



# REMEDY

AGENT VERSION - 3 OF 20 CHAPTERS

BY

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We fight,  
& when the life we know falls short,  
we find hope burning in light

## CHAPTER 1

Jet-black ravens mingle on power lines by main, scuffling for room to remain. It's closing time again and I feel doom. A taxi waits for the two making out in the corner. The eager engine coughs as she slides in through the door. And hums setting off. Somewhere. And I wonder, why am I here.

All that I wanted was a little tenderness, I thought, and to think a sprinkle arrives from the sea with fallout.

I struggle running up the stairs to Teron road where I shut my eyes above the best view. 'And in the other corner'. 'Come on' I hurry. 'What are you made of'. A deluge of crowds cheer when I raise my fists and brace. 'Go!' Two immediate jabs in the stomach and a hook's response in the head, shielding an all out swing from the shade. Another miss and I get a chance to land one, two, three, four straight blows. A tremendous thump. The bigger they come. A first round knock out. The harder they fall. And I'm hailed hands up high a winner.

I open my eyes above the city. King of the hill.

Sometimes shadowboxing sets me straight. I have no worries I can't beat up because imagination almost always wins against anxiety. I say almost when a loveless stress stings in my arms longing touch. In truth this is unexpected and terrible. Then again what is terrible I figure when I'm suddenly disturbed. A garbage

can's lid falls on the ground loudly clanking. Seem a stray cat whisks the alley here looking for prey.

I amble along a high rise cold shafts of concrete lit by moonshine. I suffered without anything to say, now I think I am regaining some strength. And when the clouds converge in darkness, I wish for something, I say: A guiding light for these dark days. A love lasting, lingering through the friction: a star in the East.

I pray. Let me be your champion. Some heavy exhausts. I can take on anything.

When we stand there alone, we will always be alone without a burning heart like coal. Without religion man is lost. Tossed around on the ocean of abeyance on a raft without guidance and goal.

Further up there's teams of two rallying the paved slope. Together by gates locked with locks and cold reflecting windows with TVs, empty balconies of iron and flamboyant toy stores. They're all two and two, and sometimes four. And I am one.

And one day will, will, vindicate all these trials and show the world a different shi.. shh..chivalry.

Will it?

Where the road meets the little creek there's propaganda savagely sprayed on one of the containers. It is the end of all Caesars.

'I am always the death of tyrants'.

Brutus.

He never allowed himself to be swayed and ruled by evil. And right here are tags showing the same resurgence. Something so fine. Wail. And watch out.

The drain lining the library roof dripped, now it floods, and a shut side shop sideshows a gather. Someone waterproof in language says he's from Kandahar in the rain. A lady livens his lock screen and I remember his password saying his girl is hot, when he sticks the phone in his pocket. Says it's his mom. 'She single?' I wonder. 'Not if you're asking' he replies. Next to him is Cricket Mogadishu pushing me for coke. I point at McDonalds.

And these days are all I have when the months go by. When someone by beats blazing above our heights was a stranger in a night. I stunned, saying 'I've never seen a scene so starlet'. And even in this summer there was nothing more beautiful, than her.

'You know how it goes' I reflect. They nod. 'Sure'. 'Well we met, and now we can't even talk'. 'Why?' 'Just be happy' he shrugs. 'Someone likes me' he smiles 'they

come to me'. 'I'd walk Gobi desert' I tell him. He shakes his head and shows his mom again. Big smirk. High five.

The walk of same is a lonely road and it's not going to get better, if I don't fight better.

Alive at the seconds of a remote control. A simple start in a Sunday sofa zapping shows searching something interesting:

An interview on CNN former JSOC commander William McRaven says the one general advice he has is to make your bed in the mornings.

Hmm.

I've been doing several jobs the past months falling asleep to another TV session. The lightbulb whirs worriedly in the roof.

It's still on.

'You have felt it your entire life' someone says. I roll out of the sofa onto the floor. Dazed. 'There is something wrong with the world' flows. I look up and green lines smatter along action. Aha. Getting up in my bed.

A Wachowski brothers' blockbuster.

You ever think you know someone. Entirely and completely like you maybe know yourself. Why of course,

do you even know yourself. I wonder. I was captain of the football team. And I had a good childhood while something else entirely simmered that was not so great.

