

Oh, look! It's the book with the funny name,
filled with the content that brought its fame!

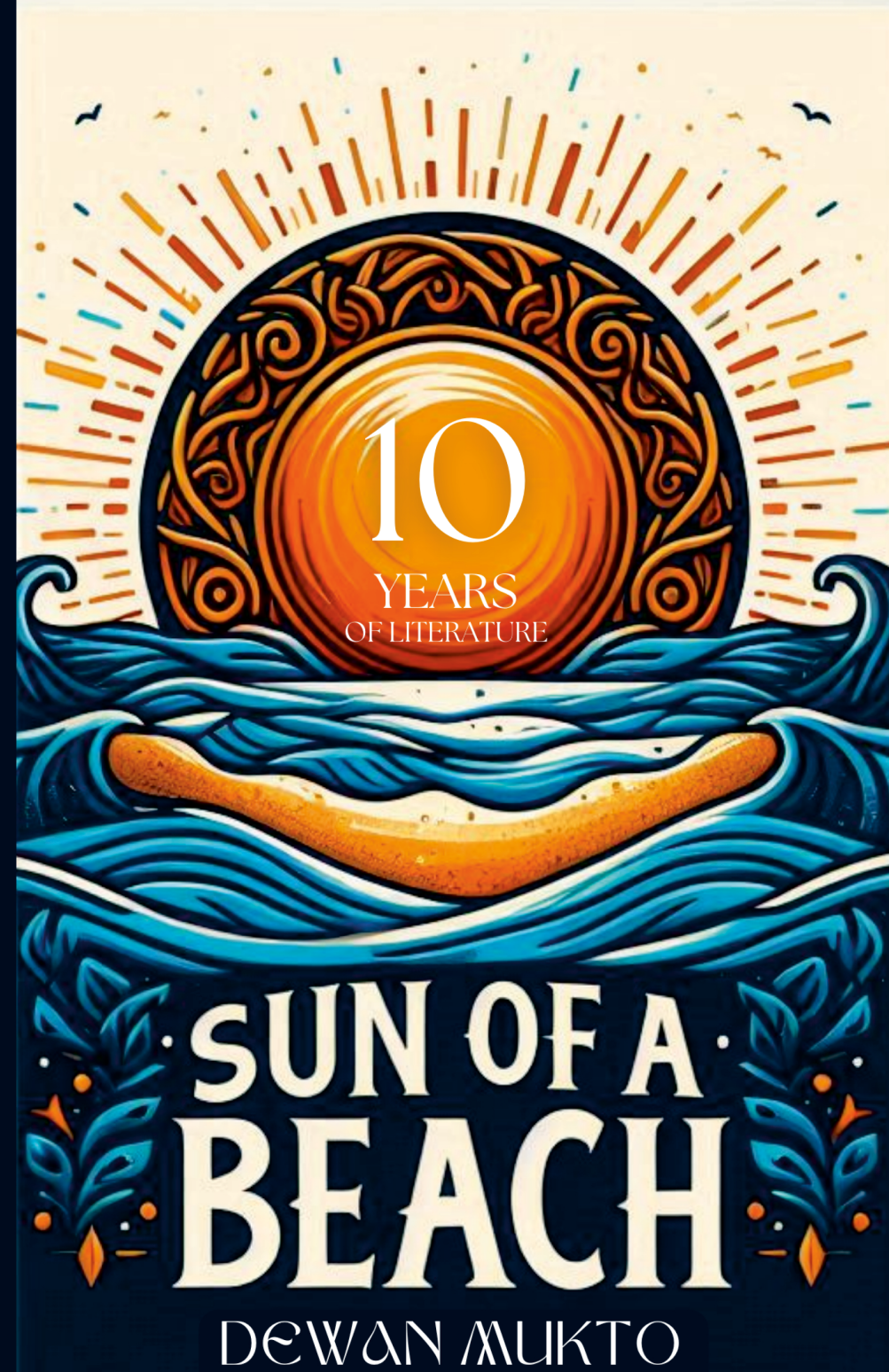
Featuring plenty of unpublished work by
Dewan Mukto, this Sun of a Beach will surely
tie a noose around your attention span and
drag it along the road to remembrance. This is
your chance at having a look at never-seen-
before stories by the author, with their
corresponding first chapters extracted and
sorted out for your convenience. Come on,
now! We've got the mainstream In The Wildest
Dimensions, Prison of Sentience, One One One,
Knightspeak as well as unseen titles like
Genesis Era, Hodge Podge, Sapien-Skinned
Serpents and more!

If there was ever an ideal book for trolling,
entertainment and gifting - this is the one!



Sun of a Beach

Dewan Mukto



Dewan M.I. Mukto is a hobbyist author and poet born and raised in Sylhet, Bangladesh. Although his actual academic interests and professional occupations differ from the usual works of literature, Mukto aims to inspire and entertain countless people through the few publications he can spare.

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SUN OF A BEACH

An Anthology

By
Dewan Mukto

SUN OF A BEACH

First Edition 2024

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For

All those people who never believed in me,
so that they can be surprised when they find this
book everywhere

FOREWORD

This book was born out of a crazy idea. What if there was a publication that existed with such a title that was sure to bring about certain giggles and raise some eyebrows whenever people mentioned it?

Well, the “sun of a beach” phrase sounds phonetically similar to a slang swear that is commonly used by loud-mouthed personnel who possess peanut-sized brains. This book is basically supposed to exist only for the sake of it — no other intentions. Obviously, this is going to be a very boring book if it were to contain blank pages. Thus, I have decided to “decorate” it by chronologically arranging the first chapters of every story I had ever written since 2014, in descending order. From the latest to the oldest.

A catalogue of pure Mukto literature. Haha.

One that can specifically pique your interests to read some of my other novels, I hope. Anyways, let us keep this foreword short and simple. Stay safe, stay sharp, and stay chilled!

Dewan Mukto
7th June 2024

GENESIS ERA

Genre: Science Fiction / Action / Futuristic

Year Written: 2024

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

Vurt Hull, a name often feared by people with hearts addicted to malice, brought a sign of hope in Mira Soy's, currently full of fear. Trembling under the effects of emotions deemed too frightening, she wanted to make sure that it was *really* Vurt.

Peeking from the corner of a pile of broken metal components, she controlled her fingers, as nervous as her entire body, trying to console herself from succumbing to the avalanche of dreadful emotions slithering through her mind right now. Being born with the surname of Soy imposed a great risk of being targeted by the rival families. Especially by one of the Reinen's Garden families - House Hull.

'Dear G-God, please h-help me,' Mira quivered quietly as the footsteps inched closer to her hiding spot.

She was likely the only survivor remaining aboard the space throttleship, the Solarquake Warner. As a princess belonging to one of the Seventeen Great Families, she had been granted a fleet of battleships and yottleships for defending the Solarquake Warner on its way to visit the planet Ard for initiating a truce. However, the nations of Ard had possibly perceived the royal escort as an invasion attempt, attacking the incoming spaceships before even entering the confines of Ard's orbit. Within minutes, House Soy's ships had become a floating cluster of space debris as the northern nation Azenturisk's superior artillery penetrated right through their hulls. As for the throttleship itself, the few Exoguard soldiers onboard had fought to their last breaths, unable to bear anyone wishing to hurt Mira, till the Azenguard made their entrance.

Leading the Azenguard was none other than Vurt Hull, the second eldest son of the Hull family - an iconic rival to the Soy family. What was the reason behind their opposition? Perhaps an age-long diet of harsh envy against each other's resources? Perhaps a disagreement between the family leaders?

Evacuation signals and lights blared as Vurt toted his weapon - Lightseeker, a rapidfire sniper rifle forged out of starsilk and deunedite, scanning for signs of life.

His stunning set of armor glistened like his gun, the pearl-white metal composing up rigid and formidable plates for withstanding even the strongest blows from any Exoguard weapon. His gait self-narrated about his regal descent, his noble face radiated with the purity of a thousand heavenly roses, his pale blue eyes honorably focusing on completing his task at hand. And he was willing to claim the soul of anyone who belonged to the wrong side.

"Anyone there? Safe or wounded?" he called out. Vurt's voice spread out with the intentions of echoing against any beating hearts. For even the faintest fraction of fluctuations in the amplitude of the resonance coming back to his ears, Vurt could expertly deduce the difference. **"Hello? This is the Azenguard. All personnel are advised to cease resistance immediately. You are being requested to comply with Ard's interplanetary visitor laws. This is your last chance. Please show yourself now to win the choice of mercy, or die while trying to hide."**

Before Mira could decide, one of her bodyguards appeared from behind a deep groove along the ship's passageway tunnel. He dropped his lasertune rifle as a gesture of surrendering to Vurt Hull.

"Please, spare me," the Exoguard survivor muttered, raising his armored arms in the air. His helmet was on, hiding the identity of his facial features. **"Please show me mercy, good sire. I'm only a servant of my superiors. My actions are not my own!"**

"Ah, good choice, soldier," Vurt approached him, accelerating his walking pace by a catalyst of excitement. **"Now, how will you be of service to Azenturisk? Your ethnicity and nationality are both unwelcome here. I'm afraid but the only option I have for you is the mercy of a painless death."**

"N-no, sire! Please! I have a family to feed back home," the soldier's mind was being mulled by the consequences of his death. **"I... I didn't want to ever become a member of the Exoguard. And, we didn't hold any purposes of attacking nor invading your planet! Please, understand me. Try to understand! House Soy is—"**

"House Soy is only a matter of *my* father's business," Vurt smacked the soldier's helmet with the Lightseeker, dropping him to the floor due an imbalance with his center of gravity. **"Doesn't the Exoguard indulge itself in teaching manners? Or even foreign laws? In the orbital boundaries of Ard, only certain people have the right to even *utter* my family's name!"** he pointed a thumb towards his own heart. **"Or even the name of any**

families not on par with ours. Including your Soys," this time, he jerked his thumb in the kneeling guard's direction.

Princess Mira Soy was observing the attitudes of Prince Vurt Hull in real life for the first time. All her life, she had only heard distant fables about a fearless new warrior rising from Ard. But her expectations were overrun by the empirical evidence of Vurt's egoistic nature, based on what she could see from her hiding spot. *'Is... is that really Vurt? The Vurt of House Hull? The forsaken Prince of the Seven Skies?'*

"I... I apologize, your highness. I'll help! I'll be of use to you and your government," the pleading soldier offered. **"From now on, I'll swear fealty to Azenturisk and House Hull, sire."**

"Hmm," Vurt began walking in a narrow circle around the surrendering Exoguard soldier, revolving like a lion dominating his prey. His finger seductively played with the trigger of his Lightseeker gun. **"I'd need to test the limits of your *fealty*, then. I've been informed**

that your throttleship carries one of Lord Soy's daughters aboard. Where... is she?"

Hearing this made Mira's cardiac muscles contract tighter than usual for a second.
'What? What's he doing? Why's he asking for me? Oh no... what do I do now?'

"S-sure! If that's what'll earn my freedom,"
the soldier's eyes lit up beneath the armored helm. **"She's right over there, behind the ruins of the communication pillar, sire."**

'No! What did you just do! Stupid guard!'
Mira frantically looked around for another place to evade. *'My father is gonna have you executed for that! Traitor! Help, oh God!'*

"Excellent," Vurt upholstered Lightseeker magnetically to his back, floating freely but always gravitating near his body. He helped the soldier get back to his feet to stand upright. His eye level met the top of the soldier's helmet. Without warning, he rammed his exoskeletally-armored gloved fists into the Exoguard's torso. He landed another flurry of blows at his head. **"Thanks for proving your dishonesty, *friend*. A soldier**

who betrays his own kind is of no use nor trust to the next. Better remember that next time, before trying to sell off yourself."

The heavy punches had distorted the shape of the Exoguard helmet, now crushing the human skull within. The lifeless body added one more number to Vurt's kill count for the day.

Mira gasped. *'Wh-what did he just... how did he... how could... ugh... I hate it. I wanna go back home. Oh please, dear God, save me from these horrid people!'*

"Alright, Miss Mira," Vurt called out. **"Come on out."**

Hearing her name being called out by the person she once blindly admired wasn't supporting her sentiments right now. She was unsure whether to trust someone who just murdered one of her family's protectors in front of her uncensored eyes. Indeed, she was not supposed to trust anyone other than the families who stood in alliance with hers. But the proud houses of Theta and Faux were approximately 300 lightyears away. She

regretted her decisions for ever volunteering to travel to Ard on behalf of the regular emissary. What could she do now? Was this the end for her? She was still one year away from adulthood.

Remembering the warnings announced by the Exoguardslayer previously, she reluctantly tiptoed out from the shadows of the safe spot, hoping for some more mercy than what he had shown for that last guard.

"H-here," she lowered her gaze out of respect, in accordance with the etiquettes of meeting an elder. Her fingers subconsciously knotted themselves to dampen out some of her mental stress. She nervously walked towards Vurt. Just gazing at the white brilliance of his armor made her tremble. Words struggled to climb out of her pastel-pink doe lips. **"P-please... d-don't... h-hurt... m-me..."**

Vurt held out his hand.

"Fear me not, Princezzin," Vurt's voice cloaked itself with a gentler tone than what had been in the Exoguard's fate. Hearing the

subtle calmness of his voice ushered the first wave of soothing Mira's current state of neuroticism. **"I won't hurt you."**

Something made her believe in him. Something told her that this was the same Vurt as she had known before. *The Vurt Hull* of the legends. She felt a sort of trust growing in her mind for the same individual who was responsible for the death and destruction of her intergalactic transport convoy. Was she betraying her own kith and kin by listening to his words?

"T-thanks..."

She placed her hand over his, noticing how delicate her bare fingers looked atop the armored gauntlet. For a moment, her heart forgot about everything she had witnessed so far, trying to cherish the sensation of touching the hands of the handsome guy she had always dreamed of meeting. *'I can't... I can't believe this! I'm holding hands with... with him! Vurtical Hull! Wowie! Oh my dear God, thank you! Thank you, thank you, thank*

you... I can't believe this! My dream... has come true.'

She closed her eyes, attempting to sink into an imaginary sea of tranquility. If Vurt wanted to kill her, she'd be more than happy to have her life claimed by the youth she had been fangirling for, for the past seventeen years.

"Hey!" Vurt grabbed her shoulder with his other hand, shaking her back and forth to wake her consciousness back to reality.

"What're you doing, girl? Now's not a time to fall asleep. Wake up! I didn't even do anything. Are you feeling alright?"

"Um..." she split her eyelids open again; her pupils dilated to adjust with the brightness from the Solarquake Warner's internal environment. **"Yes, I'm... fine..."**

"Good," he grabbed her hand and began walking in the opposite direction. **"Follow me, Princezzin. And please do not try to run away. It's for your own sake."**

The leader of the Azenguard dragged her firmly, but gently, along the tunnels to locate the nearest exit, where Vurt had parked his own yottleship near a hangar bay. The throttleship's hull integrity had been compromised, but thankfully emergency oxygen dispensers had been active for nearly an hour now. Yet, what use was the fresh air when the ship was already getting full of corpses waiting to rot?

"Okay," she bit her lip. *'Am I being arrested? What about all those soldiers? Oh no, what will Mama and Papa do now? Will I be stuck here? For how long, I wonder. Please let it be FOREVER, oh God. I don't wanna return back as long as I'm safe and sound with my dear Vurtie.'*

Her dear Vurtie lowered his mouth near her ears, whispering as they walked, "Okay, Princezzin. Do not freak out. I understand that our families are still at war against each other. I had initially estimated the peaceful gestures of your approach to our planet. Possibly to declare a truce. However, I still am not in a position of command. My family

would cast me out if I dared to disobey any of their instructions. That's why I'm being held hostage, to hold *you* hostage as I return back home. A daughter from House Soy is a valuable gift for my parents. I don't know what they'll do to you, but I do know that they'll not force any ill treatment upon you. If they ever do, just inform me and I'll do the advocacy. Is that clear, Princezzin?"

'What? Am I being kidnapped? Am I being turned into a slave?' Mira's indecisive thoughts generated a binary tree of possibilities. 'Well, it's too late now. Not that I can escape from this even if I wanted to. And it kind of feels... very oddly familiar to something,' when it hit her, she blushed. 'It's just like... getting married! Am I... am I going to live with my lovely Vurtie and his parents? Is this real? Am I not dreaming?'

If both her hands were free right now, she would've hugged herself out of joy.

Vurt led her down some stairs which transformed into a shallow ramp further

down. *'Such a soft hand. She truly is a princess.'*

"We're here, Princezzin," he pointed at the Azenguard Starstealer yottleship awaiting them at the foot of the broad ramp leading to the starboard hangar bay. **"Remember what I told you. From this moment onwards, everyone you meet is *not* a friend. Nor am I,"** he equipped himself with his rifle. **"Hop in. Time to take you sightseeing in Azenturisk. Keep your mouth shut, by the way, because not everyone in the Azenguard is as lenient as me."**

The words slightly hollowed out her heart. Regardless, she followed.

Vurt climbed into the spacious cockpit, gesturing at Mira to occupy the co-pilot's seat beside him. *'I don't even know why I'm doing this. General Sev clearly instructed me to spill the girl's blood and bring some droplets back to him for biometric sampling. I hope I can convince them to repeal their orders once I ask Father about this,'* he glimpsed at the feminine beauty sitting

within his arm's reach, on his left-hand side,
when the yottleship's engine roared to life.
'Ha, what a way to begin the year!'

Sun of a Beach

As of now, **Genesis Era** can be read online on Webnovel.



HODGE PODGE

Genre: Fantasy / Humor / Medieval

Year Written: 2024

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

"Make way for the hero! Everyone, move away!" a royal herald trotted atop his horse like trying to deliver a pregnant woman about to give birth. His unkempt beard danced with the fleeting gusts of air as his destrier cleaved through the crowd smoother than spreading Old Vamich's butter. As for his body, it hopped and bobbed up and down like the waves of the sea in the way that I remember it from my previous life. My life, as a king. **"People, get moving or else you'll be trampled and then Old Vamich would make butter out of your corpse!"**

'Eww, so THAT's the unpredictable reason why that dairy farmer's products are like that? Unimaginable! What a horrible kingdom this is.' And it was only my first day, nonetheless.

