks up and gets from under the seat.

“I’m just trying to escape too man.”

Jack yells at him, “Wait you’re fucking turn!”

Sirens from ahead start to emerge.

Jack looks back knowing those others are on their way too. He’s flanked. He looks to Mary then forward. The man in the back speaks up again.

“This hand you nearly mangled is one of the best in the west. Shoot a bats asshole from a half mile aways.”

“Fuck off about bats assholes!!” Jack says trying to concentrate on the road. His vision blurring and adrenaline surging.

The sirens and fast approaching cop lights come up faintly upon the horizon. Jack floors the pedal, taking it well over 100 MPH.

“Hold on!”

He speeds as the cops attempt to blockade the road ahead. Nary grips onto a tumble bar. A couple shots from the blockade hit the cars exterior, as two more cop cars loom behind.

The two car blockade near, another shot blasts the left rear view mirror. Jack crashes into the back of the cop car on the right, pushing it against the other and veering his getaway off the road slightly. The wheels burn and leaves and mud spatter, as Jack keeps going. Two more shots. One breaking the back window. Jack gains back control of the vehicle and slams the pedal gaining a little distance. The blockade maneuvers leaving an opening for the two following. The four pursue. Copter keeping pace.

“Fuuuuck!! Fuck!”

The pale man with a seemingly southern accent, offers with indifferent determination, “Partner! I can help. I love shootin’ cops. Daddy was a cop. C’mon man, give me a gun. Let me kill some pigs”

Jack looks to him.

“I got daddy issues too.”

He hands him a gun and goes to give Mary one. She brandishes hers. “The guy in the truck had two guns.”

Jack looks at her with a respect he could never expect. Then looks back at the cop fast approaching. Some indistinct chatter on the radio.

“Suspect... Reroute I-81... Second task force.. Air squad.. Fire on sight..”

Another voice on the radio.

“But what about the girl?”

“... Order of command.. Suspects are dangerous... Shoot on command...”

A shot goes through the top of the car, through the pale mans shoulder, “Hotdamn!! That swarms. Open up these damn doors.”

“How the fuck do I.” Jack yells running out of options.

Mary hops over Jack and releases a lever. Jack looks intimidated by Mary.

“Brother trained to be a cop. Been on a few ride alongs.” Mary says with a confident poise.

Another shot just where the pale southern man would've been sitting, just seconds ago..

“The names Tex by the way!”

Tex leans out the window and shoots at the car behind them. Missing with 11 shots. He yells triumphantly, “woohoo!!”

Jack looks back slightly pissed, “They’re still on our ass!!”

Tex replies confidently. “I’m just getting started.”

A sharp turn and a bent sign decapitates Tex’s head clean off. A second shot from the helicopter blows a chunk of the neck area.

The four cops chasing close behind are accompanied by two more. The five boxing in the beatup cop car. Smoke billows from the hood.

“Fuck! One of those shots must’ve pierced something”

Jack states the obvious and another bullet passes between the two into the windshield.

“Shit! Shit! Shit!”

Mary looks back and tries to focus her psychic powers. To no avail. The objects are too heavy any bodies are shrouded in tinted windows or in the air. A sharp pain hits her head. She’s not sure if it’s a bullet or too much force.

“If I can just..” Mary tries to shoot through the broken back window, trying to shoot through the windows of the nearest cop car. She runs out of ammo after 5 shots.

Jack throws her one of his guns. Two more shots come in from the roof. One hitting Jack in the same shoulder shot earlier and mangled weeks ago, the other just missing Mary’s leg.

“These fucking bastards! I have a fucking hostage. These pieces of SHIT!! SHITFUCKERS!” Jack yells frustrated at the adversity. A shot hits the tire and the car starts to spin out. Jack tries his hardest to keep going but clips into a Dead End sign.

The car keeps going. A flurry of bullets from behind the cop armada cars pop the back tires and the back window, shrapnel cutting into Mary, a bullet piercing Jack in the chest wound.

“Every fucking time!”