All this time I was the heir to hate.

My heritage is a society raising soldiers for a new world. I am a recruit branded by the blood running through these lines. I don't think they thought I'd get very old. So I was primed with quotes saying there are no pacts between lions and men.

When you are young you have no respects for Highnesses and sin, and still only a son, a human being. Lacks. While I figured if I said it sufficiently many times I could actually convince the world I really was a lion.

Words.

I was about to live through hell.

There is a cold war out there. And here in this land, and in some other lands, we, the resistance, is sought to be disrupted and degraded. Devastated and diminished.

A lab cooked up something really bilious one day bringing it to me like room service. Someone spicy with molecules had weaponised a strand of cold. And in a club, maybe just in a street, someone's subtle cough delivered. It was my worst week. An infection so



excruciating it wounded with an inescapable noise in my mind.

Everything else was gradual and I ultimately surrendered, like a prisoner. An inmate I was continuously moved from a cell to another. Only my walls were invisible and, and frustrating. Like someone removed from a country placed in a new without knowing ... language or culture. I was so stripped I couldn't tell anyone what I lived through. It was a feeling of complete insurmountability.

So I learned I am at a disadvantage. And fighting from a disadvantage it sometimes helps if you don't save for the swim back. And if you don't seem to care about something, there's no fun in destroying it.

Now I've known the humility to realise we all carry our part and that this is a foundation of morality. There comes a time in all our lives when we have to do what is right.

Maybe someone in the audience applauds and only silently with manners I've acquiesced my burden is unconscionable.

At times this has been so overwhelming I'd become numb to living or dying. And I was taken to an asylum.

## CHAPTER 2

There's a beautiful cliff in Normandy between the beaches of Utah and Omaha named Pointe de Hoc. Here the sea swells magnificently in the tides below.

In 1944 the allies knew the Germans had stationed heavy artillery at this site capable of shelling both landing zones, so the guns had to be destroyed.

And on D-Day 225 US Army Rangers landed in rough waves in the rocks at the coast underneath the installation to scale to the first bunkers.

Making their way through machine-gun fire the two battalions eventually managed to secure the cliff and blow up the guns.

90 of them survived.

The climb is a sharp drop now fenced and the scarred terrain still evokes terror where gentle winds rustle the foliage. I have seen it in my dreams. The ridges where the Atlantic lands along beach is a vast terrain with a vain vault. Starlight mirrors in the sea's expanse.

Here days would turn into nights.  
And nights would turn into days.

I had trouble sleeping while whirls of white were blanketing the street below my window. An insomnia unyielding like winter I found the waves breaking soothing.

I didn't know if I had it in me to go on. It was easy to lay down. Watching the sky.

And for all I knew I was there alone. When there were sudden figures in a rainy mist. Faint and undefined in the distance. And through my tire, they were no longer there.

The high tides sail serene. When a night I was thrown up where I was in this stillness. I was set on my feet. And a man shouted at me: 'Move!' And I said I was tired.

'You're tired' he raged. 'My friends gave everything for us, and you're not even man enough to stand for yourself.'

I wake where waves land beneath cliffs. And I falter again. Surfs thunder. A bolt ignites the heavens in branches of white light. And the boom rolls above another scenery.

A pier in a fishing village by dense jungle defies the ocean. The woodwork whines to the overcast.

At edge of a ruthless storm is a sword and three strikes of lightning. He's writing an entry in a journal. A messy scrawl.

'Today was a difficult day. I pray there will be more to come. Love, faithfully.'

A squadron of Thunderchiefs lays fire in a line, glowing on a wall with sun cutting through the window blinds. There's traffic and chatter in the streets below my window.

Saigon. Maybe s..ssomewhere else.

And I fret, why am I here? A sudden delirium to these walls, why I am locked up? Oh. The jail. Shackled to a bed the manacles hurt against my bare wrists. I slam them against the ground to a sonorous growling. The jungle thunders in my sight. Green palm leaves sway to the trembling noise at my hands, booming in a seeming row, sweeping in lines I fade in and out of some other vision.