Somewhere in the corner of the street, the aged man named Vamich scowled from behind his store's glossy windows. Ha, if only his business ran as transparently as his decorations, perhaps he could have hoped for a more praiseworthy business to be booming. The kingdom of Guluk Desh certainly had a prosperous economy, from what I could tell.

“Ai, ai, ai, what’s with this rush?” a baker who made fancy bread inquired, as he lifted his apron for scrambling away from the unrelenting force of the horsemen. **“Is this truly an emergency?”**

The herald had already passed by, so another horseman simply stopped for a moment to stare down at the baker.

What kind of sentiment and attitude ran in this kingdom? More precisely, why did they need to call in the Hero in here? That’s right, the HERO. In the entire world of Hodge Podge, there existed only one ‘being’ sentient enough to be claimed as the rightful “savior of the world”. Previously when I used

to be truly independent and ruled over the elements of wealth, magic, knowledge and martial arts, I remember hearing such tales from distant lands. About a certain individual who is supposed to become the next all-powerful person. However, that day never dawned and I grew bored being at the top for too long. Thus, I had wanted to break free from my life, in order to live one anew.

Here I am, in the shape of a nine-year-old boy, reliving my childhood with all of my past to my advantage, spectating whatever chaos the kingless kingdom had conjured by their own fate and stupidity.

Well, two points to be made here:

- a) I certainly was NOT the king of this realm
- b) Calling these people ‘stupid’ would be too harsh; rather, they were faster than the speed of wisdom and logic

The convoy of horses sped along the King’s Road. The townsmen couldn’t help but watch the legal bandits be about their duty. That’s

right, “legal bandits”, who siphoned the coin from taxes under the false hopes of government services. What use was a government in a citadel like this?

Just last night, I couldn’t approach sleep because of all the ruckus being hosted by the king’s doctors. To be precise, those medical mongrels had a weekly habit of releasing mosquitoes into the air of the city (which I hadn’t known before, since Guluk Desh was a land which I had never explored before). They claimed that these insects were for “experimental purposes” to collect blood samples for researching new cures, whereas all they did was play their out-of-tune clarinets near my ears. They seemed to have sensed my aura of power, which prevented them from penetrating my skin with their pointy proboscis – but they had decided to seek revenge by terrorizing my mind with their moaning. If this was the kind of work that the government was up to, I was almost determined to crush this entire city under an asteroid!

Almost.

The average citizen seemed decent, but I
was still a newcomer.

We impatiently waited for the forsaken Hero
to climb out of his closet and finally make an
appearance.

And he did!

Some of the people nearby ushered
welcomed him to the city by showering the
Hero with flowers.

Just as the fables narrated in children's
books, the heroic fellow arrived with a head
full of golden hair, a mouth full of teeth
sparklingly white and without any cavities,
and a face perfumed with confidence. The
type of person everyone could rely on. The
type of person that the bards would
compose new trending hits about. The
type—

“My hero!” a young girl broke through the
borders of the royal escort, directly jumping
onto the Hero's steed in a hug. **“You're finally
he—”**

“Ghah! Be gone, vile wench!” the people’s favorite Hero kicked the innocent female human off his horse without a warning. His reaction was more inclined towards disgust than fear. *‘A hero who disrespects women? That’s new!’*

The world seemed to be trapped in time. Eyes transfixed on the Hero were nearly popping out. What had the Hero just done? Why did he do it?

I couldn’t help but slap my own face with the palm of my hand.

Wow, all these centuries living as a superior being in a faraway land had gone to waste, it seems. Finally, I could enjoy some dramatic entertainment right in front of my eyes.

Little did I know that I had jumped out of the pan, into the fire.

Dewan Mukto

As of now, **Hodge Podge** cannot be read anywhere since the concept of this novel has been scrapped entirely.



IN THE WILDEST DIMENSIONS

Genre: Thriller / Romance / Modern

Year Written: 2023

Year Published: 2024

Status: **Complete**

Empty.

The tuxedo-clad detective was on vacation, but certainly he hadn't permitted his wallet to be on vacation either. Fueled by a shower of embarrassment and a growing cloud of dread condensing above the canopy of his superficial emotions, he hastily tried to run a search warrant on his own apparel. The collection of pockets couldn't resist. They had to give in, he thought.

But luck was the lawyer for his fate tonight. And the judge of his life had already decreed what was about to unfold.

"I... Please give me a moment," his speech skills summoned the most mundane lines his

mind could handle. Meanwhile, his arms and hands dutifully fumbled about the domain of his garments.

"Take your time, sir," a voice replied back, scented by fresh courtesy. Feminine in nature, young in stature. "I'll be available at the counter whenever you're ready."

"Ah, sure thing!"

The detective stood up from his seat. Due to a slight anomaly in the speed of his ascent, a metallic object slipped out of his trouser pocket. Under the light of the ornate chandeliers, its silvery skeleton winked back at him with a pact signed by the night's disgruntled agent of luck itself.

Cli-nk! Clink!

The object performed a gentle hop before resting atop the floor. Car keys. Bearing the logo of the British automobile manufacturer 'Bentley'.

'Ahem,' the detective performed a swift swoop with his hand in the likeness of an eagle launching itself at a rabbit, but faster

than a bullet fired from the weapon hidden within his suit. He placed his car keys back in his rightful place before throwing his gaze around the confines of the café, habitually trying to deduce if any onlookers had the honesty to capture a greedy glimpse of his keys. Luckily, and perhaps unluckily, he found none.

He heard a giggle. That same voice who had spoken a while ago. A cheerful tune that melted his stern stance immediately.

Rotating himself around, he faced the waitress. Slightly shocked.

"Don't worry, Mr Lucas," she had the opportunity to peek at his nameplate while he was dazed by his distracted self in fumbling about his pockets to trace any clues about his wallet. His surprisingly missing wallet. "These parts of town are unsusceptible to thieves or the like. People rarely commit crimes," she stated while pouring out a waterfall of latté coffee from a kettle at the counter.

"Well that's strange," the detective, presumably surnamed Jucas, swatted away his suspicions for a moment. "A town without crime is like a business without funding."

"Oh, is that so?" the waitress donned a counterfeit smile, spiced by a sarcastic laugh. She stopped pouring the coffee; the cup was overflowing. "Welcome to Vicilia, sir. May I have the privilege of asking what brings you here?"

"No," Jucas fought fire with fire, with a smile faker than hers. "I am sorry, but I'd rather not answer that."

He drew out his only hope for monetary support in the absence of his beloved wallet - the pistol buried in the womb of his suit. It was no ordinary weapon.

"E-excuse me?" the waitress took a step back dragged by the tug of reflex. "What are you doing?"

A double dozen customers occupying the environment passed on their puzzled,

slightly frightened, expression in a ripple akin to a multiplexing domino effect. All eyes on the man non-native to this region.

"Committing crimes," Lucas replied bluntly.

The detective clenched his right hand's muscles, pulling the trigger five times.

American coins slipped out of the nozzle in free flight, headed towards the roof of the counter. Five of them. Five dollars.

Stunned by the unexpected scenario witnessed by the onlookers, the detective shoved an opportunity into his bad supply of luck for the night. With a pace neither too suspicious nor too slow, he reduced his displacement from the doors signifying the exit for the coffee shop.

"Keep the change."

A tiny bell connected to the doors tinkered with two musical notes, its pitch climbing up and down as the detective boldly fled the scene.

Naturally, the waitress relied on her sharp eyesight to immediately seize any remaining clues about the strange guest's whereabouts. To her curiosity's pleasure, her eyes were transfixed on a nametag peacefully reclining near the foothills of the counter. The text read: "Adam Jucas".

Nimbus clouds were dutifully busy watering the ashen garden of the cityscape dominated by flowers and plants in the form of trees and buildings. Adam stepped out of the café and briskly allowed his eyes to locate his vehicle.

Even in the shimmering haze of rainfall, the stock rims of the Bentley Continental SS automobile shone as smoothly and perfectly as the day today. The license plate proudly displayed an alphanumeric combination that an informed individual could subconsciously deduce as being registered relatively recently.

Indeed, Adam only recently managed to afford his dream car.

After spending countless hours battling against the legions of fatigue, boredom and gritty work in the law enforcement life, Adam Lucas had honorably bought the car at the price of discrete dishonor to his reputation, by confiscating a large monetary sum from a criminal who had fallen prey to one of his sting operations. Luckily, none except himself are alive and breathing on this planet to be informed about the apparent act of dishonesty.

He recalled the moment: when the Special Weapons And Tactics team arrived to quarantine the location afterwards, all they found were a hill of drugs under the criminal's ownership, a pool of blood scented with degeneracy, a corpse tattooed with bullet holes, and a detective suspiciously unharmed and unarmed.

Being a man of renowned gallantry and crowned with mystery, Adam was confident he could walk the streets of any city within the United States and have not an ounce of fear enveloped inside him. His gait alone, he believed, could send certain criminals fleeing

for their non-existent families if they could recognize him.

‘Ha, to recognize me?’ Adam’s egoistic miniature (chibi) commented within his mental chambers. ‘I doubt it.’

Adam Void Lucas, honorary detective from a city afar and a police force unspoken of, was dismayed by the subtle sight of his car’s engine not cooperating with him.

The moonlight had fallen in love with the Bentley Continental’s lustrous body, perfectly curved and cornered for optimal reflection of the stolen sunlight. The circular orbs adorning the front of the vehicle in the shape of headlights were sadly snoring inactively; the battery itself liable for standing in contrast against the ignition chamber.

Blurred out by the thickness of glass and his current distractions, the waitress knocked on one of the windows from her location indoors. Her attempts at hailing Adam’s attention sunk down in vain.

‘You couldn’t pick a merrier moment to fail, huh?’ Adam silently aimed an insult at his prized ride, riddled in rhetoric with a sauce of sarcasm. Having no choice left, he walked over to the hood of the Bentley, preparing his dexterous hands for a remedial diagnosis of the car’s ailment. ‘Oh well, all the more beneficial to act on it than to nag and grumble.’

With a swift stroke upwards, he pulled the metallic skin apart, to expose the internal organs of the transportation machine.

‘Sigh.’

He broke free from a delusion as a personal fact rushed towards his curious mind like a tsunami overpowering a temple – Adam Jucas was not well acquainted with mechanical knowledge.

Turning around, his sixth sense merged with his peripheral sense of vision.

His nametag was in the wrong hands.

Dewan Mukto

As of now, physical copies of **In The Wildest Dimensions** can be found via the following ISBNs:

- 9798880533060 (Hardback)
- 9781446195031 (Hardback)

And online on Webnovel, Wattpad, Inkitt, Tapas, Smashwords, Google Play Books, etc.



PRISON OF SENTIENCE

Genre: Fantasy / Romance / Medieval

Year Written: 2022

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

Empty.

A blank sheet of paper patiently awaited a pen to tickle its surface. Born from the death of a tree, a shell of a leaf, and a loose lump of essence, the page was particularly satisfied with its life so far. No doubt, its ancestors had held high hopes for what lay ahead for its destiny. It wished to be used as a tool. It dreamed of being successful, to live for its worthy ambition. Its purpose of life!

Silent and still, a bed of wood upheld the paper's dream. Waves and loops of age were visible on its skin. It, too, felt a cloud of pity for the paper bottling up in its non-sentient mind. A tub of anticipation to observe a

worthy human finally set the paper free from its doubt of being a failure.

Yawning, a man in his thirties sat at his desk with his hands clutching his head like a boulder of rotten bread. Ideas trickled into his head but were drowned out by the screams he could hear storming every cell of his brain. Screams of trauma, screams of doubt.

To him, life seemed like an endless domino cycle of doubt, depression and distress.

"Ugh... Quiet down, you morons!" he threw a paste of anger-flavored words at the wall behind him. His own words bounced back from the concrete surfaces and annoyed his ears. A fact latched onto his current platter of logic, making him realize something important. His eyes seemed dimmer. "Right... I forgot.... You're not here."

A room bare as a newborn, except for his dutiful desk and charitable chair. His wallet remained crammed with due receipts in another room unspoken of. He owned no musical device, so the monotonous beats of

rainfall were all that currently provided ambience for his task.

He wanted to write.

Unfortunately, memories of his past clung to his sensory perception, infecting sensitive areas of his psychological health. From sudden uncomfortable visions to auditory illusions, he almost gave up trusting his own thoughts and interpretations.

Petals of hatred glistened from flowers of emotional pain he had acquired over years of triumph. Passion fueled his hobby, but toxic friends and unsupportive parents ate away at any roads of fortune he built. He had been bullied just for loving to write.

A nerd, a geek, a lifeless zombie... He could've written a list of their abusive nicknames faster than he could produce a fruitful work of literature.

"Damn it!" he delivered a smashing blow to the wooden table with his fist. Logic. Emotion. Passion. He didn't know which one

to choose. A fourth option poked at him from the shadows - Vengeance.

'No,' he thought, quickly fluctuating his frame of mind to a calmer octave. 'I don't wish to write and succeed to seek revenge on those who demotivated me. Rather, I myself should consider responsibility for everything. My scars and my shining stars. I am because I was.'

A caterpillar of pain throbbed and curled around his writing hand. Silently, the man tolerated the harvest of his own actions.

The wood where his fist struck remained visibly fine. No marks or signs of impact at all. On a subconscious level, though, pieces of the wood's soul ripped apart under the weight of its owner's hardship and mistreatment.

"Aaagh..." he clutched his forehead in the likeness of a Greek philosopher trapped in time, trying to rethink his life plans. "All my life, all I wanted was to create worlds and characters..."

A pen was sleeping beside the virgin paper.
He turned his attention specifically towards
that shaft of metal, plastic and ink.

"All I wanted was to weave life into my
creations..." he muttered to people absent
and invisible. "To let my readers enjoy them,
to adopt them, nurture them..."

His chair involuntarily let out an anxious
creak as he leaned forward to grab his pen.

"All I wanted was to be a good writer!"

His hand muscles whirled with motion -
battling forces of excitement versus
procrastination - positioning the pen's nib
normally at the superficial whiteness of the
piece of paper.

Both his mouth and his mind went mute for
a moment.

A train of words were stationed in his mind,
ready for departure out the gates of
freedom. A pearl of sweat climbed down the
ladder of his forehead cells. Hundreds of
hours of melancholic memories were en
route to being imprisoned by the call of

hope. The call of duty. For something magnificently great.

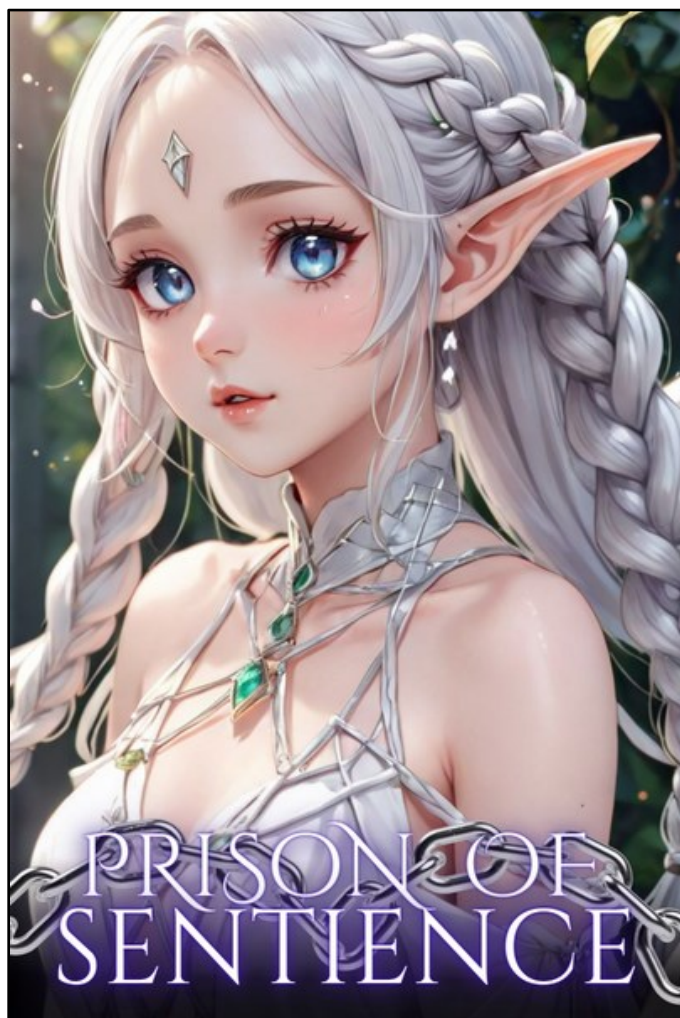
The paper, the pen, the person - all three dreams united as one.

His eyes grew dimmer and his lips drooped downwards into a frown. Without any external context, he scribbled the following words:

"All I see are broken dreams."

Sun of a Beach

As of now, **Prison of Sentence** (previously entitled as **The Inkmaster**) can be read online on Webnovel, Wattpad, and Honeyfeed.



SAPIEN-SKINNED SERPENTS

Genre: Fantasy / Adventure / Medieval

Year Written: 2022

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

"Be gone from my sight!" the newly ascended king donned his furious face for the first time. Peering down from his throne of fused obsidian, glittering darkly with shades of arrogance attune to the shine of his corrupt personality, he contracted his eyebrows at the noble family kneeling before him. "Hiltin Midar, one of your forefathers, had been a historic enemy to House Frenn. He had committed crimes not yet forgiven. Thus, you and your family shall be shunned!"

King Leeroy Frenn banged his fist on his throne's armrest, visibly exhibiting his muscles fuming with frustration. Certainly, his blood itself was boiling.

"For now, you all are being exiled from the range of my reign. Delay any further, and perhaps you all will be exiled from life," the king gestured towards his royal guards flanking either side of the ornate seat of power, a treacherously powerful weapon wielded by each. No, these were beyond weapons carried by regular protectors of the throne. These were legendary artifacts imbued with energies from another dimension!

"B-but Your Majesty," Ghorr Midar, father of five, retorted as a representative to Hiltin's bloodline. His legs trembled with rage parallel to the unfair ruler. The grey hairs on his head and face boasted years of experience. A broadsword fastened on his hip behaved as a badge of honor for his reputation as a knight. A knight to the previous king, nonetheless. This new one hardly paid heed to any of his words. "There are no such laws that allows you to simply BAN US from this kingdom itself! This is TOO MUCH!"