A larger swat style vehicle takes the lead ahead of the 3 cop cars. Mary eyes the behemoth of a vehicle. It’s roof gun aiming at the two. Mary tries to see the gunner, but a dark plexi shield guards him. Jack tries desperately to maintain control, as the car swerves and scrapes against the road. Tex’s body flails around squirting blood all around the car.

The car finally stalls out and the cops surround the totaled cop car. Mary watches as more weapons are prepared, she looks to Jack. Slumped and gasping for air.

“Could this be it. I cannot kill them all. How many are innocent and being lied to? How many could I really kill”, Mary eyes death in the face, while contemplating fighting or..

“HELP!!! PLEASE!!!!”

She yells to any that would hear her. Jack with no health can hardly react. He mumbles bloodily and gravely injured, “Fuck.. Off!”

The police are silent, as bright lights are shined in Marys face.

“Mary Moone??” A familiar thin pale face asks. Another cop with a robust golden mustache loads his gun, while another scolds him for it behind.

“Hold your fire!”

Mary looks to Jack wondering his fate, as he layed far beyond deaths door. She speaks softly and smiles slightly.

“Thank you.. Jack..”

The police draw weapons and charge closer to the car. Yelling about and investigating the scene.

Several cops gather near Mary and begin interviewing her.

“I am Mary Alice Moone.” Mary says compliant and worried, both of her new capturer and the fate of her former.

Some of the cops mumble. “She’s that girls sister.”

“The new governors daughter.”

“How old is she? I mean.. How old are you??”

“Fuckin’ creep”

A couple cops try pulling Jack out of the car, his dying husk still struggling. One of the cops grips his assault rifle tight ready to shoot Jack. He angrily looks at everyone wasting time.

“Hurry the fuck out of the car. No sudden movements!!” His finger twitches on the trigger, waiting for any reason to shoot.

“Please don’t shoot..” Mary mutters unconfidently. “Please don’t shoot him, he’s dying. He... isn’t a bad guy..”

The police look incredibly confused.

“Don’t hurt him..?” Mary says in a last resort.

The robust golden mustached cop yells to Jack, “Get out of the vehicle!! Hands where we can see them!”

Mary glances back, then to the trigger happy man. Her body in his line of sight.

“He’s gotta gun!!” He shoots at Jack 3 times coming inches away from Mary. Mary counts each one. She wonders if she’d stopped them. If only it was sooner. The mustached man reprimands the murderous cop.

“What the hell are you doing Daryl??”

“I was protecting my officers, Ronnie.”

“You could have shot the Governors Daughter!!”

“He could have shot one of my officer!!

Jack falls out of the car limp. Mary worries intensely. The thought of him dying, nearly brings a tear. But her face was cold and insides frozen.

“Well, there goes any interrogation! Daryl!” Ronnie shoves his rifle Daryl the violent cop. A man from the heavily armored vehicle asks. “We calling off Jugs?” Ronnie hops on his radio “Ronnie to HQ, suspect is down and victim is in custody.”

Ronnie moves in to examine Mary, “Roger that. We’re gonna need an ambulance. The girl appears to be injured and highly erratic.” He ends the radio call and orders a scrawny guy with very squinty glasses, “Paul, go clear the scene.” He then gets in Daryl’s face. “You ever defy my orders again or act without my dick in your fuckin ass. Your badge, is goin so far down your cum drowned throat, it’ll hit you shit covered esophagus.”

Daryl spits to his side towards Mary, then walks away “Yeah.”

Ronnie stares off annoyed and returns his attention to Mary, who’s visualizing what was just said vividly.

“You’re going to be ok now. Alright? You’re safe.”

Mary hardly knew the meaning of those words anymore. She looked back to Jack, the cops kicking him to see if he was still alive. She looked in the eyes of the well meaning robust golden mustached man. Behind him, Daryl points the gun at Mary and mouths.

“Bang!”