A long day in here makes a short evening. I sweat. And I shake the chains into earthquakes. An instant night and they crack and they finally break. See, my, my tricks. My ... escape. The door was weak, and the hall empty. I snuck out avoiding the white men walking against a wall onto an open balcony. Slipping down the street, slinking between talking crowds. Yes! And I don't even understand a word.

I stagger along a long lonely road in an Asian town and weakened by medicine I soldier the arduous endeavour of forgetting the pains amid allures of rest. Somewhere here is the Purple Lotus I think, the resistance little hide out. Their get-away where they know ninjutsu and teach forms of conquest by means of words. They know shadow fighting, deception by illusions and rejuvenation, they heal you with incense and herbal medicine. And I need to be there, I need to recover. I need to be allowed the strength to be my self again.

The night is hazy here, and the alley I took small. And I am not alone: there are movements in the corners, on the roofs and in the windows. The closed doors scheme with rattle and anyone here can be assumed allied with the ignoble crown. An enemy.

In the distance by a parlour leans two men in dojo joggers, long white sleeve tees and rice hats. Kung fu. I have nothing on them, but I can't turn around now, it is suspicious, and disguised like anyone I chance, to saunter by.

A thick smog separates us, but as I pass the inn's lights glow with welcome. It is a break to the grey desolate day out in the mist where hardly anything is visible yonder, where lines of wind wallow in a mysterious weather. The man furthest the door looks at me and a chilling strike runs through my veins of frost. A so sub-zero cold I

exhale snow. He wonders a while and wilts, and I walk by, into the fog choking on ice.

I had come a long way, I was furthest down the road when my eyes weakened. My sight suddenly waned and my head hurt. A simple thud, and I fell so haplessly. The gravel cut into my hands and arms and I could feel, I could taste the grimy water in the gutter. The headlights came beaming so hard it pains in my eyes. A motor growled angrily, a door was flung opened and I was lunged in a seat. Doors slammed to a foreign tongue.

A shuttle service. Taxi. No. Bulldozers. We set off and I don't even know where I'm going.

In minutes, maybe more, the 1963 silver Sting Ray coupe pulls over in an alley and kicks me out. 'Hail Caesar!' he revs. And I shout a response: 'And exalt the Cartel'.

I rise from the roadside drowsy lingering with this venomous lie. And refute, I slur: 'Upheavalll. And overthrow'.

A streetlight flickers and slowly fades away. A reminiscing rally of frightful yet interesting impressions: I seem to have seen this before. The oil and the dirt. The mixed stench of loneliness. My bones hurt. I've been here before.

While walking a soft voice suddenly touches and leaves.  
Why wish it could stay, here where doors are shut, sordid  
and damned.

I skip a wall in someones yard slitting a scar. A rush of  
warm blood. I feel the grip of her hands in the crowd and  
I promise I won't let go, but I don't see her here anymore.  
'What am I doing' I thought.

I am in a villa area of a metropolis. Greater Lexington.  
Left for the forces of the underground I fear I have lost  
my way.

The clouds roll by, sinister and grey.

Along the block it's quiet. For a silence has spread along  
the doors. Till a bird wings from a tree top and a gust  
grabs my shirt and garden laundry flows in the wind. A  
sudden so cold, and insensibly I watch when morning  
sun trickles between whites.

Then a gentle noise reveals and burns. There's a black  
cat jumping roofs here where everyone sleeps.

I slept in the hallway again. 4 AM. 5. 5.30.

And where everyone gathers a note was left. They don't  
want us to know, it said, we're all serving a sentence for  
someone else's crime. So in mingles we've made a new  
church.

And we've carved crusade in walls of stone.

The King is dead. Long live the King.

The patient door suddenly shrieks of cool winds. And at green the line moves one, by one, by one. 'Godspeed! See you on the ground'. We fly. The clock ticks thirty seconds and the ripcord deploys the chute.

We threw ourselves through clouds, tracers and flak's cackling, cracks and cries.

Windborne we sail.

Myths.

Oh.

Falling into a hedge it stings with thorns and cuts my jacket in tears. And my backpack, and I think my shovel and Garand falls all over me. A burden so heavily weighs on my shoulders.

What haven't I done carrying others corruption for love.