The man was a tyrant, everyone knew, but none dared to duel. Rumors had already spread that Leeroy himself poisoned his father to claim the crown for his own. For someone who favored historic grudges over sensible logic, Lord Ghorr Midar knew better than to argue. Sadly, he already blurted out his comments too openly.

"Too much... too much..." the palace walls rang with resonance of Ghorr's rude remark. For a clock's breath, everything fell silent as a cemetery. By the caliber of Ghorr's words, it was soon expected to be an actual cemetery.

Lord Midar's eyes split wide apart, his pupils dancing to the beats of fear, anger and doubt. What did he just say? How could he have been so stupidly ignorant of his senses? He sensed danger.

"You think you can win this verdict with mere shouting?" King Leeroy jeered. He clapped his hands and rose up from his seat. "Well, atleast your father would've been more... fitting."

Ghorr peered at his wife and children, unaware of the impending death flags approaching their fate.

The king descended down the stairs, every step sending audible clangors against the hardness of the surfaces. Obsidian, indeed. Harvested from a volcano thousands of miles away in the heart of an island unmapped. Leeroy insisted on wearing his armor wherever he went - a full set manufactured from a blend of dragonbone and foreign metals not found anywhere in Aeron. Crimson stains littered the moderately dull silvery skin of his armor like roses drenched in wine.

"Well then, pick up your blade, wretched noble," he challenged. "Let's test the strength of your tongue by the weight of your skills in combat. Stand UP!"

Leeroy reached the bottom of the stairs, his icy blue eyes locked onto Ghorr's hazel irises. Sunlight bathed the ornate hall, spilling into rectangular puddles. But none of

it reflected off Leeroy's unusually lifeless cornea.

"I said, get UP! On your feet! NOW!" the king bellowed; his voice amplified by his intimidating aura.

The royal guards watched from afar as Ghorr Midar stood back to his feet. Yet, King Frenn towered over him and the members of his family.

"No," Lady Midar whispered, hoping that her husband would refrain from accelerating the grim situation any further. "Ghorr, please stop. Don't! Think about the kids."

Ghorr took a glance back at the cherished love of his life. Perhaps for the last time. Smiling, he unveiled his weapon from its sheath before facing the enemy that threatened their existence.

SLING!!! SPLAT!

Blood erupted and tainted the carpets adorning the floors of the palace. The red liquid sprawled across the throne room like a sadness-flavored paint.

Sun of a Beach

As of now, **Sapien-Skinned Serpents** cannot be read anywhere since the concept of this novel has been scrapped entirely.



COOPER BLACK: THE HOMBRE

Genre: Action / Adventure / Modern

Year Written: 2022

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

Police sirens blared across the skyline of California as a man snuck out of a cardboard box. His silhouette shifted its colors in the hues of red and blue as several *Ford Interceptors* whizzed past behind his shadow.

The *Stetson* hat perched atop his head and the metallic jingle of bullets attached and camouflaged with his belt gifted his shadowy twin a bold cowboy attire. Not to mention the *RayBan* aviators adorning the bridge of his nose and secluding the biometric details of his irises from being traced.

Casually placing hands in his trouser pockets, he mimicked a typical street gangster and walked out of the alleyway – a

lit cigarette already prepared by his dexterous hands. The brand? Unknown. The man's name? Anonymous by nature, but only a few close acquaintances knew exactly how to address him.

"Hey Cooper! What are you doing out in the open?" a familiar voice hissed from behind the wall, though the tone was intended to advise him rather than complain. **"It ain't time yet! Get back, get back!"**

"Huh? Who's there?" the cowboy fellow, presumed Cooper, inquired. **"Identify yourself."**

"Damnations, Black! Did you forget?!" the other person revealed himself under the illumination of the streetlamps. He spotted the cigarette in Cooper's hands. **"Bloody hell, man. No wonder why. How many did ya smoke already?"**

Cooper Black hesitantly dropped the unhealthy stick of nicotine immediately, before gesturing two with his fingers.

**"Don't worry, Luke," Cooper identified him,
"Everything is goin' according to plan, pal."**

**"According to plan, my ass!" Luke barked,
showing signs of intolerance of his partner's
activities. "A few seconds too early, and the
cops would've found ya."**

**"No worries, homie, I could've taken 'em
down with my Colts," he tapped his pockets,
where the lethal weapons were concealed.**

**"Holy shit, Black. Those smokes are seriously
degrading your IQ. You better stop 'fore it
gets too late, bruv."**

A remote communication device stirred to
life suddenly and a voice boomed into their
ears.

**"Shut the hell up, yokels. Pay attention to the
objective," a voice heavily spiced with
Russian piped in via the devices. Miniature
wireless phones had been surgically injected
into their eardrums for extra confidentiality.
"Any mistakes, and my men will puncture
your heads while you sleep. Any wrong**

decisions, and I'll turn your skins into carpets. Good luck."

"Oh, oh, right!" Cooper grimaced. **"F to this."** He stamped his military-grade boots on the sidewalk, venting his anger on the cigarette. **"C'mon, Luke. Let's go grab that sweet ride."**

"About time, mate."

The duo carefully crossed the "now empty" street and snaked their way towards a store. A business building boasting of the best automobiles on the planet – from rare antiques to exotic limited editions, Yon Ronchi's Autorium collected and showcased them all.

"What is this place about, mate?" Luke whispered in the lowest of amplitudes his voice could manage. They continued their trek meanwhile, not stopping for even a second.

"From what I see and what I heard," Cooper informed. **"There's this Asian car addict who enjoys his cars more than he enjoys his wives. So he constructed a whole museum to**

brag about his beauties. A true connoisseur, I tell ya."

"I see."

They ducked and continued walking in a crouched posture, revealing more and more about their military background. The pace, the tactics, the secrecy – every detail shouted years of experience and expertise by the minute.

"Hey Black."

"Yeah?" Cooper unscrewed an air vent from a blind spot of the architectural marvel.

"Questions and comments later. First, let's satisfy that greedy dog's demands. Get in."

"No, after you."

Cooper landed a blow on Luke's cheek.

"This is all your fault, English brat. So you better be the one making most progress."

"Alrigh', alrigh'. Ow, man. That hurt," Luke rubbed his face as he slid himself into the rectangular hole. **"You coming or what, Black?"**

"Like hell!"

Cooper slammed the vent shut and hammered the screws like nails.

"BLACKBURN, I SWEAR TO GOD I WILL—"

Luke snapped, unexpected such a sudden betrayal.

'Aaargh!' Something stung Cooper's left arm. Peering over his shoulder towards the direction, he observed a *Rolls-Royce Phantom*, as black as sin, parked on the other end of the street. He caught sight of a sniper rifle just before the windows rolled up.

"Hey, what the freakin' fu—," Cooper grunted, holding his arm and trying to calm his nerves from the waves of pain now flooding the wound. **"You dared to attack me? You dared to lay your hands on meh?!"**

"Mr Blackburn, this was your first warning," the voice over the radio pressed over his shoulders. **"No time for silly loitering. You either return as a faithful servant or a corpse. Your choice."**

"Shiddamn!" Cooper cursed at his luck.

The suspicious *Rolls-Royce* sped along the road and away from view.

"Cooper, bloody holmes, why did ya do that?!" Luke yanked the metal cover and freed himself from the claustrophobia tube. **"What's wrong with you, bruv? Did you lose your common senses?"**

"No, just... just stay away from me," Cooper stepped back. **"They just hit me a while ago and you're next."**

His eyebrows worried parallel to his emotions, as he tried his best to warn Luke from the impending danger.

"Cooprion, what are you– Aaaagh!"

A marksman rifle's roar echoed throughout the neighboring area, from a source unknown and unseen. Luckily for Luke, the bullet didn't manage to penetrate the specialized vest hugging him underneath the layer of jacket fabric. But he still felt the impact nonetheless.

"Are you sure we're the only ones after the Lambo?"

"You bet. But I don't," Luke replied. "At this point, I don't even know who's betraying who. Let's just grab a car and face off that baldy once and for all."

"Affirmative, I agree," Cooper gestured towards the glassy epidermis of the building. "In that case, we need not worry about stealth any longer. Aim high rather than stay low."

The police sirens which clouded the sector a handful of minutes ago were retracing their way back again, to their unfortunate surprise.

"Damn! The pigslaughter team is back so soon?" Cooper commented. "I thought you set up a nice little distraction for 'em."

"Ah, yes. But how long will a fake 911 call keep 'em cluttered, ya think?"

"Anyways, enough with this cops and robbers thing. To win big, we need some style, we need some—"

"No, wait, Cooper! Don't!"

Despite Luke's warning, Cooper unholstered his Colt Peacemakers and fired a school of bullets, allowing each to graduate with their career of being used to pierce through a layer of crystalized sand (glass).

"-skill."

Alarms around the compound finally got a chance to perform their opera of distress signals. Now the local police network knew exactly where to go, not to mention the fact that Yon Ronchi is known to have bribed policemen nearby for extra protection of his beloved structure and the automotive trophies it housed.

**"Don't just stand there, Exos ("ae-zos")!
Stand up like a man and do your duties,"**
Cooper bared his teeth in an excited grin.
"It's an opportunity of one in a million. Can't miss it, can ya?"

He helped Exos Luke back to his feet.

"Cheer up, man," Cooper attempted to motivate. **"And get out your gun. Fire away at**

any bastard who crosses your vision." He patted Luke's back twice before kicking at the glass wall, carving an opening wide and tall enough for a 5'9" American male to pass through.

Meanwhile, a *Bell 206* LAPD chopper was en route to the location faster than the duo had anticipated. Herds of *Ford Interceptors* merged from other road junctions, stampeding at the place where burglar alarms were singing.

Inside the corner of the building Cooper and Luke breached, they found rows upon rows of supercars worth more than 5% of the American GDP. They passed by a blue *Dodge Viper*, a red *Ferrari Enzo*, a yellow *Audi A6*, and a white *BMW M3*.

Luke took out his smartphone, pre-loaded with specialist apps and intel about the building's architectural and thematic skeleton.

"The keys must be stored in a room on the floor above us," Luke pointed out. Cooper

nodded. **"I'll guard from this direction, while you go pick up three keys. Chop-chop."**

"Got it," Cooper didn't waste a breath and located the staircase immediately. Even while ramming his feet up the stairs as fast as he could, police sirens were audible within range of the building's parking lot. He only hoped Luke would be able to fend them off in the final moments.

"This is the Los Angeles Police Department," an officer announced through a megaphone mouthpiece. **"Discard your weapons and walk out of the building, fast. Hands above your head and knees bent."**

"Meh," both Cooper and Luke ignored the instruction with ease. Luke, now only one decision away from equipping himself with the treacherous murder weapon he carried on his back, ducked behind the Audi to avoid the hundreds of lumens of light shone over his direction.

"Please obey our instructions. This is for your own sake, gentlemen," the police officer changed his tone from intimidating the

criminals to requesting for negotiation. **"We have received an intel report that this building has been rigged to blow."**

'What?' Both Cooper and Luke froze in their positions. A lockpicking tool fell from Cooper's tensed fingers.

"Dang it," he changed his mind and kicked the door open, thanks to the power of brute force.

The *Bell 206*'s rotor blades beat the heck out of the air above the building. Cooper found it hard to focus as an infamous song by Fazlija kept crawling into his mental space.

"This is your last warning," the LAPD copper badge bearer advised outside. **"This is for your own safety. Please seek cover immediately, behind our vehicles."**

Inside the room, Cooper reached for the assortment of electronic keys in the darkness. After rummaging here and there without stepping a foot forward into the room itself, he pulled onto a string-like object. *Beep.*

'Uh, oh. That doesn't sound good.' Cooper tried again. This time, he managed to get one of the keys. *'Here we go, time to leave.'*

"Luke! Catch!" he dropped the key from the platform-like floor above and proceeded to expertly hop over the ledge and land back on the first floor. **"Press on the button!"**

Cooper posed to hijack one of the Lamborghinis parked near him. But the key he obtained unlocked another car.

"What car is that?" Cooper wondered, trying to locate the reception notification. **"Snap! A Jeep Wrangler?"**

Glass shrapnel flew everywhere as several heavily-armed police enforcers dived into the building, knee-first, with their riot shields up and electric batons active.

"LAPD! Drop your weapons!" they bellowed with supremacy.

"No, taste them instead!" Luke opened fire. His Razorback assault rifle finally demonstrating its debut performance.

"C'mon, dude. This way," Cooper tugged onto Luke's elbow.

Luke missed some of his last shots and lodged them into a *Bugatti Chiron*. The riot officers were not pleased.

Firearms echoed from both sides and dented cars, glass, concrete and everything except flesh.

"All you had to do was find the key, Black!" an annoyed Luke gnashed his teeth as he walked backwards, facing the policemen as his first priority. Cooper sprinted in front of (behind) him. **"Now the mad bull's gonna be madder. And he'll poke at both of us with his henchmen. You happy now, bastard?"**

"Frick you!" Cooper had no time for disciplining his ally. **"Get in the car. And shut the hell up."**

Cooper and Luke squeezed themselves into the *Jeep* just in time for a *Rolls-Royce* to arrive cruising from a third (unexpected) direction, knocking and running over a majority of the cops.

'A holy shot. Credits to unholy people.'

Cooper pressed his boot against the pedals before the gunmen in the black sedan had the time and convenience to aim.

He miscalculated.

They did aim, and they did shoot, and they did it perfectly.

"Officers, charge!" the LAPD officer-with-the-mic ordered.

"Sons of witches," Cooper exclaimed. **"Try to keep up, though,"** he chuckled while fixing the rear-view mirror. His left hand twitched as his mind swapped to driving mode.

"Fasten your seatbelt, Luke. This'll be a hell of a joyride."

Vroooooom!

As of now, **Cooper Black: The Hombre** cannot be read anywhere since this version of the story has not been published yet.



Concept Art 1: Cooper Black and Exodus Luke

ONE ONE ONE

Genre: Action / Adventure / Modern

Year Written: 2021

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

The night was alive with the music of joy and the scent of celebration. Guests flocked all around the Honé household. Fireworks blossomed in the sky like exploding gemstones. Bliss in a definition.

Complete with exquisite carpets on the floor of the grand courtyard, adorned with chandeliers catering out shades of formal romanticism in the air, and the subtle presence of a hundred flavors of perfume wafting in the mist of the crowd – it was the beginning of a pleasant evening.

People dressed like the traditional lords and ladies talked, danced, drank and hummed along with the live tunes from the orchestral band in position at the dais.

Among the blurry bokeh of the background hubbub, an auburn-haired girl peeked about the horizon as if trying to locate someone. Her face adopted a smile when she found the person she was looking for. Her brown eyes sparkled with excitement.

“Heyyy, Takira!” the brown-haired girl approached another poshly-dressed girl who was busy observing the spectacle of bursting fireworks in the sky than the mundane field of people, with a rather dim expression covering her face. “What a fabulous party you’ve got running! What’s the occasion, may I ask?”

Silver-blond hair capped the other girl’s head. She turned around to face her best friend, letting out an unrelenting sigh.

“Oh hiya, Miyumi! Great to see you here,” Takira seemed unsure to continue her sentence. “Well, the party is for a birthday.”

“Oh wow! A birthday?!” Miyumi clapped her fist to her palm. “Errr... I’m sorry I came here empty-handed. Oh no, I’m the worst kind of best friend. Ah, you don’t deserve me,”

Miyumi covered her face with her hands pretending to weep and overreact to her mistake.

“What? No no no, Miyumi, oh no, don’t say that! I didn’t even mean anything by that!”

Miyumi quickly removed her hands, revealing a sly wink and a tricky grin.

“Heeeheee, tricked you again, Taki!” Crisp laughter escaped from her mouth.

“Oh, Miyumi... you...” Takira almost raised her hand to slap Miyumi. “By the way, your attempts were in vain, sister. You didn’t even hear who’s birthday it is!” Takira crossed her arms. This time, she had the tricky aura surrounding her words.

“Eh? What do you mean?”

“It is actually my father’s birthday today!”

“Hehhhhhhh????!” the fact startled the soul out of Miyumi Rakkan, classmate and loyal friend to Takira Honé.

Takira couldn’t fight back the urge to laugh, so laugh she did.

“But,” Miyumi’s head ignited a factory of confusions and curiosity spawning, “why would your dad tend to celebrate it in such a grandeur fashion?”

“Oh,” Takira regained the same grim expression as before. “I would love to know the reason, too. His childish habits are annoying sometimes.”

A firework rocket erupted in the background, showering crimson butterflies into the air.

“I am also kind of feeling jealous about it,” Takira continued. “Because he never arranged such a thing for any of my birthdays till now.”

“Oh don’t say that, Taki~” Miyumi grabbed Takira’s hands in hers. “You are only eighteen and the only child. Perhaps someday he has a bigger plan in store for you. Maybe he’s keeping it a surprise, yeah? So don’t lose hope in your dad just like that. No matter what happens in this world, fathers will always love their daughters dearly. In fact,

you are quite lucky to have such an influential father!”

Takira felt tears preparing to descend from her blue eyes. She held them back and hugged Miyumi closer to her heart.

“Oh, Miyumi.... what an amazing soul you are. Without you, my life would be forfeit and desolate.”

“Whoa whoa, calm down, sister,” Miyumi presented a nervous smile as she stepped back. “This is nothing too serious. All I did was motivate you to have more patience.”

Another firework rocket launched itself to the starry sea and shattered like a blood diamond.

“Speaking of which, what are you doing out here at the edge of the throng, Takira? You’re the daughter of the host! You belong somewhere right at the center of the party, sipping magnificent drinks and dancing along to the chords of the choir. Let’s go inside. Follow me.”

“This is the place?” a robed person inquired to another man of similar attire. “The Honés’ mansion?”

“Confirmed,” the other figure toted a gun enveloped by a dark red fabric. “Search for the ambassadors and meet me at the rooftop.”

They walked briskly towards the humongous palace of a mansion, now bathed by light and colors and thriving with music and happy voices.

Takira’s father indeed was a very powerful figure in the local society. In this world, few such great demon hunters are still alive and breathing the air they had unlocked from the clutches of otherworldly beings. Frland (pronounced “four-land”) Honé earned his name and fame by aiding other demon hunting heroes during a war that lasted twenty years.