Daryl grins darkly. Ronnie, smiles from another job well done. He leaves to talk to the heavily armored cop and Daryl stands staring menacing. Before too long paramedics arrive. Then the familiar looking man. Mary could almost recognize. Looked like Snake, but with a mustache. A lady paramedic crouches down and holds Mary’s hand.

“Are you ok?” A curly haired brunette woman, that reminded Mary of her aunt asks. “Where did he hurt you?”

Mary looks back, as they load Jack not into an ambulance, but a police car.

She tries to speak, but her pains and powers cought up to her. Or maybe it was the shots, another medic slipped in. Everything was a blur except for Jack. “He needs help..” She asks wispy.

The nurse stoically. “We’re here to help. You’re safe now. Now just relax.”

Mary could hardly trust another sedation, but could hardly fight it. Another nurse comes into focus. She looks familiar. She looks like Anna. Everything blurs into an impossible static. Everything except for Jack’s husk, The Snake look alike and nurse Anna. Mary gives in and falls.

# Chapter 13

## Asylum

“You’re safe here Mary. You can tell the truth this time, ok.”

The swarmy goateed old man puts his hand on my shoulder. All these creeps seem obsessed with a prolonged shoulder touch. I wish I had spikes there.

“I told you the truth. I’ve told you the truth!” The story so crazy, they locked me up as crazy.

He rubs my shoulder and continues staring at me, “Mary, I’m just trying to help. Help me.. Help you! Ok.”

I picture blowing his eyes from his sockets, his jaw from his head, his hands from his arms, but nothing. Not even a twitch. The anger brings on a nasty headache. Whatever pills they have me on, really don’t mix with my wrath.

“I think we’re done for today. I’m gonna recommend a few more days of isolation, before visitation.” The doctor says somehow offended.

“But what about my brother?? I can’t stay in that dark room any longer.”

“If you cant cooperate. I can’t trust you’re not a risk to yourself and others.”

“I’m not lying! About any of it! I..” How could I expect anyone to believe me. The thought of it all has made me crazy. Maybe all the magic was just..

“Ok Mary.” The doctor rolls his eyes and stands up, his shrimpy body hardly rising passed me. What a sad little man. Perhaps if I cant just.

“I can prove it!”

“Prove what Mary? You’re Father and a bunch of well respected community leaders tried to sacrifice you and a bunch of little girls to Satan. C’mon Mary. Give

it a week. Whatever that bad man did to you, we'll get through it. Ok. I'll see you next Tuesday ok?"

The shrimpy man walks off, unneeding of any response.. I have no other words to say to him anyway.

Everytime we speak I try to hone my ability to make him believe. To make him think what I want him to think.

It's worked on a few here, but they're also mentally insane. Easy for crazy to influence crazy.

3 months have passed. How many more days, must I live in the shadow of that horrible day. The doctor brings it up every week. Every day in the brightly lit solitary confinement, I remember. Every scream, every pain.

I remember him. "The Bad Man" As everyone refers to him as. If only they knew.

I wonder if he survived. I wonder why I care at all.

Did he really protect me? He didn't even think to make two burgers that day, but still he..

3 longer months.

My dreams have intensified and with them, disassociation. I've been trying to hone the two, among many other things, but every time I make progress, they force pills down my throat and the headaches cloud sparks in my synapses. I wonder if I can train that as well.

Nevertheless, I wonder how long I'll be here. If I ever do get out, where will I go? Where do I want to go. Where can i..

Some screams from next door. Must be Sally. She's a screamer. Managed to get inside her once during weekly shower. It was a painful experience. Loud and shrieking, for hours.

How long must I wait?

"How long can this place hold me?"

I stare at the wall intently, remembering a recent bloody dream.

3 more months. The longest yet.

I don't want to wait anymore.

## Penetentiary

3 gay ass months. Literally. I've never seen so much gay sex in my life. Jackal and Chameleon fucked their fair share of man ass, but they aint got dick shit on max security prison.