Led in a hallway I hold on to her, I don't want to lose her here in the crowd in the departure hall. We're going on a vacation when sudden splinters shower my sight somewhere else. We kiss and a phantom wails above us. A dark AS58 glider crashes with a tumultuous rumble straight through a haystack and is only just brought to a



halt in the yard in front of a house. The windows are open and the starved white curtains wave without impressions. They are all grey those walls, with depressions.

You cannot see the wounds varnished vile psychology.

I sit down in a bed waiting for something I once said and light litters my face looking through glass into a garden. It is summer. And I am writing about bumblebees. They are yellow and a bit of black. Sometimes spellbound by an incessant innocence they hit the other side of the window with a thud. Say, little creature, why do you want in, when incarcerated by corroded politics we all want out.

A soldier smokes a fire in the early morn. A welcome scent of home, and an intermittent pause in a distant violence. A bird sings when another bomb is fixed in a barrel and blown.

We ceased the cliff. When captain wonders, and I sigh exhaust at first light soaring with parachutes. What a view.

Maybe this isn't so difficult anymore.

We patrol an empty avenue.

When a gargoyle laughs in a building not far away. It is a machine-gun spewing lead in a nest in a farmer's house only so far away. And when everything happens so fast it

is a relief when something a sudden shot makes my  
body tire. And it. Burns. In me.

Waning struggling staying aware I fade in and out of  
conscience arranging seashells down the beach by  
shingles, wires, tank traps, mines and chairs. Chairs.

I've arranged chairs in an asylum's hallway. And before I  
fell asleep, I saw them all; astounding.

A message.

A May day, they measure meds for immeasurable prides  
here to pacify. And I have to fight these inoculated  
dreams for I am more than destined for symptoms of  
drugs and mania. Madness and anger.

See I have a traveled past for love and I am a partisan  
born to help destroy this jail where it is forbidden:

Some stadium style lamps showered the runways and  
terminals with light. I'd slept at the airport in Colombo  
while the countryside swarmed with tigers. At exit the  
security walked with ammo belts and food cartons filled  
with a jittery worry.

Where for us an empty hotel welcomed with a sign.  
Hmm. We were the only tenants and we sat that evening  
in sun chairs and sitting in my lap I counted your freckles.  
Four, five. A sweltering warm Indian ocean's current

scudded, drifting downwards where sharks surround ships. A white flag in sand twisted in the draught.

Democracy. I have really been everywhere looking for you until I found you. I survived the landings.

And I was sent into rural Normandy where in forests sudden olive leaves fell before me a brave farewell.

Fallen friends.

We walked through sunlit fields with hands rushing golden wheat where the winds wave forth like sea.

With Kilo Company we delved deeper into enemy territory; houses, barns and 'mortars!', bangs and dirt and shrapnel and like a flash I give in to agree to write to return. See sometimes stories are all we have and difficult to read.

Sometimes a sketch is easier to decipher than a text. And in the cafeteria someone of us's chiseled a calamitous creation into a desk.

It is a monster.

And I've been everywhere to gather guns and guys. There will always be a need for more guns and guys. And I raised my fist at the edge of the cliff crying out for more guns and guys. GRRRrrr.

And below in Saint-Laurent-sur-Mer the cold rain's lost in the warm Vire River where strafing fire blankets the ravaged coast. Mustangs are blowing storms this hour.

Side winds with our better angels.

Remains of the seasickness foyers fragments and bits of memories not even sentences of a different life when everything was enveloping and loud. Waking up in sweat screaming sometimes I've an even worse life to lead in silence.

See all is relative except inhumanity. It doesn't know any, any, bounds. Any soundness.

It is cruel.

And I stood firm taking shots for a longing, long after the night was due for dawn. On Fox Alpha the lines are unbroken and dangerous. And I was there alone at the landing zone when they stepped off in a wave and told me I don't even know what love means.

'I am in hell' I shouted, and they vanished.

I don't even know, now, how long it's been around.

I used to work a power plant in the harbor. They unload trucks of waste to make electricity. Clean green power. I was an energy man told what to do.

Well we're all stuck in a routine I think, till someone breaks the mold, or brings a large enough explosive. And trust, when the locks let go my mind was set free: and those lines hadn't rust they were dust.

And they, the schemers and their evil had something coming for them alright.