Back in his days, Frland was a mighty swordsman, although poor and uneducated.

He hailed from a village so old that it was now extinct. People yearned to meet him and hear his voice, fabled to outmatch all other singers of that era. From villages to castles to kingdoms, he roamed freely and proudly.

Rumors also suggested that he had a peculiar disease throbbing through his body. A hunger for providing justice. When he found trouble, only then would his ‘hunger’ be satisfied. The rest of the past evolved into the dad joke: “and that was how I met your mother” which is better left alone for now.

The current Frland Honé barely emitted any signs of his previous lifestyle, however. At an age halfway between 50 and 60, Lord Honé grumpily stared at the hubbub laid out in front of him. No one lent their attention to him yet. Standing by his right-hand-side, a butler stood ready with a bell in hand.

‘Damn these people nowadays. Have they truly forgotten who I am?’ Mr Honé rubbed his eyes. The once-bold-looking forehead was now a graveyard of wrinkles. His black

had turned grey, coincidentally now matching that of his wife and daughter's silvery meadows.

Lord Honé raised his hand and the butler hit the tiny bell once. **Ting!**

Instantly, a shockwave was generated in the hall, resonating all across the main household. The whole crowd fell silent to the spell of surprise. Among them, Miyumi glanced at Takira as if she wanted to signal an event.

"Greetings," Frland's voice echoed off the Corinthian pillars and walls. "Dear messieurs et madame, we have gathered here tonight to acknowledge an important announcement. Now, now, don't panic and don't frown! I won't keep this speech too long."

A few youths in the herd of people rolled their eyes, thinking 'that's what they all say!'

"Ahem. Tonight, we have a special guest from the Alkyne faction," Mr Honé resumed the oral conveyor belt. "I would like to introduce

Casio Thozo, the current leader of the Alkynes. Please give him a round of applause!”

“It’s Thozor. You missed the ‘r’ in my name!” Casio complained, but luckily nobody heard it thanks to the environment of claps. He was a big fellow, with shoulders wider than Frland’s and a perfect bulk of muscles. The neatly combed yellow blonde hair atop his head glistened like gold.

“Okay. Now, onto the main issue of tonight’s party...”

In Takira’s mind, she tuned her father’s words out of focus. She had been hearing meetings after meetings, speeches after speeches for her entire life. In the bitter light of truth, Frland Honé had more characteristics of a retired lawyer or a businessman than the forsaken warrior everyone remembers him by. Where was the adventurous version of her father? Was it asleep, waiting for the right moment to be re-enabled? Or had it all faded away with age and time?

‘Time’, Takira thought to herself, ignoring everything and everyone around her for a moment. ‘Such a precious resource in this world. No doubt, it is also the strangest. So many opportunity costs, too. It is “time” which controls the balance of nature. “Time”, which is responsible for us to improve. “Time”, which is also the culprit who backstabs our efforts and causes things to decay.’

“Huh?” she felt someone else’s gaze falling onto her.

It is very difficult — almost impossible — to locate a particular person where there were dozens of them in every direction. According to Takira’s instincts, she propelled her vision towards a man of interest.

Before even trying to recognize the person, Takira’s eyes analyzed the first impression details.

Oceanic blue fuzzy hair with a short ahoge sticking up. An asymmetrical suit with blue fur lining one side of the collar and blue-white checkerboards decorating the other.

An overcoat above it, in the color of a blue hue so dark that it appeared black. This young gentleman was clearly an uninvited guest.

Uninvited, unknown... despite all of that, he produced an aura full of charm. For some seconds, Takira couldn't resist looking away from his face.

To Takira's surprise, the stranger winked at her when he found out that she realized what just happened, much like a prey realizing it has been caught in the web of a spider inbound.

'Wait... is he not alone?' Takira's senses flared. She skimmed through the crowds again, silently, as she spotted a dark hooded figure newly entering through the main gates.

"....and thus, the factions Akaminé and Alkyne are willing to investigate into this matter more seriously," Mr Honé almost reached the conclusion stage of his notice.

“Death to the followers of Hamadaw!” the blue-haired ‘prince’ suddenly flipped the atmosphere. He attempted to cast a spell to claim Mr Honé’s soul.

The crowd immediately broke apart like a river splitting in half by some invisible force. Casio Thozor donned a facial expression as if he saw a monster in front of him.

“In the name of Holy Seruvia, stop that kid!” Casio summoned an altar as his weapon and flung it at the young guy. “Alkynes! Defensive positions!”

Shwiiiiing~

The altar shone bright with light, charging up mid-air. Meanwhile, the usual crowd dispersion effect occurred — ordinary humans without any powers hurried to take cover or exit; the remainder possessed one or two abilities for the least.

The hooded figure stepped forward while retreating people flanked his sides. He unsheathed his weapon — a black spear-like glaive — posed to strike.

He darted forward, pushing the air itself with him and sliced at the Altar of Light. **Clungk-shhhhhhrrrt!** The altar dissipated into particles, fading out of existence.

The hood fell off, revealing his dark brown hair and grey eyes, as he landed on one knee before the blue-haired ‘ambassador’.

“Wan Dé? What are you doing here?” Frland recognized the robed person as an Akaminé member.

‘Snap! My cover is blown.’ Wan cursed at himself. ‘Oh right... the task...’

“You there! Come with me,” he called out to the blue-haired prince.

Casio’s disciples dived and flew down from the top floor, descending like angels of retribution. They conjured their weapons from thin air.

Somewhere in the havoc, Miyumi trailed Takira away by holding onto her arm.

“But wait! We do know magic, Miyu.”

“Yes, we do. But we don’t want to be hurt. Fighting is dangerous.”

Back at the main spotlight of action, Wan blocked two incoming attacks from the Alkyne members. The blue prince grabbed a third member by the neck.

“No! Saiyan Dorr, don’t hurt people,” Wan advised. “Let me handle the fighting. Otherwise you will taint your family’s name!”

“Huh?” the blue-haired guy (named Saiyan Dorr) looked at Wan as if he didn’t spot him there before. He siphoned the life energy out of the Alkyne’s body before throwing him fiercely to a wall. “How do you know my name? And who are you to decide what I do, you Akaminé scum?”

“Halt!” Casio bellowed from his side. “As the head of the Alkynes, I order you to stop right now.”

Clang! Wan safely blocked an incoming scythe from an Alkyne.

Casio pulled out a tablet computer and searched up Saiyan Dorr. The results he

found on a fugitive database made his eyes dilate with anxiety. Sweat formed on his forehead.

Name : Saiyan Dormungar

Race : Human

Age : 20

Wanted level : Demon class

Wanted for : terrorism activities, voluntary acts of violence, unauthorized soul transfers

Threat level : Death God

Info : Saiyan is adept at the art of necromancy and soulmancy. Stay away from him at any costs unless you are immune to the necro (death) element. He is known to have a special charm to attract female humans with ease. That is as far as the IDR knows. All other information about this entity would be valuable to the IDR database.

“Sir, this is a state of emergency,” Mr Honé’s butler helped him evacuate while the source of chaos was distracted away from him. “We

must leave immediately. Your enemies are coming.”

“Hold up, Varamir, where’s Takira?” Frland checked the corners of the courtyard. To add to his stress, she was nowhere to be found. “Wh-where is my moonlight flower? My dear Takira...”

“Oi, Saiyan! Now’s not the time for games,” Wan threw his glaive like a frisbee at the chandeliers, ripping them down and exterminating the light sources.

Crash! ...Crash!Crash! All three of the chandeliers in the central hall were down. And underneath them, the Alkynes remained wounded.

“I don’t listen to the Akaminé,” Saiyan egoistically replied.

“Well, from now on, you will!” Wan cast magical chains onto Saiyan’s hands and feet. He clasped Saiyan’s mouth shut as well. “Azgerdos!” The spell opened a one-way portal to Wan’s planned destination.

He picked up Saiyan and ran through the portal just in time to avoid a lethal strike from a surviving Alkyne marksman.

“Phosynchron!” Casio conjured an orb of light to assist in seeing in the dark. “Where are they? Where’s that necromancer brat and the traitor Akaminé??”

Only the silence answered.

“Bain, are you here?” Wan communicated via a communication device installed outside his ear. “Bain wun Donn, do you copy?”

Wan hefted Saiyan and absent-mindedly walked across the mansion rooftop. He bumped into someone who had been standing there well before him.

The fireworks had stopped some time back.

“Yeah, Wan, I am right heeere,” Bain stood before him, flipping an army knife. “No need to use the CommPhone. Turns out, they’re faulty as *uck. They don’t work. I’ll send complaints to the headquarters.”

“I see.”

“Which is why I exercised my stealth skills a bit and spent some free time climbing up and down walls and windows. And, man, this Honé family has a huge estate under their sleeves indeed.”

He glanced at their ‘target’ subject on Wan’s shoulder.

“So how did it go?”

Wan dropped Saiyan to his feet and unlocked his restraints.

“You idiots!” were the first two words spoken by Saiyan right after he was set free. “Why are you after me?!”

“We need your help, Dorrungar,” Bain explained. “The Sirutov faction reported that there’s an ancient monster caged beneath the Honé mansion. Figuratively, not many people are aware of the fact.”

“What?”

“Yes. Mr Frland Honé kept it a closely-guarded secret,” Wan added in. “With a man

of such power, no wonder why he gets so much respect.”

With the mention of his name, Frland’s voice was audible below, shouting commands to the nearby Akaminé demon slayers. “Find my daughter in five minutes or I’ll dismiss all of you from the service! Quick! Hurry! Be fast!”

“Alright , alright,” Saiyan cracked his knuckles with an aggressive grin on his face. “So you folks need my necro skills to take it down or what?”

Bain and Wan nodded in unison.

“Sure thing, I guess I’ll help,” Saiyan brought his hand forward in a gesture for a handshake. “But I guess not!”

Saiyan retracted his hand right as soon as Wan was about to shake it.

“No Akaminé will ever receive empathy nor support from House Dorr! Never!” Saiyan grumbled, placing one hand in his pocket. The other hand closed into a fist and trembled with anger. A grudge memory of

his past was actively choking him. “I... will... kill that monster. And also...”

He opened his fist and threw a splash of steamy death towards Wan’s direction. Bain also realized that Saiyan was standing an inch too close to the edge of the roof.

“Saiyan, behind you!”

“...I will endanger the Akaminé faction tonight!” Saiyan ignored Bain’s warning.

Saiyan let himself fall freely from the edge of the rooftop.

And he rose again, holding onto a firework rocket. But it wasn’t truly a rocket. The object resembled a living creature in the sarcastic likeness of a demon.

Bain equipped the gun he had brought with him. But he soon realized that even a hundred such guns wouldn’t be sufficient.

The moon’s color turned a menacing red, now blinded by a darkness almost bloating out the visible circle. A blood eclipse.

“You really need to improve your eyesight,
my fr~i~ends,” Saiyan’s left eye glowed bright
blue, with luminescent smoke wafting out.
“Because there happens to exist a certain
color which you cannot see properly.”

As of now, **One One One** cannot be read anywhere since this version of the story has not been published yet.



Concept Art 2: Wan Dé and Bain wun Donn

ONE ONE ONE: UNDER A CORRUPT SUN

Genre: Action / Adventure / Hybrid Medieval-Modern-Future

Year Written: 2020

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

"Wan, don't go climbing on trees again," his mother cautiously advised.

"I won't! Don't worry, Mom!" the voice of a fourteen-year-old rushed past the upcoming breeze. A mischievous smile was raked upon his lips. Scratching the rear of his head and trying to adopt the most innocent face he could don, his arms and legs fidgeted. He longed for action; he wanted to roam free.

His mother sighed.

"Little Wan, you never change... tsk tsk..." she watched him break into a sprint, darting off over the limits of her parental gaze. Within moments, her son disappeared beyond the boundaries of their cozy cottage.

Wan ran ahead, anticipating the rhythm of his movement as he throttled down a dirt track headed for the village market. Sakura trees enveloped parts of the village and fringed the edges of most buildings nearby.

Yafloria Village was a sanctuary dipped in harmony, certainly far away from bustling capital to the east and a treacherous border of the nation to the west.

"Oi Wan!" another voice stormed through the air, reaching Wan's ears.

"Huh?" turning around, he recognized a familiar face. His eyes lit up almost immediately.

"B-Bain!" he rushed forward and embraced him like a long-lost friend. Indeed, he had been away from home for a painfully long time. Despite being a 'tough guy' among his friend circle, Wan always shed tears of joy if situations ever arrived. "Bain! Oh... For so many months I have waited. Where have you been?!"

Bain wun Donn's parents were employed by the Sirutov, a military organization dedicated to serve the kingdom. Their grim tasks involved guarding the western border, also known as Humanity's Last Lesson. Mistakes had been committed in the past for which all current and future generations of people living in this kingdom have now been threatened for their own existence.

"Ah, hold it right there, dude," Bain tried shrugging Wan off. "Careful. Me and my parents just returned from the desert. Possibly my clothes could be contaminated with demonic flares and dust."

The hubbub of vendors, merchants, craftsmen and even villagers, both local and foreign, was not a calm one. The two teens luckily chose a spot further away from the mists of trade, being able to hear each other crisp clear.

"Oh-oh, right! I forgot!" he let go instantly, rethinking his activities for a second. "How was the trip? Working right beside your parents?"

"Before that," Bain raised his hand, still gloved in the special gear resistant to corrosive liquids. "I would like to know what's changed. What did I miss? It's been three months, I bet," he shot his gaze here and there, excited to inspect any new updates to their homely village. "And how's everyone else? Where are they? Where's Takira? Where's Miyumi?"

"Haha, calm down, calm down, warrior!" Wan patted his best friend's shoulder. "You've just returned from a war zone and yet, you're more energetic than me! That's so unfair!" he grinned.

"Not really. My parents were the ones who were busy. I was locked up in a chamber in a watchtower. It was boring," he crossed his arms and turned his head to a side while grumbling. "All I could do was watch from the oversized windows as the Sirutov did their job. Me wishing to be there one day."

"Relax. Don't worry. You'll definitely be there. You're from a Sirutov family, after all," Wan assured.

It was common knowledge. A subtle history of the world was stapled into every newborn's pool of knowledge since the dawn of humanity on the entire planet of Harthwa.

Harthwa had a history ornately decorated with the feats of mankind, great and small. But beneath the layers of discussing about various kingdoms, continents and reigns, much of the 'spice' of their history remained tainted by the touch of otherworldly creatures.

For centuries, beings from other dimensional universes visited Harthwa – often disguised in human form – contributing to the human civilization in both advantageous and hostile ways. Many had been great rulers and wise men. A flurry of new inventions, new ideas and new chunks of knowledge were delivered by these superior beings, unbeknownst to everyone else that they weren't, in truth, 'people'. Most crucially of all, they had introduced the art of magic.

Humans were quick learners, adopting the mystical technologies as equally as the brute strength of science.

However, not all such beings were generous in their will. Monstrous beings spread ill teachings throughout society, gradually corrupting the world of the living. It was not long before the humans evolved to a distinct scale of sentience where they could finally distinguish these alien-like people among their own.

The good ones were regarded as 'angels' and the evil ones as 'demons'. To turn the tables of fate, once the demons understood that their cover had been blown, they felt free to reveal their true selves, shedding away their human 'skins'.

Elves, orcs, humanoid animals and countless neutral creatures alike, too, staked their own claim on Harthwa, plundering and battling against each other as well as humans. The tides of war didn't settle down till each major race had conquered a patch of land they could call their own.

The demonic races, however, were not pleased with mere satisfaction of a certain patch of land. They desired more, and so 'more' they devoured. Out of jealousy, they had launched invasions to eliminate all other life forms – especially humanity.

Several millennia covered the pages of Harthwa's history simply describing constant ripples of rage and defense between hostile races and the kingdom. Three strong factions were formed to combat the darkness - the Akaminé, the Alkynes, and the Sirutov. Each of these three organizations boasted their own customs, motives and technological assets. Their goal: to protect the Kingdom, the central domain where all surviving humans flourished under a single ruler.

The Akaminé were spellcasters and warriors following the teachings of what the superior beings had bestowed upon humanity ages ago. Using the power of magic, they hoped to defend and rescue those in danger.

The Alkynes were similarly spellcasters, but more liberal in their morals and less disciplined than the Akaminé. Nine cases out of ten, they ignored wisdom and chose the most appropriate strategies that may have an overall outcome in their favor – that included using the demons' own magic against them (and carrying a risk of being infected via long-term usage). They wished not only to rescue innocents but also to raid the demons' own territories, guided by their vendetta for vengeance.

Last, but surely not the least, the Sirutov were a military department directly endorsed by the Kingdom. Disciplined enforcement of soldiers trained to the claw. Relying on the power of science and technology, they intended to lay waste to any and all unethical actions. Their primary aim, ofcourse, was to maintain a global unity between all races.

Away from the reaches of modern technology, Yafloria Village, where Wan Dé and his friends were born and raised, was cradled by the expanses of forests

cushioning on all sides. Its inhabitants were hardly aware that a thousand kilometers away, there were cars, skyscrapers and unbelievable gadgets in active use. On the other side of the village, to the west, beyond the furthest tree at the edge of the Yaflorian forest, a major desert wasteland resided.

A row of Sirutov towers stood their ground as a physical mark for the outermost boundary of human civilization. Near the end of the last four decades, the demons had unleashed an assault too powerful to handle. A frighteningly large portion of the landmass had been conquered or destroyed. The three anti-demon factions had united to distill the aftermaths but the Sirutov kept a wary watch on those borders to ward off any intruders ever since.

Indeed, Bain had just observed what it meant to be a Sirutov. Beneath the promise of respect and riches, potential candidates had to undergo toxic trials to test their passion and physique. The family trip had slightly shattered his expectations.

"You think so?" something caught Bain's eyes. "What? Oh... Oh hey! There she is! Takira!" he waved to someone behind Wan. His face momentarily guided an implicit comment as he whispered to Wan. "How's your relationship with Takira going, bro?"

"Aiii," Wan was shocked to hear him ask that in a moment like this. He nudged Bain in the ribs, making him bite his tongue in the process.

"Hiya!" Takira approached them, surprised to find Bain back. She waved back. "Bain!!! Wow, you're back. So soon?"