Other than that and the racism, prison ain't so bad. Plenty of time to rest, heal up and lucky for me, this prison, has only the most violent criminals and corrupt guards. Makes for the occasional shanking or baton beatdown. Easy bribes and dirty drugs. Even better yet, the wonderful Warden is a huge fan of gambling and an even bigger fan of arena combat.

May as well get used to it here. 1802 years here. If they don't execute me first. Pinned just about every crime that night on me and the gang. Inspired some sort of strict terrorism gang initiative.

Pretty glamorous shit, just how much credit they gave me, except for the whole raping the girl. Mary. Ick gross. The imagination of these people.

"Ha!"

Got me into plenty fights though, so that's nice. I do wonder how she's doing. More than I'd like.

Heard the cell block I'm in is surprisingly low on the totem pole. Makes sense, with all the pussy pricks trying to pick fights. Haven't made any friends yet, but ya know. Not from a lack of trying.

Wonder how long I can survive here. Rumor is the outside of this prison is just ocean. No windows or glimpse at the outside. Everything's tight lipped around here. Except for the asses..

Wonder if they got the other Animals that night. Could they've gotten free and if so, I wonder what they're up to. Gooch probably buying Indonesian baby spines and government grade drugs. Jackal probably trying to suck every anus in the city. Mouse probably.. being a good person and shit.

I hope hell is real. Fox bent like a pretzel there, eternally being flayed and fucked by flaming fists. Can't wait to see him again. My fists are pretty big.

Yeah, I hope everyone out there is having as much fun as I am.

The long haired cocaine traffickers entire upper body now lay pulverized. A new record into what I like to call mushing. The crowd cheers and the most evil of the guards readies his worst. Must've lost a shit load of money. Fuck him! Starting to get turned on by the torture.

I stand up and embrace the insignificant victory. Thinking back to three months ago. I can't help but remember her. Mostly because I'm told I raped her on a daily basis.

The thought never did quite cross mind, but then again. I did wonder, why I didn't just kill her? Why she helped me, even though I was trying to sell her back to her worse captors? I wonder if she was retarded. Then again, her killing skills weren't too shabby and there was just something about her. So many mysteries on some stupid girl.

... Mary.

More than even the animals, I can't help but think about her.

Dream about her.

Ain't in a love way, but in a killing way.

Yeah.. Me and her, we could kill a lot of people.

Kill the whole fucking world!

## **Notes**

***Change Jacks name to wolf when Animals talking.***

***Leads to explore, for furthering word count and story***

***Moone family vacation to Egypt.***

***The drug deal gone wrong prior to Jack going on the run.  
Elaborate on the stolen money and shadiness of it.***

***Book Of Melanie- Marys mom and the family revealed. Jacks  
father John had affair with Marys mom Melanie, baring Anna  
confirmed. Mary maybe.***

***Fox and Hound- Jack and fox backstory. Animals prelude.***

***Jacks recovery and training.***

***Mary's psychic powers.***

***Anna's dream***

***Determine concrete timeline.***

***Marryanna The world Sorceress-***

**Anna**

- **Anna and Fox go on a road trip with some old Animals .**
- **Anna the Black Swan.**

**It would've been 3 years ago. Yes. 3 and some change. What a wonderful number. 3.**

**What a strange time since.**

**Always weird living days just remembering. Never was too good at living in the moment. Always remembering. That awful nightmare. The smelly van full of weirdos and those two men. Jack and Fox.**

**Definitely one of the more memorable moments in this life. Hell of a roadtrip, mother.**

**Felt like a alignment of planets and I'm sure there was, but the energy in these people. Just.. Wow!!**

**A bit on the dark side for my tastes, but I was new. Just testing the waters. I knew I was different, I knew they were too. In a different way. I remembered Fox, but Jack. He was new. A violent memory. I couldn't read him without strain. Real burn.**

**But I suppose you knew that. Always said the same thing with daddy.**

**I wonder what it is? Could they both be dealing without much torment and pain??**

**Scares me to think about, but what else is there to do now. It always had been remembering. Just wish I could remember every moment with Mary. Instead of replaying the same dang**