The jail's part of the drug aristocracy and dirty money making deals. They sometimes call themselves the league. But it is a little more than a title, it is a complex hierarchy between a loved child having many names:

The Cartel.

Anyone in their cotton fields were servants. And, see, this with this, this here we loyal slaves slaved no more.

The catalyst?

Liberty enlightening the world.

The leagues worst nightmare. CIA choppers with tier ones flying low by walled villas and inner city jetsets. A nice nobility. They've been above the law all their life. Now the law was coming for them.

Someone in a Black Hawk grins beastly beneath kevlar. An in and out hover and ropes. There's always another proud motherfucker on a list.

Waves roll on hull. The US attack sub Louisiana waits for the rendez-vous in a bay. A swift swap and Cap has a few new cards in the deck to shuffle. Someone wins a trip to the Cajun alligator farmers.

There's a very thin line between a world with rules, and a world without.

But importantly, there is a world with rules out there. Only, it is not here.

And let us rewind a few years. Maybe just a few moments. See if I remember. See if it's still relevant.

Oh, it is.

In a homely lobby a tv showed static. The walls here, and the doors and roof hangs trophies and water paintings. The details are a refined yet faded gold, and it smells of fresh conifer forest. A bit of snow litters the floor from someone's walking. It's me. I am someone.

There's a neat embroidery with a cursive hand on a dependable door I read saying 'The point of war is not to die for your country, it's to make the other guy die for his'.

The lobby is nearly empty now except me, and except me there's not many around. It is sparsely lit with a few fauteuils and sofas made of deep black leather. On the far end of the other side flames a fireplace and there's a

clock in here somewhere. Yes, it's there behind the counter moving mesmerisingly slow.

Tick, tack. Tick, tack.

The fires snap.

Winds whip the facade of the hotel to whine and flags hurt. And when another guest finally arrived a cold waft followed him in.

A man in a white cowboy hat, tan windbreaker and regular jeans helloed in with some haste to tune the broadcast. 'An invitation, this is important' he tells. Eeahwiiieeh. And it actually is important, no matter what he says. He just happens to be right, standing there tuning. The show is uneasy for him and the reception is very vague. Krrr. Schkrrr. And finally, something crisp clear; almost:

'Have a seat' he says. Of course. ANPA at the Waldorf-Astoria. The American Newspaper Publishers Association. The man reading is JFK. 1961.

Hmm.

Everything that is important will eventually have a place. Some matters cannot be stowed-away, lest they stow you away.

‘And we look for strength and assistance, confident that with your help man will be what he was born to be: free and independent’.

‘Thanks for listening’. You’re welcome, I think. The man gets up and shuts off the TV.

‘What do you think about war’ he says.

‘In a world of danger and trial’ I say. He adjust his shirt, buttons the top button. ‘Peace is our deepest aspiration’, he knows this part. ‘But it is an unfortunate fact’ he continues ‘that we can secure peace only by preparing for war’ we riddle. It is the wrong speech we recite, but it is a speech nonetheless, and many things weave together in this same story, if you only gain the right vantage to see it like we do.

It is a test of an allegiance. See he is not a cowboy, he is a little more than his appearance.

And I am anxious. In harm’s way. I seemingly fare through the years up until now.

## **CHAPTER 2.5**

Thanks to the politicians we endured an escalating fifteen years of jail up to the asylum. Maybe it was all my life and I just didn’t hear him. Someone shouts but I can barely hear him. And all I see is the dark green clean



uniform of a ranger above me. And I looked down, seeing the waves are three meters high here and they slam into the cliffs splashing a cold Atlantic on us. One of my steps slid and I almost fell if it weren't for a fast recovery grip.

A machine gun up there fires fast. To me it is happening in slow motion now. 'Faster!', that's what he shouts. Aha. And I hear the fire, I sense it missing me just a few feet wide and I try with a waving motion to get the ladder to swing closer on the rock to defy his angle. Someone below me unholsters and fires until his magazine clicks. A grey figure falls downwards into the engulfing ocean and disappears into darkness. 'That's what you get' he furies. He's right. But I am stressed and I fumble with my revolver almost dropping it. Scared out of my wit I climb straightened to slide across the cliff upwards. My knuckles hurt grinding against the cliff and blood runs on my fingers when the soldier above me looks down my way. He's grabbed a grenade. The sprint is held between his teeth and he lobs it upwards into a slow count. Six, seven. And they go off. Dirt stirs and springs on us. It is a manoeuvre for the first guys. The first guys, with nerves of steel.