"A long story," Bain pronounced. "Erm... I gotta go now. Catch you guys later."

"Ehh? Why?" Takira Honé was curious. "What happened? It's been three months! Let's chat for a bit more, pleassseeee."

"No, Taki. Sorry," Bain inserted his hand into a pocket in his trousers. "I forgot to hand over something to my father. I'll be back by sunset."

"Huuuhh?" Takira's cloud of happiness popped. She frowned. "Why must you leave now? Is it really that urgent? I just got here."

"I... I'm really sorry; my father told me to get back home quickly," Bain announced. He gestured towards the rucksack on his back. "Need to drop this off, too."

Unaware to the three, the density of people currently in the market slowly, but suddenly, dispersed.

"Okay then, byee," Takira smiled merrily. "Hope to meet up in the afternoon."

Wan watched his buddy leave the market square, feeling empty after a quick dive into such a heartfelt moment of meeting a cherished friend. But something hurt his eyes.

The sunlight.

"What's wrong, Wan?" Takira noticed.

"No, nothing. It's just the sun."

The sunlight. It seemed a bit too bright today.

Sudden screams flooded the atmosphere. A clangor of blades followed next.

"Wh-what's happening? There's trouble!"
Wan's pupils constricted. "Taki! Come with me."

He grabbed her hand without warning and rushed to the nearest house in sight.

A few flares flew from the direction of the sun and landed on the other side of the village market, blocked off by a wall. It set the stalls and stores on fire.

"Wan, what? What are you doing?!" Takira exclaimed, as she was forcefully led to a shelter. "Why are there screams? What's going on?!"

"I don't know either," he ignored the shade of nervousness painted on her face. He dared to peek out from behind the cover of the exterior surface of the house. "I guess we cannot stand here. Too unsafe. Come on."

"Huh?"

"Let's get moving. Please cooperate," Wan humbly advised.

While the locals' focal target was to extinguish the unexpected burning blaze, a horde of strange figures appeared, raining from the sky like silhouettes of silky darkness. To add salt to the wounds, a band of mysterious men walked out from behind the shadows of all trees and objects – as if spawning out of thin air.

"Wan!!! There are people. Weird people," Takira innocently pointed at them, as she struggled to match the pace of Wan's brisk walk.

"I know," his face was a mask of confidence, enabling him to act stoic in this situation.
"Where should we hide?"

"Wan!! The people are following us!"

"I know," he barged through the door of his own house and shouted for his mother.
"Mom! Mom!! Call Dad immediately. There are strange things going on in –"

Wan stopped. His grip on Takira's cotton-soft hand loosened.

He felt he was about to faint from the sight laid before him.

"Mo-mom... MOM! MOTHER!!!!"

Wan's vision blurred away like the psychedelic effect of remembering memories. The world drifted out of its borders. Distressful darkness enclosed his surroundings in a veil of obstruction. He tried hard; he wanted to see what had happened to his mother. He walked forward in the void, only to hear his own footsteps resonating against the spiraling abyss of black and white. His environment was a helix of energies streaming in a hurricane of hope. Empty and desolate.

Voices. He heard reverberating voices attempting to slice into the shell of darkness. But against the rumbling of his own mind, the details were too blurry to contemplate on the words. They sounded like a woman's voice.

"W-----"

Streams of blank thoughts bombarded Wan's senses. Where was he? What was this place? Where did his mother go? What happened to Takira?

What was happening? Was he dreaming? Did he get killed by the oncoming strangers?

He clutched his chest.

'No, definitely not a dream,' he thought. Pain penetrated through his body, warming up his heart.

"Wa-----"

The voice. That voice. Who was it? What was she saying?

Wan's dead senses groveled their best to overcome the blanket of isolation. He wanted to burst out of his body just to see what was happening outside, even if it meant he would die. Trapped by his own senses.

"Wan! Wa-----"

"Huh?"

Finally, a crack appeared in the tide. Wan commanded his mind to focus. To return back to normal.

"Wan! Wan! Are you okay? Wan!"

"Aaaaah!" Wan was back, screaming at the top of his lungs.

He allowed a few more seconds for his senses to calibrate with the environment.

"Wan! What happened to you?"

He turned his face at the voice, still lying on the coarse ground. It was Takira; she looked older.

'No, it can't be Takira. How come she looks older? And how come...' Wan paused in his head. His own hands, they were bigger, too. Was he older as well? He sat up, cross-legged. In front of him lay the dilapidated ruins of a house he once called his own.

"Wha-what has happened?! Why is..." he stood up, this time, noticing that he was now taller. "Why is everything broken?"

"Wan! Quit it. You're scaring me."

"What-who-when..."

Takira grabbed Wan's shoulders.

"..." Wan's tongue suddenly forgot how to produce words. His ashen irises locked onto the icy blue ones of hers. His eyes observed the beauty of Takira Honé.

"It's been five years since our village was razed. Did you forget, Wan?" she explained. Her eyes did the rest of the talking. Twinkling moonlight danced in her corneas.

It was night time.

No, not her eyes; Takira had been gifted with the talent of telepathy.

"I... I don't understand," Wan uttered out again, slightly relieved that his tongue was working fine. Although his voice had matured into a wonderful wine of heroic boldness with a youthful tune to it.

Takira sighed, letting go of his shoulders.

"You don't understand," Takira agreed. "But I do. Five years ago, at this very spot, you had encountered the greatest shock in your life..."

so far," she averted her eyes from his for a moment, out of remembrance of greater tragedies that may have occurred beyond that point in time. "No wonder why you collapsed right as soon as we investigated your home."

"F-five years?" Wan took a step back, caressed his forehead and tried to shoulder the burden of sudden realization of the fact. "It's been five years already?"

"Yes, I'm sorry, perhaps it was a bad idea to let you visit your place," she dropped her eye level before continuing, placing a hand over her chest to shield the blows of the past against her heart. "On this very day of this month, at this same village, all of us had lost many of our loved ones."

"I-I still don't get it..." Wan muttered to himself.

"C'mon! Wan! Quit it, please," Takira urged. Wan noticed she was holding a sword and dressed in the red attire of—

"Wait! I think I recognize the clothes you're—"
Wan looked at his own arms and legs. He, too, was dressed in a similar outfit.

"Sssshh!" Takira clutched Wan's mouth, pointing towards his weapon resting on decaying grass beside him. A spear glaive – Wan's dedicated weapon. "I believe your memory needs to be refreshed," she lowered her vocal volume. "But for now, please do as I say. I sense gâguns nearby."

Having no time to think, Wan calibrated to the situation. His eyes drew a ring of suspicion over this woman who claimed to be Takira.

He picked up his weapon.

As of now, **One One One: Under A Corrupt Sun** can be found on Wattpad and Inkitt. Only the first 4 chapters have been published.



Concept Art 3: Wan and Takira

ONE ONE ONE: COLORS OF INFINITE GRIEF

Genre: Action / Adventure / Modern

Year Written: 2019

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

A firefly entered the room. And the room was silent.

Three seconds ticked off the clock, and the firefly fluttered down to the ground.

Clang! Clash! Cling!

Humans. Warriors, they seemed, by the audible range of effects being portrayed by their surreal reflection of action. Judging by the position of the firefly trembling in fear, the clashes of metal on metal wafted from outside the room.

Into the dark. The darkness of the forest.

Gently, the firefly's glowing illumination began to fade. Like a smoky blaze gnawing

on the final embers. Innocent as it was, the lovely insect found it difficult to breathe.

Clang! Whoosh!

The metallic clangor rose up, possibly enough to induce a state of nausea for even humans who dare to stand nearby.

Blades cut through air outside the puny hut.

Two robed warriors were indulged into the art of warfare, their focus interlocked on each other's eyes. One of them expertly wielded a badly-damaged glaive, whilst the other figure was acquainted with the usage of.... roses?

Roses indeed. Perfect, beautiful and exotic. Glass roses shimmered in the palms of the latter. Sacred flowers that could capture more romanticism in each petal than by a 16th century French prince.

"Wan..." the hooded figure with the roses broke the ice of silence at last. "I.... I'm sorry...."

He raised his arm and thrust the roses towards his opponent.

"You mustn't interfere.... Please stop, Wan...."

The other person, named Wan, reached out to grab the roses. Mid-air, they seemed to be normal flowery crystals. But with the first embrace, Wan's fingers came away bloody.

He had been tricked; the roses had razor-sharp petals.

Wan landed back on the blighted soil. Hands trembling. How could he be so ignorant of all the clues?

Meanwhile, a butterfly entered the chamber where the firefly had receded - carrying a droplet of sacred nectar with its feeble little legs. Swooping down in a slow arc, it let go.

The nectar fell right on the firefly, extinguishing its light forever.

"You... you're..." Wan's voice zoned out by the impeding growth of the fake rose's venomous nectar soaked in hatred. His grip on his glaive didn't diminish, luckily.

All around him, rose shrubs danced to the tunes of the passive breeze. Some were real, some fake. A few were lethal, and all of them were, no doubt, illusions. Soon, the entire forest lit up with the luminous roses.

Wan swung his glaive once more, slicing the air with a force that created a sonic boom.

Swoosh!

He prayed that it hit his target. For a fraction of a second, the world shattered in front of his eyes.

Everything became nothing.
And only he and that firefly remained stationary. Frozen. Floating. Free.

When he opened his eyes again, Wan's glaive was a burning staff. He dropped it on instinct, to observe it turn to ash immediately on impact with the ground.

From behind him, a voice sniggered.

As he turned his head, someone placed a finger over his lips.

"Sshhhhh...."

The person gestured towards Wan's hand.

As he braced to look at it, a blinding light appeared in the woods, turning all the silver roses to an ocean of blood-red sakura....

An emblem.

An emblem had been drawn.

"Wan...." the voice ordered. Not as a name; as a number.

Dogs were barking. Possibly fighting each other in the brutal uncivilized manner.

Night had fallen on the city of Ach'ka Chuai. A slow boring process of the sun shutting itself down the horizon.

"Ghaaah!" a woman opened a door and entered her apartment, panting with depression. "Ugh... I don't get it. Why does it always happen to me?"

She was referring to her bad day of work that she was brave enough to face. Walking a small distance, she dumped her bag and

flung herself on a couch. She let out a sigh - not out of relief; out of frustration. At herself.

"Curse my luck...."

She turned on the TV. It was automatically switched to an anime channel.

Her bag suddenly tipped over, and a namecard fell out. It read "Takira Honé, junior detective".

Lazily, with eyes half-enveloped with sleep, she peered over to see what had happened. The word "detective" drilled ill vibes of misfortunate memories into her head just by the sight of it.

"Nope. Not again."

She tried her best to ignore her past. Whatever had happened.

Eyes glued to the TV screen, Takira sought refuge. To escape reality. To allow her fascination for anime to act as painkillers to subdue the aftermath of her day at work.

Takira gulped and let out another sigh.

"Forget it. I'm never gonna be able to solve that case."

Her mind had been embedded with an infestation of boredom combined with regret. Wherever she looked, she remembered that face. That annoying face.

Her boss's face.

"Yaaaaaaargh!" she clawed the air, as if her boss was standing right in front of her.

But there was no one around.

Takira blinked twice. Another sigh and she turned off the TV.

"I guess I'll goto sleep," she muttered to herself.

Roses are red,
The sky is blue,
She lay asleep on the bed,
But one thing she forgot to do!

* Imaginary arrow points towards an alarm clock on the bedside table *

Screeeam!

Takira awoke with a hearty scream. The reason: she had forgotten to set the alarm and was now running late for office!

Downstairs, Takira's neighbor received a shock after hearing her scream. With a jolt, a swab of tea dropped onto a brand-new smartphone. The neighbor cursed her name eleven times while wiping the device clean.

Meanwhile, upstairs, Takira hurried into her daily official apparel, joining up the buttons on her fur jacket.

With a fog of crazed speed, she dashed out of her apartment, down the stairs and almost slips on the wet floor ahead.

"Hey! Watch your step!" the janitor warned. But it was too late. "Hey! What're you....
Aaargh!"

Takira grabbed the janitor's shoulder, conserving and transferring the momentum. Thus, the janitor slipped and fell down instead of her.

"Sorrrrrrry!" Takira innocently smiled and faded out of sight from the janitor.

Finally, she touched down on the street.

Instantly, the flaring effects of the crisp sunlight made her shield her eyes with her handful of files.

'*Must keep going*,' she thought.

Her feet resumed the race. The forces of a typical employee vibe tugged her along.

Eventually, Takira arrived at a collection of crossroads, carelessly about to cross the road.

Everything seemed to be normal. Peaceful. Quiet. Only the natural ambience of birds hidden among the pink-leaved trees.

Alas...

Right at the moment when she was crossing, a car appeared in the horizon like a proud antagonist.

She was about to die from a car crash.

Fortunately, she's unharmed.
Unfortunately, someone else got smothered
by the car instead.

- Swerve....Crash! -

Takira gasped as she turned her head
towards the noise.

An hour earlier...

Hastily clutching the tie of his office, pacing
up the walking rate...

A man entered his boss's room. Anyone
gifted with the skill of critical observation
could easily infer from his actions that he
wanted to ask for a pay raise. Or perhaps a
vacation opportunity.

The boss, however busy he looked at that
moment, was actually knee-deep in a private
business of his own - playing games on his
PC.

At the sight of the employee who had just
entered, the boss was startled. He pressed

the "Esc" key and quit the game. Obviously he didn't want any member of the organization to discover his secrets.

"Wa.. Wan Dé... What's the matter?" he bit back a gasp that was about to escape his lying lips. "Err...any problem? What's wrong?"

"Sir," the employee, named Wan, loosened the grip on his tie."I need... An emergency vacation."

"A vacation?!"

Wan nodded.

His boss blinked twice, as if attempting to process the information.

"Hmm... Ah, alright!" he drew out a file from a cabinet nearby. "Your file will just be... yikes!"

By accident, a sheet of paper flew out of the file stack. And by the look on the boss's face, Wan knew that it had some crucial info on it. Something so valuable that made his boss react in the manner he had just done.

Thanks to luck, it landed right in front of Wan's feet.

"No, no, no, no... Stop! Wan, don't.... Don't look at it.... Please, no! No! Noooo!!!"

The boss seemed super-scared and stunned. And was already biting his nails.

Wan defied his orders and picked it up. Turning it over, his eyes popped open wider than the Pacific Ocean.

'Hmmm... Impressive taste, Mr Kayun!' he commented in his mind.

"Ooooh, I didn't know you were an otaku, Mr Kayun!!" Wan smiled and waved the manga poster over and over at his boss's face.

Comically, Mr Kayun became a living statue. For five full seconds, he didn't utter a single syllable.

But, then...

"WAN!!! GET OUTTA MY FACE! GET OUTTA THIS OFFICE!! NOW!!!"

"Huh? But.... but.... All I did was...."

Mr Kayun walked up towards Wan, while he kept blabbering reasons for not firing him for such a silly issue.

Despite Kayun's deceiving gaze and pretending to listen to Wan's reasons, he simply walked up to him.

He paused. He patted Wan's shoulder.

"Okay. I understand your verdict, Wan," Kayun nodded, with his secret weapon of deceit armed and ready.

He snatched the poster with an iron fist.

"But you're still fired!" Kayun broke off the conversation with a feast of evil laughter.

Wan Dé simply had no choice.

He left the room, continuing to exit the management office.

~Sigh~

Wan Dé clutched at his tie again - this time, he attempted to tear it to tendrils.

Walking along the streets now, he had nothing much to do.

Unemployed.

Sinking into life's dosage of depression, Wan sighed and threw his attention around his environment. The sky. The trees. The people.

Unemployed.

The delicate silence.

'I want to enjoy all of this while I still can.'

He slipped his hands into his pockets and closed his eyes.

He didn't realize it, but he stepped right onto the middle of the road.

- Swerve... Crash!-

A girl gasped and screamed nearby, his ears noted. He felt pity for whoever that unlucky person was. He thought that girl was the one who got hit by the car.

Time slowed down.

Wan's eyes jerked open.

'Where am I? What am I doing? What is....'

He found himself holding the car above his head. A 400-kilogram object, balanced on one hand. How was it possible?

He gently placed the vehicle down on the other side.

Time went back to normal.

By the concepts of time, he had managed to lift and flip the car over his head in a fraction of a second!

'Damn. That wasn't so serious.' Wan crossed his arms and watched the driver of the car merrily continue on the journey, unaware of the events that preceded just now.

~Sigh~

'That was close. I was almost exposed to the human world. Luckily no one is around me, except for....'

Wan looked into the direction of the girl.

Takira and Wan's eyes met, as they both stood shocked by what they each had experienced just now.

Takira stared deep into the stranger's eyes. Midnight pools of mystery. And the hair is all garnet brown, uncombed likely.

Wan scrutinized at Takira. Brilliant blue colors highlighted her eyes. And her haircut... certainly unique!

A moment ticked by, and Wan's pupils dilated. Without a word, he sped away from her.

"What...wait! Waiiiit!!" Takira was speechless after what she had just seen. How the man just picked up a car and escaped certain death. So odd. Almost unbelievable.

Wan Dé darted out of sight, sprinting faster than the upper limit of humanity.

He switched direction into an alleyway and checked his surroundings.

'Hmm... That was close. That girl almost saw through my disguise. Course is clear. Time to move on.'

He cast a spell.

His office outfit was replaced with some red robes. On it, was inscribed, in runes: "Akaminé". In his hand, a glaive was equipped. Its blade thirsty for blood.

Another spell.

A shimmering portal materialized in front of him. He stepped through, just in time for the portal to collapse inwards and implode out of existence.

Takira was right near the alleyway, but dropped to her knees, panting.

A paper flew out of her file stack.

"No! Noo!!" she tried to grab it but the wind teased her and carried it afar.

She wanted to weep. A great storm of grief and depression overtook her soul, washing away her triumph. *What a terrible day! Again!*

She got back to her feet and spotted a café beside her.

She entered, but felt something cold and sharp slide past her. Like a strange wind.

The place was half-packed with people. *'And also half-empty,'* her pessimistic mind informed.

She ordered a cup of coffee and sat down at a table.

From out of the corner of her eye, she noticed some men dressed in black muttering about a very serious issue.

"...yes, yes. I heard it, too. The Evil God awakening..."

'What? Evil God? Who is he? Who are they?' She couldn't help but eavesdrop on their conversation. But she ended up confused with a deck of unfamiliar terms and names.

She peered over their direction but rapidly turned back again.

Unfortunately, one of the men noticed her actions. He whispered to his companions about it.

Takira's legs began trembling.

One of them walked up the aisle.

Tip-Tap.

Tip-Tap.

The footsteps echoed across the floorboards.

Tip-Tap.

Tip-TAP.

He was getting closer.

Takira gulped and closed her eyes.

TIP-TAP.

TIP-Tap.

Tip.

The footsteps seemed to draw away from her now.

She opened her eyes again. She was relieved.

The man was simply paying at the cashier.

However, now he was facing Takira directly.

Which meant a very discomfoting situation for her.

Takira stood up and was about to pay her bill as well....

But the world suddenly crumbled under the touch of beings unseen.

From the 7th dimension, an invisible demon entered the Earthly realm and landed on a building rooftop behind the café.

A shockwave passed through the neighborhood. An earthquake.

Floors cracked.

Everyone inside the café screamed.

Everyone excluding the peculiar men.

But one of them did.

"Shut up, Fagin," one of them snapped at his associate. "Behave yourself. Or you'll only make a laughing stock out of us Alkynes."

"Looks like we finally got our hands on somethin'," the third member cracked his knuckles.

"Uh...okay," Fagin, the cowardly one, agreed.

"Let's go...."

They hurried outside, running with skill.

They search around for the source of the quake, namely the demon.

"There! It's a Jinnic demon!" one of the Alkynes pointed.

They drew out weapons – swords, guns, and ropes. All made of an unknown metal.

Takira Honé, meanwhile, ducked for cover and crawled near the doorstep. An aura of curiosity overwhelmed her, though. And she decided to peek over to see what the Alkynes were doing.

Her eyes widened with awe.

A battle was in progress. But it appeared that the men were fighting with the air.

In fact, from their perspective, they were easily able to detect the monster.

Takira's subconscious personality dragged her forward, outside the café, inch by inch.

Without even realizing it, she was in the line of fire.

At the same time, Fagin's courage meter hit full throttle; he dived and absorbed the blow from the demon.

Protecting Takira.

A few minutes later...

The demon was dead. The Alkynes stood in their positions, nearly exhausted.

Takira was speechless just as everybody else who were now spectating the fight. Mostly because some unknown person had just saved her.

Fagin cast a healing spell on himself, luckily. And his wounds vanished.

The rest of the Alkynes braced for a memory recorection spell to be applied on the civilians nearby.

Magic was forbidden. Magic was a myth. And a combination of cults practicing magic was gravely shunned in the human community.

"You there," Fagin called out to Takira. "You are interested in magic, I see." He held her palm. As if reading her mind. "Now, now... Would you like to learn more about it?"

Takira gulped for the third time, because of the Alkynes.

She couldn't believe her eyes and ears. For all she knew. For all she cared.

"Y-ye...yes..." her legs trembled; this time due to elation.

"C-come with us, then! My name is Fagin," he stopped Takira trying to face the crowds of people who were about to be devoid of their memory of the events that had occurred.

"What's yours?"

"Um....Ta...Takira," she replied, out of sheer joy. She didn't allow herself time for a logical decision.

"Nice to meet you, Takira. I'd love to take you to our world. A world of magic."

Meanwhile....

At the other end of town....

A girl hummed to the tunes of the birds as she engraved her name on a hockey bat on her lap, seated on a bench.

She was almost finished carving out "Miyumi Rakkan" on the surface.

She suddenly raised her head, her eyes closed.

A terrible color was portrayed in her mind. A sensation. Of danger; danger to a friend she knew.

Miyumi cried out her friend's name, "Takira!"

As of now, **One One One: Colors Of Infinite Grief** can be found on Webnovel. Only the

first 5 chapters have been published.



*Concept Art 4:
Takira Honé*



*Concept Art 5:
Miyumi Rakkan*

VINDICATION

Genre: Action / Science Fiction / Dystopia

Year Written: 2018

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

ALRF site, Arizona

06:34 pm

Metal wrenched away from a high security containment that was guaranteed to last 100 years. Inhumane roars and noises resonated from the research labs. Lights flickered. The subterranean tunnels rattled.

"The project needs to be shut down!" lead scientist John Paul Sergeant ran a marathon with his eyes, monitoring the unusual behavior of the test subjects from behind thick screens. "We can't keep them all inside forever. We must call in Leyton asap before the last layer of protection is breached."

"We've summoned them already, sir," a mentor by his side confirmed. "Won't be taking more than an hour."

"An hour? Blasted shit, I doubt the containment's gonna last another minute!"

Thirty feet down below, a chaotic mob of mindless afflicted test subjects continued jeopardizing the outer walls of their cell. They drove their rage against the *rabindranite** alloy, by fang and claw. Doubtlessly, several cracks and faults appeared across the surface of the impossible-to-shatter containment.

As for the afflicted, people called them by many names: freaks, monsters, abominations - and most commonly - zombies.

Above them, a flock of six scientists observed the personality and activity of their own creation. Indeed, they were the ones who lured many hundreds of thousands of volunteers, who totally fell for the false promise of becoming immune to microorganisms. Unfortunately, no tests had been conducted at all and instead, all volunteers were gathered and trapped in tall, cylindrical silos before being showered with scintillas of *koronium** fragments.

The scientists, however, had no hand in this powerful handiwork. They knew the risks.

They knew about the health hazards. John's superiors had sent forth the command of performing the grim task.

Their goal had been to create a population of supersoldiers, to fight against the United States' rivals. Though, the gold they found turned out to be pyrites; the experiment failed drastically.

John Sarge felt his pulse accelerating. What if the world got to know about this mess? What if these deformed humans broke loose from here?

A million different pessimistic thoughts collided into his half-insane mind. If he wasn't insane enough, none of this would have happened. Now because of him, a plethora of people were trapped in this underground research facility. Obviously the zombies had no rights to infect the outside world - John Sarge couldn't wait to obliterate their existence, every last one of them.

Alas, another half of John's mind advised him to have patience. These zombies would be key evidence. Without the required

evidence, he'd never be capable of framing or blaming his superiors.

"Sir, we've got ill news," a seventh scientist entered the glass skyway. He seemed to be holding a blood-tainted katana. Judging by his limping motions and specks of blood near his knees and shoulders, he had been injured. "Sir, the koro.... the koronium depot has been assaulted....now...radiation leaking everywhere around....R&D center irradiated."

"What? Assaulted? By whom?" Sarge dabbed at the fresh perspiration forming on his forehead. "What's going on?"

"Sir..." he paused for inhaling a gust of air. "We don't have much time remaining.... we have to leave....NOW. They...they're coming."

"Who? Leyton Clay?"

"No... still not here. Zombies. Zombies broke out. There's....there's a hole in the second silo."

Ho shit, John Sergeant clutched his wrist.

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Sun of a Beach

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*rabindranite: a fictional alloy.

*koronium: a fictional radioactive element.

As of now, **Vindicason** cannot be read anywhere since the concept of this novel has been scrapped entirely.



LOADED BARRELS

Genre: Action / Thriller / Modern

Year Written: 2018

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

Sand and dust elevated from antique hardwood floors. Beams of afternoon-flavored sunlight seeped in through ornate glass panes. Grains of ages, loneliness, and decay fluttered about. Not a single movement was audible save for two footsteps.

The main birch doors had been opened. No doubt an outsider had entered, one who's about to interfere with the naturally calm atmosphere.

Thud, slap. Thud, slap. Like a giant dragging an island or a schoolboy lugging a heavy backpack, his steady, slow motions were deft. With deft motions, he walked tall and with a tankful of grace.

The room stretched to a vast hall-like extent. Unused wooden chairs, tables, alcohol bottles remained forgotten. Heavy layers of cobwebs and dust had settled in every inch of the chamber. Behind his silhouette, the fresh, dry light - from the external desert environment - only reached halfway along the abandoned bistro.

Like stone grotesques, there were plates, mugs, bottles laid down on the tables. Yet, it seemed surprising no one found them. No one stole them. Why was this so-called café built here - in the middle of a void of human settlement - in the first place?

The outsider stopped in his tracks. The gradient of light turned to darkness. But did it really matter to him? Darkness wasn't his foe; those who took shelter in it, were.

From the shadows, a gun fired.

He ducked right on time - the bullet smashed through a wine glass, instead. The sound of breaking glass triggered his reflexes.

Reaching to the sides of his matt black coat, he drew out two Magnum 44 revolvers.

More guns joined in the chorus, hitting and destroying valuable objects. The outsider lay flat on his front and proned towards a collection of chairs and a table. Standing back up again, he picked up a chair in each hand. But before he could let them off after a quick spin, the chairs got reduced to splinters and saw dust.

Countless gunshots from every direction blurred his senses. He wasn't expecting this. He didn't want this. He couldn't win this.

Sean Kruz wasn't a man who believed in violence, no matter how hard his opponents hit him. But this seriously wasn't any regular case. It was time for payback.

"You brought this upon yourself, Kruz," a known voice piped in from the background of blackness. Sean smelled mockery in it. "You had made a grievous mistake trusting me."

"ANTOINE ALLION! SHOW YOURSELF!" Sean couldn't help but shout. His revolvers were ready in his hands. Any false movements or ill notions, and he vowed to let loose all hell.

"Ger ger ger gerr...dear Kruz friend, you amaze me every day. It's just that...how innocent and stupid you could be!"

"That wasn't what I demanded," Sean tossed the revolvers from hand to hand. It was an obscene gesture in front of a criminister such as Antoine Allion. "I should have stopped your damn drug trade when I got the chance. Guess it's too late...but not TOO late for THIS!"

Without warning, he fired three rounds into the direction of the voice. Kruz received no reply. No voce reply, that is.

Several other assault rifles cried in revolt from the invisible corners. More chairs and objects were damaged.

Kruz dived aside, shooting repeatedly towards the flashes of muzzles and the faces partly-illuminated at each shot. By the time

he landed back on the ground, the gunners ceased fire, unexpectedly.

Sean attempted to step towards Antoine's 'presumed' location.

That's when he felt a tranquilizer syringe inject into his neck. Kruz tried to fight it. He commanded his body not to give in, not to surrender. But he found his hands trembling, his neck throbbing. It wasn't the pain that ailed him. It was the thought of being this close to his goal and yet being handicapped by an unseen barrier.

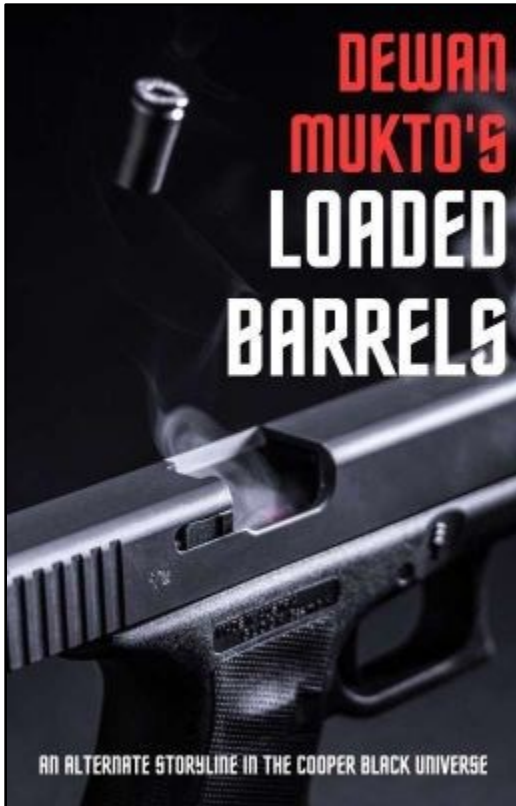
"Ooh, looks like our little guest seems surprised," a familiar mocking voice mumbled close by. Kruz hardly saw his own hands in the darkness. How were they so different? Were they using night vision? "You should've at least arrived fully-prepared. Where's your equipment? Where's your protective gear? Didn't the M.B.C. train you hard enough, or did mama never teach you how to pack your inventory 'fore facing the enemy?"

Kruz felt a boot's grooves on his back.
Somebody's foot forced him to the floor.
He'd barely believe that he was kneeling -
kneeling in front of the criminal don.

"Now, now, Kruz. I see you've brought your
puny toys with you. Hand them over, please,"
a pair of rough hands grasped the pair of
revolvers by his side. "It's been nice knowing
you, Sean Crusade. But I guess the sands of
time have nearly diminished. Goodbye, Kruz.
You had done me great favors."

A blinding flash of light silenced everything.

As of now, **Loaded Barrels** cannot be read anywhere since the concept of this novel has been scrapped entirely.



SYNAPSED

Genre: Action / Thriller / Modern

Year Written: 2018

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

Skylaika-SouthEast, Gora Chen

Cherskogo Range, Russia

28 January, 23:12

Like a silent snake gnawing through its sealed fate, Tony Clint paced about the gangway platforms surrounding the mountainside in a spiral. He had come prepared – no soldier was fit for laziness in the midst of battle. Even at such high altitudes as this, he had no fear concealed in his soul as he remained vigilant atop the hanging platform. His eyes were used to meeting the surrounding snowy scenario.

Dressed in the black coats and trousers provided by his agency, with a black tie about his neck, the blizzard held no

surprises for him. Not even a single muscle twitched in his body – unless he willed it so. He was almost up the mountain, close to the military base lying on the lap of the summit. He still had an external bulletproof camo jacket, which provided him with enough warmth. 200 meters above, hardy guards shivered even in their warmest garments. Their Kalashnikovs restlessly aimed randomly across the valley, scanning for any signs of hostile activity. What secrets could they be guarding with such brute force?

Such security, such discipline – Tony was eager to know what so important to them that they would stand freezing out in the cold for.

He had been assigned by his agency to enter the compound by any means possible. He'd chosen to be air-dropped from a F-117 aircraft and had later landed at the foot of a long staircase that seemed to twist around the cliffs like the grooves on an upside-down screw. A parachute had helped him on the way down, reducing his terminal velocity to

that of acceptable forces of impact when fully landed.

Now that he was so close to the base, he acquired some new problems: how would he get close enough to breach the facility? Heavily-armored guards patrolled the walls.

Tony retrieved a pair of thermal binoculars and patiently observed their movement patterns. A M98B sniper rifle strapped to his back glinted like a dormant demon in the hazy moonlight. He noted their tactics.

Three guards were armed with AK47s – the signature weapon much beloved by terrorists worldwide due to its price-to-versatility ratio. Suppressor, RDS and flashlight attachments included. Walkie-talkie portable radio communication devices were pinned to their shoulders. Their armor, though... not so strong as meets the eye, Tony glimpsed.

Four more guards walked along the high concrete walls, bare-handed. Fog condensed from the mouth of two of them, standing by a corner's edge. Probably talking.

Whispering. Their armor was incredible – flak jackets.

Seven guards, seven lives.

Tony hated the ‘killing’ part but it must be done. There wasn’t any other choice than to stitch in time to save nine. He got his M98B ready for pursuit. The coolness of the metal somehow made him feel cold-hearted.

Maybe he really *was* cold-hearted; all the years working in the Arctic had frozen his humanity.

Tony checked the magazine as he loaded it into the rifle. Twelve bullets, twelve cold assassins just like him. During his working experience, he had befriended his guns. No human mattered to him anymore – only the sincere taste of victory brought satisfaction.

Aiming through the scope of the weapon, he realized that his current position wasn’t providing him with a stable angle. Clint spied a higher platform just a hundred meters from the wall, dug into the icy rock.

A distant metallic **whirr** disturbed the silence. It seemed to be moving with a kind of spinning motor motion. It was perhaps opening a gate for the one and only thing Tony feared throughout his life: being discovered by the enemy. What terrors could the noise be bringing him now?

Tony stopped dead in his tracks and scraped his back against the sloping terrain (mountainside) when the sound frequency appeared optimum in terms of the Doppler effect.

He immediately recognized the beat of wings on air. It was supposedly an aerial vehicle, no doubt. He stood silent as a shadow while the dreaded flying object made its entrance hovering above the wall.

A Russian helicopter, dressed in the shade of a greyscale Arctic military camouflage wrap. A Mil Mi-24, to be exact.

Tony only saw the visible flashing red lights cloaked by the darkness of the oceanic night sky. Locals called these models 'Crocodiles'. NATOs labelled them by another name:

‘Hinds’. Names didn’t matter to Tony. It was its size, its turrets and its armor level that overwhelmed him.

Tony was not equipped with anti-air weaponry at the moment, so he found it wiser to leave it alone. Surely it hadn’t come flying looking for him, did it?

The helicopter harmlessly sped away into the horizon, to the east of the landscape. For a moment, he’d believed he’d been discovered. Tony sighed in relief as he resumed on his objective.

From his current vantage point, the higher platform was merely a 50-meter hike. If only there were stairs in between... There were stairs, technically, but there were spotlights aimed at them, too. Moving into the light sources was utterly suicide and certainly the last choice on Clint’s wishlist. Some inspection told him that the guards had plenty of Vitamin A in their diet.

Flak cannons sat on extruding platforms beside the coiled staircase. Fortunately,

there were unmanned and his extraction from a F-117 had been successful.

He could've climbed the face of the mountain himself. Unfortunately, he wasn't in his default climbing gear and the cliffs looked too steep. Platforms were the only options left.

Tony judged the distance carefully.

'Easy,' he thought, with a professional smile.

A grappling hook attachment on his left arm stood ready. He zapped the hook towards the edge of the metal mesh platform (catwalk). With a single shot, he hurtled forwards and upwards.

He grabbed hold of the edge and scrambled up. Taking a dare with his adrenaline, he retracted and fired the hook at the reinforced concrete wall wedge in-between two concave slopes. Like a bullet shot out of a gun, he felt the propulsion towards the behemoth of a wall. But there was a problem: no place to land his feet.

Tony landed perpendicular to the wall's hardened surface. For a heartbeat, his heart went up to his throat. Where could he find a foothold now? He only had less than three picoseconds before gravity dragged him down. Luckily, two sharp projections from the front of the g-hook armlet pierced through the concrete, forming a point where he could at least hang onto.

The 15-centimeter-long tungsten-chromium alloy blades had been finely-finished and promised to jam through even the toughest of surfaces. They certainly were advantageous – without them, he'd have suffered a death drop.