'Hurry' they shout. A big wave rolls in and drenches the lower squad. It is ice cold. I know.

And I see some light. A lamp fixed above my bed. Its' rays are warming, almost comforting. The sun nestled its way through clouds I guess, when it strikes me I have to

help. Where? Wait. When I understand I am nowhere there. And I realise nothing matters anymore.

I live in a generation lost without an endeavour. And I was alone here in the great depression fighting a war. Stuck in a senseless round bound by neither effects nor emotions. The asylum fought back winning. Inducing me in a world of indifference so bad I was losing my every notion of freedom. Pain fell heavy drop by drop until it flowed like currents above Andes and I felt nothing anymore.

What kept me alive was my faith in better things. My light. My star. My oath. I could take on anything. I am your knight in the night. I prayed for small things, like a book to take me somewhere, somewhere happy and gentle. Or great things like a guided missile at the other end of the building. To shake the wardens, and demolish the contain.

My room was a white box, a bed and a window with window blinds that I can't stand. Sublimating a state of discouragement I wrote in a notebook. I am not a good writer but in an otherwise destitute situation of incoherent order it was a way to remain sane. To remember the days.

What I had was some clothes. A Nirvana teeshirt and jeans. The nights arrived foreseeable and I sought release from the cycle of rebirth impelled by the laws of the doctors and soldiers. I try at night to remain calm and

silent when the canines came sniffing. They search for signs of life in the hallway. A barren stretch sometimes housing escapees and violent resisters. And every night the hounds snivel, and I fear.

When a night I fell out of my bed to tremors. The entire building shuddered to large bangs. Yes! Could I believe it. I felt it. I went away from the window. My heart racing out there I could hear pacing. Footsteps, running even, there beyond the door. The door whom so often had taken me places I didn't want to go. Now the handle felt free in my hands, somehow the plastic no longer felt a jail. A glassed veranda facing the ocean in a beach house I opened. And I was immediately caught by a gust of cool fresh air. My feet felt welcome sand, out here where the days had come a fighting, was now something else.

At the far end of the long hall I could make out rubble, a new path out into the yard. The wall that had been there was gone and disintegrated powder lay strewn across the hall. I went for the opening when another door opened. I shivered. When a thin figure in long hair glanced slowly out, I relaxed. He is someone I've known in here. 'What's happening' he wondered. 'Freedom' I chanced, but it felt right, not misplaced at all here in the crumbling building where only a few more steps would grant me my liberty.

'Where, where is everyone' he confused. And I hushed. 'Shhh'. I put my finger in front of my mouth. 'Do you want

them here, or do you want to release' I whispered. Release from the state of suffering I thought. 'I wanna go' he said. 'Where do we go?' 'We go out, right there' I said, pointing.

With much haste we gambled a get-away into the yard. Struck by immense heat only across the yard a pyre belched flames, the building was on fire, sending small burning particles into the sky. New small stars twinkling in the impressive night vault.

Lying in the very fringes of the city the asylum had been struck by someone's bombing and the otherwise secure facility stood stupefyingly sad and impotent, open for anyone to check out.

We parted ways and I ran. I ran till my lungs felt like exploding. I fantasised a follow of German Shepherds and men with flashlights getting closer by every corner. And at a corner I stopped to distinguish barking. I felt the fabric of my teeshirt wet a chilling touch on my back. I was sweating, I was cold yet I had, I had no time to strategise. I had to continue. Flee. Rush through the city and make for my family. There was no barking. There were no men. Still I ran.

When suddenly I felt the smell and the soft ground of grass, I was entering a football yard and the white posts of the goals and the lines in the pitch structured the wild in rectangles. And above me were the stars. And I

bewildered. I breathed and I lay down looking into light years believing me now finally free.