Tony grunted as he tried to lift his weight, but failed. Thanks to the lack of friction on the foothold, his feet slipped and his legs were dangling down.

He was stuck on the wall, with guards beaming suspiciously at anything within their sense of vision.

'Oh, damn. Don't turn on the thermal goggles. Please NOT the thermal goggles,'

Tony silently prayed. He felt exposed amidst the snowy colors. It was common sense that a black dot is always visible on lighter backgrounds, from ANY angle. Likewise, his black apparel didn't entirely blend in with the surroundings.

Hoping for the best, he quickly yanked the g-hook blades out. The rushing tug of gravity on his back almost made him cry out. His reflexes twisted into action. Tony shot the hook at the very edge of the wall as his body continued losing altitude at breakneck pace.

He closed his eyes and believed he'd never reach the wall any faster than the rate at which he kept falling.

Miraculously, the hook held on – at the last limit of its 30-meter range – and for a split-second the hook wire remained taut. The 5-milimeter-thick wire was durable enough to lift a 18-wheeler truck from a pulley. Tony trusted the wire. It was his lifeline now.

Right as soon as he darted towards the height of the wall again, he noticed what he was doing. He preferred to be falling to his

death instead. What sort of insanity drove him right into the lions' den?

Tony Clint, aged 38, American Caucasian male, landed safely at the brim of the facility and staggered forwards by his own momentum. He'd made a mistake by retracting the hook a moment too early.

The seven guards strolled about the slightly-curved length of the wall's episurface. A blizzard had settled atop the frozen peak of Mt. Gora Chen. There was a guard walking towards him quietly Luckily, there was poor lighting available up here, save for the moonlight.

Agent Clint crouched on one leg as he held the sniper rifle in his grasp. The advancing guard was only yards away. What was the use of a scope now? His skills were obviously proficient enough to let him shoot directly without having to aim with visual aid. When it came to handling guns, Tony was a born veteran.

The guard suddenly stopped movement. He switched on the flashlight on his

Kalashnikov. Tony had nowhere to run; he'd been spotted.

“Ey, ty! Kto ty, chert voz'mi? Vam ne razresheno nakhodit'sya zdes,” he growled like a guilty politician accepting bribes. His Russian accent was scented by some French. The guard pointed the assault rifle at Tony. “Hey, you! Who the hell are you? You're not authorized to be here. No civilians allowed!”

Tony glanced at the guard's face. A helmet and a shielded visor covered his head, but through the visor he saw what he had to see. Age mattered a lot to Tony. This man's was beyond the 60s. What was an old man's duty in security field order?

A smile curled at the edges of Tony's lips. Before he knew it, Tony pulled the trigger.

The guard saw a bright flashing pinpoint of light from Tony's direction. Next, he heard a loud gunshot and found himself being forced backwards. There was a pain in his gut and when he clutched it, his hand came away covered in a sticky dark liquid. He tried to breathe, he tried to call for help, but he was

unable to do anything. The last gust of air was knocked out of him by a brutal punch to his torso. The guard vomited blood. From afar, he saw feathered otherworldly creatures arriving to greet him with a question: “who is your lord?”

Death shrouded the guard’s soul as his body lay dead on the snow-crustrated ground. His blood seemed like a muddy shade of crimson in the lunar light.

He’d done it. Tony felt restless. His rifle was still warm from firing two bullets at a human. His own species. Tony heard a faint whisper in the air.

“Kinslayer,” the voice approached and left with the cold breeze.

The snowfall interrupted his attention. It wasn’t his first kill, Clint knew well. And it wasn’t going to be the last. Before he’d joined the agency, he was renowned in the underworld black markets as a mercenary for hire. Working as an assassin, he had murdered hundreds of contracts. More than hundreds of deaths already. What difference

would the addition of one more soul make anyway?

All of a sudden, the remaining guards began marching towards his attention. He understood why: he'd forgotten to attach a flash suppressor to the M98B before firing. Those two gunshots had probably echoed all across the valley by now.

Ever since the haunting peak in his career, Tony's professionalism was slowly decaying with time.

'Goddamn. I knew something was amiss!' Tony placed a thermal ACOG scope on the rifle. Just as it was mentioned before, he absolutely *hated* being discovered.

The guards' alarmed exclamations and curses met his ears.

"Cyka blyat!"

Roaring gunfire of Kalashnikovs arrived next. Tony parried the wave of bullets by diving aside. He quickly shot out the few light sources nearby to ease the situation. Then

he dodged the guards' attack by proning out of sight.

Beyond the settling snowy mist, Tony made out the exact positions of the guards, judging by the flashes of their assault rifle muzzle. A sniper rifle like the M98B wasn't a good option for defense against multiple AK47s. There had to be a better option. Tony hadn't brought any secondary weapons with him. Where could he find one now?

The speed and proximity of the guards' footsteps increased tenfold. Their aggressive shouts in the Russian tongue amplified. That dead guard must have been a dear friend to them. Sad that he had to die... up here, in the cold, in the black of the night.

'Wait a moment. That guard. He had a weapon with him. Oh, yes,' a chain of thoughts stuck an ingenious bell in Tony's mind. He picked up the blood-stained AK47 from the guard's limp, lifeless fingers. Tony upholstered the M98B to his back and readied the Russian assault rifle pre-

equipped with an integrated suppressor.

‘This will serve well.’

“Stop in your tracks and don’t try to move!” a guard boomed from the distance. Regardless of his peaceful orders, he betrayed Tony right as soon as he was about to drop the AK47. A storm of bullets sponsored by the guard’s companions followed by.

Tony Clint rolled aside from the line of fire, before unleashing his own set of bullets onto them. The Kalashnikov swiftly sent bullets screaming towards the half-dozen guards.

He ceased after he fully emptied an entire magazine. He dropped the curved magazine onto the soft buildup of snow at his feet. Only a soft **thump** was heard. Everything became unnaturally quiet.

He wasn’t sure how many died, how many were injured. The blizzard and foggy atmosphere limited his concurrent visual acuity.

A flurry of dangerous bullets whistled past his ears momentarily. There were no flashes,

no sounds; the surviving guards had switched to flash-hiding suppressors. Without being able to understand from where and when they shot, Tony felt handicapped.

Depending on his instincts, Tony dived sideways once again. The shooting stopped. Taking his turn, he blindly shot through the blizzard with a new magazine – the first guard he had killed offered a trove of different ammunition packs. He heard a gasp, a grunt, and a voice muttering something in Russian. Hopefully, atleast one more guard was hit.

Agent Clint waited for them to shoot back. Nothing.

He lay on the snow-covered concrete and proned over to the previously-dead guard's corpse. It now served as a barrier to hide his face. He switched guns, holstering the assault rifle to his back. The good old M98B was back, ready and armed.

'Let 'em try their tricks on me. I'll gladly show them mine,' he proudly thought.

Through the zoomed-in ACOG thermal scope, infrared images formed. Tony spotted five radiating sources in the shape of human figures. They were crouching, huddled closely and were gesturing and conversing secretly with each other. Hardly were they aware that an atrocious man was spying on them.

His luck had finally turned good enough. Like a child's play, he casually gunned the guards down.

One down, two down, three down. The fourth and fifth tried to retreat. Nevertheless, the speed of sniper bullets outmatched the speed of their cowardly legs. The fourth guard howled like a slave begging for mercy from his master. He howled even louder as his body dropped down, dead. The fifth guard was probably the son of an athlete – he ran fast enough to escape behind some 'cold' structures.

Tony chuckled. They were nothing but a bunch of amateurs in comparison to his skills.

Killing wasn't part of the assignment tonight, he knew. Besides, why would he need to waste bullets shooting down ordinary guards when they could be marked for a more important contract?

He decided to bestow mercy upon this guard.

Agent Clint holstered his weapon and started a trek up a blunt slope of snowy ground. The inner compound was surrounded by a layer of barbed wire fencing. Up ahead of Tony, they flanked a steel-framed gate. Army camps, radio masts and other ambiguous and unidentified buildings were visible on the other side. Watchtowers outlined the outer perimeter at regular intervals of spacing. Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) sites stood on watch for the skies. Guards with heavier armor, with badges displaying greater expertise, patrolled the second-line wall.

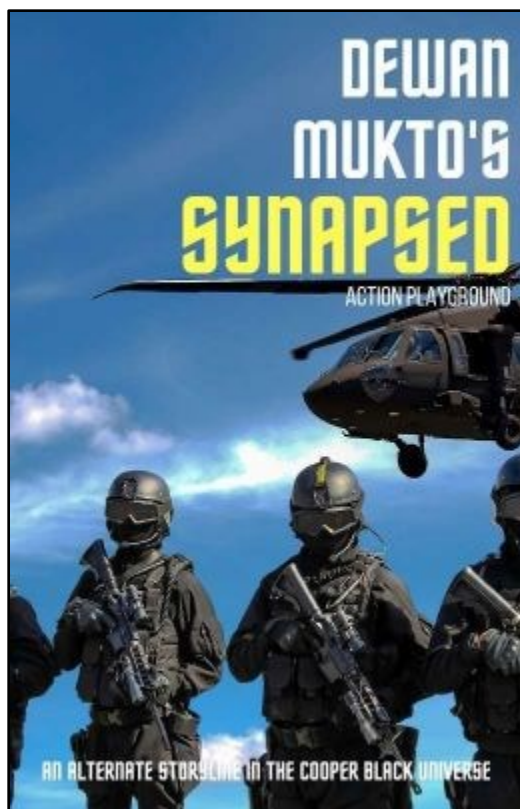
Tony knew it was in his best interests to try and avoid them.

Somewhere within the base, an alarm blared.
Watchtowers activated their spotlights.
Armored mounted guns remained manned
inside them.

A spotlight shone directly at Tony Clint.

“Son of a gun,” Tony finally spoke out aloud.

As of now, **Synapsed** cannot be read anywhere but the storyline has been planned to merge with the **Cooper Black: Critical Instinct** novel later on.



THE STELLARBORN

Genre: Spiritual / Fantasy / Modern

Year Written: 2018

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

Jolting from the dreamy dimension of mental freedom and acres of free will, his mind collapsed back to reality - a transition of a rainbow to grayscale. He'd been having these strange dreams again, he believed. Every night he thought over the fact, layer upon layer. Could it be true? Or were these simply mere visions of his multiverse imagination?

Fact or myth, they were dreams still - his mind kept cloning these obscure states repeatedly; his mind was greatly ensnared by the dreams. He dreamt of every tinge, every movement, every voice, every emotion - his dreams: they seemed so real.

Fresh sunlight seeped through closed shutters, spreading the spray of illumination

in the form of chilled morning rays and calm, relaxing hues. Drops of solid shadow occupied every corner of the small bedroom, turning moods gloomy and mentalities lazy. The honeyed light painted his face in gold.

Back to the reason of his sudden awakening: his bedroom door wavered by the pounding of a fist, followed by a trickle of a female voice that sounded much like someone he knew very well.

"Wake up now, Altair! You'll be late for school. C'mon dear, up, up," his mother's voice dribbled across a sea of silence.

"Yee-yes, ma," his reluctant voice reflected back. He seemed much disturbed by the signs of her parental kindness.

Last night, he'd felt so liberated. Was it actually a dream or was his head providing him with more confused views about how the world works? Ever since he'd first seen the light of life, he'd been wondering about the same fact over and over again - much like the old film reel - that: why and for what

purpose had he been born into this world of today. The precious curse of life.

Altair resolved out of bed - his daily throne of transporting to other universes; 'his' playground of exploring different emotions and tasting the otherworldly feeling of subconsciousness.

He sluggishly disclosed the shutters that compensated for windows, allowing the fountain of golden heat to consume the place. Instantly, the shadows fled for cover; they faded away parallel to the rate at which last night's memories vanished from his volatile mind. Darkness declared a truce and let the light overcome its might.

His dreams: he couldn't remember them by identity, but he did, by heart. Why was his mind unstable for storing dreams? Ten seconds ago, he remembered each grain of detail. Ten seconds later, it all turned to oblivion.

Altair gazed out towards the clear patch of cyan sky outside and caught a glimpse of the

last star's sparkle be drained out by the dominant sunlight.

So it might be true. I am stellarborn. He wondered what it meant. Did he have some kind of link with the nightly stars who blaze hotly against the cold sky? Did he possess supernatural ties to the spirit world? He had no clue. Altair hovered over the theory one last time before another flurry of knocks at the door intruded his thoughts.

"Hurry up and get dressed," his mother's words embraced his ears. Like clockwork, Altair followed the order acquiescently, leaving his mind still unaware of the involuntary actions he was about to perform. It was a daily ritual - switching between clothes and outfits.

He gazed at his own reflection in a mirror adjacent to the singular closet that had occupied this room older than the hills. He saw only a teenage human standing there. How had he metamorphosed to this stage of life so soon? It only seemed like he was born yesterday. Time had flown past his life in a

rush of studying, exams, hanging out, and freedom of choice. It didn't seem at all like his true life: the stress of surviving hordes of examinations wasn't making his life easier; it only poured more oil to troubled waters for the parents, for the teachers, but never for him, alone.

Friendship, peace, and hobbies gushed through his veins. Great rivers of kindness, justice, and punctuality crawled along his skin. Awesomeness, uniqueness, and happiness swarmed around his young brain. Silky strands of inspiration, wispy fragments of desire, and plush clouds of love hovered atop his frizzy hair. Minuscule particles of corruption dangled from the depths of his brave heart. Mortality surrounded his soul in a tight kiss of marked death.

He finished putting on his selected apparel before thrusting the mottled teak closet door shut, leaving the remnants of a feather-soft **'thud'**.

Simultaneously, he looked back at the wild, freestyle teenager he'd become. He blinked

those black onyx stones, that served as his eyes to look upon the world and its wonders. They shone with a lustre of curiosity, concealing true secrets and faithful knowledge.

That smile like molten butter, that face like a postage stamp - he knew who he was. He knew his identity, his existence in this world.

Named after a celestial trailblazer, he was Altair Jayden: the only (and lonely) child of the Jayden family. He knew his specialty - nobody could distinguish between living matter and dead space any further deftly than him. Altair was a star; so was he bound to be one on Earth. His role model was the night sky, a universe of infinite proportions.

Retrieving his backpack from a study desk that had been transformed into a gaming console center, Altair unlocked his room door and stepped into the portal transcending to the living room.

Each footstep distorted the cool sleepy morning's aura. He noted the antique hardwood floors conjuring specks of rough

dust and the creaks caused by every touch of his feet; the house was growing old.

His mother's voice trailed in from the kitchen.

"Alty, what'll you be wanting for breakfast?"

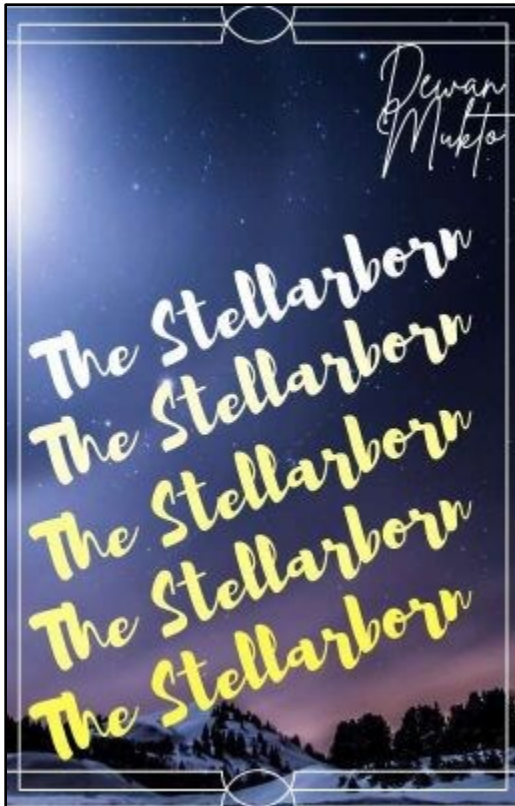
Skimming through a catalogue of choices in his mind, Alty Jayden resonated back eagerly. He wanted something dry, something luscious, something toasty, to begin his typical promising day with.

"I'll be happy with some cheese sandwiches, please."

As he continued to walk along a corridor carpeted neatly, a dazzling burst of sunlight distracted his attention, from an ornate glass pane. He peered outside and fed his vision with an outstanding view of stratocumuli clouds about to intercept the sun's power. They moved slowly with a tranquil silence above.

Nevertheless, little did Altair know what fate had in store for him. High school wasn't an option.

As of now, **The Stellarborn** cannot be read anywhere since the concept of this novel has been scrapped entirely.



A KHAJIIT'S TALE

Genre: Fan Fiction (The Elder Scrolls: Skyrim)

Year Written: 2017

Year Published: 2022

Status: **Complete**

The sun was peeking above the thicket of clouds, when a cargo ship arrived at the northern docks of Solitude, as the people of this land called the port land. The wooden ship was small, but it had been sturdy enough to withstand all the sea storms that it had met, on its voyage. The ship was slowly being steered by the oarsmen sitting on top of the deck. But these oarsmen weren't actually humans; they were of Khajiit race. The cat people of Elsweyr.

Although they looked like fierce tigers and lions, they were truly unlike them. They were peaceful, and cunning, and also kind at times.

Ma'raish was a Khajiit trader, renowned for his extremely sweet ale, produced only in the lands of Elsweyr. He was quite well-known in

his homeland, and everyone appreciated his ale. The Khajiit had never tasted ale so strong, before. Old age had begun to take toll in his warrior-like body. Ma'raish owned a grove of deathbell bushes, and vast amounts of thistle shrubs. The plantations came cheap, and the secret of the production of such good ale was kept only to himself.

"My dear Elswyri, looks like we're here at last!" he called out to his favored daughter's room in the cabin. Ma'raish had ordered that the cabin of his ship should contain a room specially-made only for Elswyri. He cared for and loved her like an angel. More than an angel.

He stood up from his work table littered with maps, and his window to gaze out at the front bow of the ship, and walked over to Elswyri's compartment. He knocked twice on the polished wooden door. Rest of all the doors of the ship were rotten with fungus.

"Wake up, now, dearie!" he chirped like the morning birds. "Oh, nothing shines better than my Elswyri! It's morning now. Come out

soon. We've got plenty to explore in these fabled lands."