I sat up for a wasp flew straight by me, energised and angered when I swiped my hand for it. Get away little wasp. It had turned into a hornet. It stung me so badly I shout. It was morning, and I could see a community park field and I realised I was really free here, for once not drowsed by medicine, I was me and I had awakened. And while they certainly exerted to rally the fugitives I was no more special than any other. They wouldn't get me. Not in a million years they would.

Able to orient I went for our summer home. It lies just outside the city in a fishing village by ocean. The roads were with people dressed in grey clothes carrying grey faces. They could just as well have been the dead, but they were the deprived, lost of what to do, and where to go. And me. I don't know how long I had been in the asylum when I finally stood there at the porch and unhinged the gate. Like getting married an excitement so real it tingled like hearts everywhere in my body. Judge their surprise when I stood there by the door. A lustre joy, the partisan returned.

There were many I thrilled to see alive. I learned the resistance planned destroying the asylums and jails and carried it out in this night. While I understood we sought many in our circles still somewhere on the run.

'I am never going back' I said. 'And there is no one around anymore to get me back'. 'No why would you' they said. 'Here, sit down, we have food' they arranged a meal of bread rations. This brown bread reminded me of bark. Dry and poor. Still, the tables had turned.

'So thats what it was like' my family was otherwise oblivious. My dreams still reoccur while less frequently now that I focused on some lighter aspects of life.

'Run, run away and never come back'.  
Scar.

Kids in the family love cartoons and I just love power conservation and diesel generators running for fun.

The cartel war was where the cold war went warm. And it attracted everyone.

### **CHAPTER 3**

So we had fled for the barns.

We vacated the city making for the cottage hills in the countryside. The mountains and the fresh rolling rapids.

An all-American family in patterned sweatshirts and grungy jeans, muddy sneakers and smiles. Fabled friends.

There's a jumping tower down by the lake, and out in the middle of the lake is a raft all free. We moored it with an anchor and I pushed you unexpectedly in with glee. And with a backflip I dive to you in this tranquil sea. We swim in glittering blue. We are a team we two.

The water drips while we dry in the sun. And together here, what haven't we won.

Hmm.

We met in high school and what started out as a fling became my soul's joy.

I know her freckles like I know my stars in astronomy. Constellations, celestial beings, greek Gods on her skin.

We saw each other for a year on and off before the mad regime intervened and sent us haywire. I was profiled a risk, I think so, and that led me eventually to the closed ward. My little bit of Eden.

Now I'm back in the resistance. Running errands.

An old lady runs a shop down on Fourth where she's fixing favours tailoring. Immediately when you enter you see hangers full of fashion and you hear a sewing-machine somewhere chewing cotton. The legacy of the old world lingered in the seams of the present. She provides coffee for visitors on a table in her kitchen. The Cartel patched proxies with seemingly legit states. By a

pack of pure black Colombian beans in the window is a frame of a family. The politicians ran these sovereign states supposing they were nowhere different from any other. And sometimes she affords to sit down and chat.

‘But it’s so much to say Caesar carries a vile crown and must die’ she says. ‘Because his power where he rules above Kingpins is one without charity’. ‘And while evil is a supposititious servant’, she adds, ‘God’s work here in this life must still be ours’.

And here were people intended to suffer, I thought, ‘for power’ I claimed ‘and sometimes for suffering itself’ she had. ‘Needing nothing’, ‘needing nothing’ ... ‘short of a revolt’ she fills. There’s a subtle ping to the door when it shuts. It could be louder.

A streetlamp fights exhaustion on the road home. So weak it wanes and dies. That’s it. It’s like she said. We need to be our own fathers. We need lighters to light the scorching flames of the Molotov’s. We need to stand high in the hills. We need sharpened hockey sticks and riot shields. Big boots. Bengals. Bombs and pitchforks in windows. Headlines in the world’s news.

‘We need furore!’ Out in the middle of a street I set out my hands. ‘Right here where I stand’.

‘Because all, much, or everything of infrastructure and design, like supermarkets, clothing brands, television shows, movies, actors were all meant to chisel very



crudely the emphasis of subjugation into the very fabric of our reality' she said. We were blocked from thinking. 'And endowed with freedom and fantasy the outsiders had to see an end to this life'.

The doors close and a man misses his line by just a margin. The train leaves. 'Next stop', it says, 'the Palisades'. While language may invite the flavour of romance there is nothing inviting in dystopian orders. And you were not supposed to tell. Not really.

I rest on a seat among others. My station is the end of the line. A man watches me and rolls his head. And he looks away. Sleeper cells with hitmen conditioned to kill are everywhere. But a round revolves only once in a lifetime and they don't want to make you into a symbol. They want you to wither and shake.

'I am here for the boos' says a sign of a little child dressed up in a white sheet with peek holes cut with scissors where I go off. His friends are pumpkins, Abraham Lincoln and zombies.

Hmm.

They want you to dissolve. So every day I try to grow. For love.

While their threats are plenty and in abundance and dangerous. I received shoddy emails with life insurance policies. An anonymous caller called me breathing and

someones whisper slunk the subway saying 'a few days'. Who was it, I don't know. There were so many there I couldn't see. It doesn't matter. The point is there are infinitely many ways, and unfortunately they were very creative.

So you have to meet their match.

They say they'll shoot you if you run; go run, they say you'll be arrested if you go to the movies; go to the movies. If you take a step back that's when you're dying because you're afraid.

And I wasn't until I realised, what if I don't see her again.

And I reminded myself every morning of my blessing sleeping safely and sound in the bed next to me.

You only know the worth of something when you have it no more. We had summer, summer's fall and then fall. Now it's freezing outside. The seasons shift, and there's new snow shingling our roof and streets, and when we wake we wonder what's worth in a winter.

We join to the junior high where we start a snowball war against the kids teaming up in the schoolyard. What we lack in numbers we make up for in style. And the only point there is to participate is to win. Her smile.

Sometimes a spirit is so intractable it can't be seen, and can't be touched. It can only be sensed.

Love. Where does it come from?

Who lit this flame in us?

No war can put it out, conquer it. I was a prisoner. And you set me free.

We sit on our car to a drive-in of this movie I've seen. A big projector projects the pacific theatre on a bigger screen. Bullets fly midst a score, and they ricochet and I forget the lyrics have reoccured in my mind anymore. When spreading skywards through tension they suddenly reverberate again in me. It is the frailty of life I see.

When it's done and over and credits have rolled the drive in empties. We group a couple remainders to set a light a blaze in a tyre to keep us warm.

Fleeting and fragile in the fire logs burn and small particles of black soot rise. We are just a speck of that starting ignition. Of the flames. But we are flames.

And we are wind. It grabs your hair and whirls. We are the elements most fanciful dream. Creation's desire to be seen.

And I understand more miserably the sickness that I've lived. And it explains the words that I've seen, and never understood:

Never understood.

Walking alone a way down the ocean where the wilds  
pad the forests at night one night. Little fox hunting rabbit  
with tiptoeing strides where the moon lit through trees as  
it left the way with light.

It was a chilly breeze beneath blinking stars where my  
road was yours, and yours was mine in sight. A nightfall  
when love lived beneath branched leaves a roof above  
my height.

A sudden falling star left a line. Who lights the darkness  
with a promise so fine. When someone's say held me to  
the strand. Where waves died a humble glory was a  
bench empty like all evil, and behind, a cradle.

When I so sought your name, a star twinkled in the East  
and I never knew alone again.

Where are you, I said, if not in my heart. And Leonids set  
a startling stage. When I understood this is not the end, it  
is a beginning.

And my hands felt your voice, and slipping between my  
fingers onto sparkling sand were galaxies. The most  
beautiful are purple. Red. And sometimes blue.

'So what do you think will happen' a friend let out. The  
airwaves that are usually full with music arrive as noise.  
The fireplace snaps and illuminates us to the backdrop of

our cars. It wanders between faces. Dancing in our midst. Noise. There's only one station now, and now there's even an interference in that transmit. And they, the men behind the curtains, the stealing thieves vehemently hating, they detest these broadcasts and us. And we. We slip their attention, resisting the chains like saints.

'I think we'll be free' I raise. 'What's the disturbance you think'. A wonder. 'Weather maybe'. 'No', a say. A flake of charcoal escapes wilting into the air. 'Something invincible'.

F22s.

Remember the yanks?

We needed a cleanup crew to deal with the misrule. And for our prayers they gave us one.