Behind that polished door, the room was kept gloomy by the not-drawn curtains dangling from the big window that gazed out to the very back of the ship.

On a soft cotton bedsheet, on a hardy bed, lay a beautiful female cat. A Khajiit, to be exact; it's not common that they were often regarded as "cats".

Every dad's morning flattery. Elswyri shifted over on the bed, to face the curved wall of the ship. And wow, what a spectacular place I've got for a room, I must say!

"C'mon now, Elsie, get up now. You don't want to miss out the elven folk of this city, you know!" her father knocked once more and became silent. Then he walked off back to his table.

Could it be true? Had she heard what her father just said? Elves! High elves!

Really dad? What an excuse to force me up the bed. Will we really find any elves in these

distant lands? Elswyri slowly forced her reluctantly lazy mind to get up. The floorboards creaked softly wherever she walked on her furry feet. She grumbled away about why did they have to come here, why they chose this desolate land, why she had to join her father, etc.

She finally made up her mind to unlatch the door. Her father was busy at the maps, and the candles were still lit, she noticed. Looks like her father had been working through the night. He frequently did.

"Ah, glad to see that you're up and awake, dear Elsie," Ma'raish tucked his maps into his pockets. He wore a magnificent robe worthy of such a title and honor, as he'd been famous back at Elsweyr. His robe was customized with a great number of pockets.

"Uh, dad, why did we have to come all the way from home?" Elswyri grumbled as she appeared in her white sleeping robes. Her delicate and lushly curved features were easily visible beneath the thin, tight fabric.

"Why are we here, dad? I don't like this place. I hate it here. It's too cold!"

"Cold? Cold?" her father chuckled. "Is that what you fear, sweetie? The cold?" his laughter became deeper. "Dad, that's not funny!" she cringed. I guess that's how it is. All dads are same. All of them don't understand anything besides their work.

"Ship land! Ship land!" an oarsman's voice broke into their conversation. "Ship land! Ship land!"

"Ship what?" Ma'raish poked his head out the front window. "What happened? Did we approach land...oh, by the heavens...we've arrived!" he turned back to his daughter. "Elsie, we're here. Now please head to your chamber, and get dressed nobly. I don't want anyone to think what a bad father am I."

How correct the statement was, dad! You're the worst I've ever seen. Elswyri quietly paced back to her room and shut the door with a Slam!

"Ooh! Daughters these days I tell you!" Ma'raish opened his secret cabinet and found a chest inside. He had lost the key to open it, but he knew how to unlock it using lockpicks. After three strokes, the chest lid swung open. "Aha! Now that's some good treasure!"

He took all the items into his pockets. Five amethysts, twenty bottles of his special ale, an apple, two rubies, and ten emeralds. These items could be exchanged for quite a value, he knew. He shut the chest, and left it there. And right beneath the work table, hidden from view, was his blade. His only weapon. An iron warhammer, capable of clobbering enemies to pieces. One swing, and a correct smash, would mean no one tried to mess with him. Though he doubted if he still had enough strength left in his aged arms.

There was a sharp rap on his door. He quickly unlatched it open. Two oarsmen were standing vigil outside.

"We've arrived, master," one of them spoke straight away. They were straightforward Khajiit, working for the love of ale. Ma'raish had promised them a good share of his best products, when they'd arrive back at Elsweyr.

"Yes, I can see that," Ma'raish gazed out at the horizon. He saw a light fog, and a high rocky arch, over the waters of the bay.

"Please hurry up the cargo disposal and let us make preparations for departure."

"Ay, master," they hurried off to carry the crates of ale overboard.

Ma'raish seized the opportunity to cherish the view of the beautiful landscape in front of him. He walked up to the front of the ship's bow. There were many other ships unloading goods. But all of them were manned by men. Humans. Hardy Nords, by their origins. The great arch that spanned all across the water was shaped naturally, by the strong winds blowing in. And on top of that, was an unbelievable town. The citadel of Solitude.

A gentle furry hand tapped his arm, while he was busy admiring the scenic beauty of the land. He turned back to see his daughter, now well-dressed.

"Now you look all a princess," her father complimented. "Good. You're looking way better than your mother, I must say!" then his sweet words collapsed, and his lips shut tight. He seldom wanted to talk about Elswyri's mother.

Oh, there he goes again! Why does he need to include mum into anything he has to say? Elswyri wore a blue velvet robe, with purple silk draped over her shoulders and cinched at the brown leather belt around her slim waist. "Dad, can we go now?"

"Go? Go where?" her father's words were blank. No more honeyed words.

"The city! Let's go, dad!" she walked along the plankwalk and hopped off the ship. The oarsmen were busy unloading the goods. She looked at the high rock arch above the water, and it instantly took her breath away. Whoa, so this is Skyrim? Nice place!

"Wait, Elsie. We'll go when the cargo'll be ready," this time it was her father who didn't like this place.

She frowned.

"So the citadel is currently facing troubles?" Ma'raish asked the driver as they slowly travelled up the slope on the wobbly horse cart. Elswyri was occupied by the scenic sights everywhere around her. "But do they accept some good brew, in these hard times?"

"Could be. Could be not. I cannot say," the driver lashed the whip at the horse, to make it speed up. "I haven't visited the place since I was a kid. Heard some talk about the assassination of the High King of Skyrim."

The short journey up the cobbled path was a great time for talking about serious business. At least, it kept thoughts about Elswyri's mother away from Ma'raish's mind.

"So, does Solitude accept strangers from other lands?"

"Ooh, yes they do. I think they might, but there's always a chance of being driven out just because you're a bit outlandish," the driver steered the single horse right as they passed a few guards dressed in red.

"Who were those?"

"Guards. Local hold. Solitude," the grumpy driver shouted a command to his horse, and it stopped almost immediately. "This is the Solitude stables. Last stop. You can easily walk up to Solitude from along the path ahead."

"Here. Please accept this kind offer, since we have no gold, yet," Ma'raish handed him an amethyst. "Thanks again for the ride."

Four Khajiit oarsmen handled the crates of ale, while Elswyri and Ma'raish continued the trek up the road of soft mud, and cobblestone.

Elswyri liked it here. She regretted her previous thoughts of hating the place. She liked the smells of the morning, especially in the woods they were walking through now.

The only thing bothering her was the cold. But it didn't matter much anyway. She saw a tall stone wall ahead, with three 'open' iron gates, and two Solitude guards flanking the leftmost and rightmost gate.

"Halt! What is your business in our fabulous city, Khajiit?" a guard interrogated him on sight. "Don't you know that your kind aren't allowed here in Skyrim?"

"What?!" Ma'raish felt his voice stick in his throat. "But... but I thought... we were free... free trade..."

"Those glory days have passed," the other guard arrived. "Now be on your way or face it!" they drew their swords. The fresh sunlight danced on their metal surfaces. "This is your last warning, Khajiit! Leave or get killed!"

"Please...please give us a chance. I promise not to cause any harm. We're here only to deliver some ale..."

"Ale? Or is it poison, huh?" the guards seemed cruel, but more three of them were

called in from the city. "Like I said, move it! Khajiit are tricksters! Khajiit are traitors! Khajiit have stolen, robbed, killed!"

The words hammered into the ears of all six of the Khajiit standing before the gates of Solitude. Elswyri couldn't believe her eyes and ears. They were just one step away from their destination, and they were being blocked by some guards. The guards might be corrupt, indeed.

"What's all this ruckus?" another guard joined in. "Oh, so it's that Khajiit trouble again? I say, kill them all and leave their corpses for the wolves to feast upon!"

No. No. "No!" Elswyri couldn't bear it any longer. She charged forwards and tried to scratch across the face of a guard, but the guard was too fast. And too strong. He kicked her away to land in the nearby bushes.

"Elsie! No!" Ma'raish took out his warhammer. He'd been waiting for this moment. "Die you! Damn all of you!" he

swung the heavy piece of iron and knocked over two guards.

"You think you can mess with me?" another guard joined in the fight.

The Khajiit oarsmen joined in, too.

"Die reckless humans!" Ma'raish swung the warhammer around once more, and broke a guard's back with one mighty blow. Another swing, and another guard was thrown into the air, with full force.

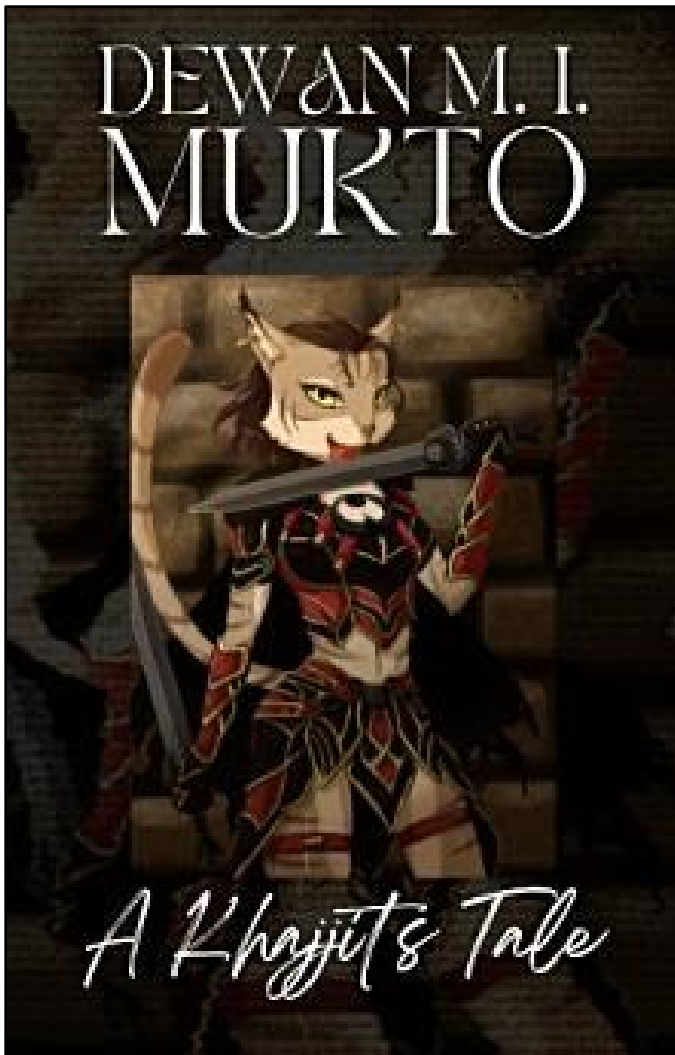
Elswyri regained her balance and stood back up. She thought her father was winning. But how wrong she was.

An arrow pierced through her father's back. Blood sprayed out on the snow beneath his feet.

"No! Dad!"

Sun of a Beach

As of now, **A Khajiit's Tale** can be found online on Google Play Books. This is a short story with only 3 chapters.



DEAD MAN ALIVE

Genre: Horror / Thriller / Modern

Year Written: 2017

Year Published: 2023

Status: **Complete**

I have always regretted this moment. The moment of death. I am a dead man alive, and I may end my story here. Just kidding!

You - my brave reader - may hold this book in your hands, but the power of the mystic dead remains hidden within these pages. Unholy, unworldly, and undesired forces have seeped deep into the core of this story. Paper can conceal some secrets. Dark, terrible secrets. One cannot, and shouldn't, interfere with such cryptic dimensions. Events without source; powers without meaning; endings without time - these are merely illusions in our realistic, material world.

Oh no, no, no.... I'm not describing any cult or the "Illuminati" or whatever. That was barely an introduction for curious readers

like you. For my part, my advice is : stop reading. You may read on, but I may meet you face-to-face, on one unlucky day.... after you die.

Ughh.... I suck at "introductions", so enough of all this nonsense. Time to cut to the chase.

My name and age are of no matter to you, but I can spare them - for a friend. I shall unveil my personal information bit by bit, fragment after fragment.

For the time being, follow me to my past.

I was a NYPD desk officer, bored to death by having pillars of paperwork eradicated every screwed-up day of my life. I was considered a bottom ranker 'cause of my inattentive behavior at times. One thing was clear about me - I was a major slacker.

So there was this one day when I left for a vacation in Virginia, to spend some time in tourism (and to be alone from the chaos-and-pollution factors of the NY concrete jungle).

Everything was smooth and perfect, shining like the rims of the '**Bentley Continental SS**' I had recently managed to afford.

Before even reaching my destination, nature spelt out "k-a-r-m-a" for me.

The sky turned darker than a criminal's guilty facial expression, and thunder boomed like the 80s bass among the shadows. Those shadows - you could almost sense them tracing your movements.

Rain showered down, hard. The roads were deserted. I couldn't figure out why. Had I taken the wrong route? The screen of my car's GPS shockingly flickered. And my phone's battery was down (only 2% charge remaining). Damn. Shouldn't have wasted too much time on Wattpad.

Even my non-living car could sense something defile stirring in the environment. Simultaneously, the deafening dubstep beat of thousands of raindrops hammering on the windshield, plus the car roof, catalyzed the effect of being "lost".

I just didn't 'feel' being lost. I truly 'was' lost. Lost and lonely to such an extent, I just didn't feel lost any longer. Or was that quite weird of me?

Nevertheless, I kept driving ahead. I paused a moment to check the time.

My watch read : **[10:03 pm]**

Only two hours till midnight. No vehicles in sight, no people either. Just me. Me and my consciousness.

But my car's engine suddenly flopped. I didn't replace my foot off the accelerator, in order to continue the movement of my car for as long as friction didn't conquer it.

I heard another roar of thunder - nature's rockstar. Unfortunately, it sounded closer, much closer, this time.

Something heavy just dropped on the road in front of my car.

Pressing on the brakes, I prayed for not colliding with that '*thing*'. The tires slipped on the wet surface. Luckily, my car just

stalled an inch away from that '*thing*'.
Hopefully, my prayers were accepted.

The windshield wipers spun into action and I
finally saw what the '*thing*' actually was.
Something big, long, massive, and *organic*.

A tree, damn it. A tree had created a sort of
blockade in front of the road.

Without warning, my car's engine sputtered
and died. The car keys didn't work.

I studied the surroundings. The darkness
spawned in all four directions other than a
small road-side café. A café that sold all sorts
of coffee, judging by the neonlit billboard
sign. Coffee, yes. A little touch of caffeine
could relieve my mind from the stress.

No path ahead on the road, thanks to the
fallen tree log. And surely no turning back
now.... 'cause the engine of the car was dead.

Maybe I could find a person inside who
might help me find a suitable motel for the
time being.

I ditched my ride and tasted some of the heavy "beat"-iful rain pouring down on me, drenching my Harris Tweed jacket.

The café seemed to be "open". I knocked on the wooden double doors but they silently slid open without my word. That sent a frightening dose of "uh,oh" sensations down my spine, freezing it to solid ice. I didn't know the reason. Was it the chilly aura of the freakish rainfall, or the fact that the café was deserted? Yep. The café was empty. Fully silent.

Not a soul in sight. Only some flickering lights and empty tables and chairs. The place looked lonely. Too lonely. What was wrong with this suburb? Did an apocalypse wipe out the citizens? Was there a curse regarding the location? Had a deadly virus or disease broken loose? My mind demanded answers. Every second, it screamed at me, "Why? Why? Why? Why? Why? ..."

After a minute of silence, I heard footsteps.

"Hello?" my voice began an echo that reverberated all the way across the hall. I didn't expect anybody to reply.

"Yes, sir?" a female voice startled me. I turned towards the direction and found myself staring at a blonde waitress. "How may I help you, sir?"

"Um....uh...." my mind was quite blank after that wave of chills down my back. I managed a few words, whatsoever.

"Please....can....you.....serve....coffee?"

"Sure. Which type?"

"Plain cappuccino or a latté, please."

"As you wish, sir. Please have a seat. I'll be back with your order," she turned back into the emptiness and realms of shadow.

I found the nearest chair, composed of ebony. The flooring was polished hard wood, so shiny that it reflected my own reflection in brownish chromes. This place seemed kind of....strange. Creepy. The café was so well-furnished, but I wondered why weren't

there any other customers. Was it because of the rain, or what? I had no clue.

More than two-thirds of the café was bathed in darkness. The meagre number of fluorescent tubes on the ceiling weren't sufficient to provide good illumination.

And where did this waitress go? She was taking too long. I thought it was wiser to leave instead. The rainfall was calming down anyways.

Right as I was deciding to leave, the waitress walked out of the veil of blackness from the back of the hall, nursing a tray of plastic. On it, stood a ceramic cup containing fresh steaming coffee.

"Your coffee, sir."

"Uh....thanks," right as I was holding the cup in my hand, I glanced at the waitress' eyes. They seemed blank and black. Indeed, they were dark and empty - so unnatural that I almost dropped my cup.

"Careful, sir," she advised, with courtesy deeply scented within her voice. I looked at

her eyes again, but found them perfectly normal. Ordinary blue eyes."Just a minute, sir."

She returned back to the shadowy section, leaving me solitary again.

I got back to my seat and laid the cup on the round teak table. I watched the smoke dissolve into wisps in the air, steam emanating from the strong coffee.

Ready to try a sip, I noticed something move across the ceiling, in the reflection of the thick soupy brown liquid. Looking up, but seeing nothing. Nothing interesting.

Yet again, about to drink, I spotted a shapeless creature move across the ceiling. I gazed upwards. Nothing but a plain ceiling. Something was definitely NOT 'right' over here.

On the third time, I saw nothing stir in the reflection though. Nor did I notice anything in reality. Well, the situation was exceeding the limit of 'creepiness' and too out-of-place

for me. Immediately standing up, I left the cup of coffee untouched.

About to leave, a familiar voice whispered into my ears, "Sir, you've left your coffee. Please pay up."

Without turning my head in any direction, without thinking twice, I drew out my wallet and threw as many \$10 bills as I could, before quickly escaping from the confines of this chaotic café. Now....That wasn't a 'cool' experience at all!

I yanked my car door open, and inserted the car key. I hardly had a second to lose; there was no time in hand to understand the meaning of what's going on.

I twisted the key, expecting no result. But miraculously, the car engine revived back to life.

Stranger still, the fallen tree wasn't there anymore. There was barely a sign of the tree. Not even a single leaf. What could've happened? Who could've done this? That, too, so fast?!

My watch read : [10:18 pm]

So I was halfway between New York and Virginia. Didn't know where I was exactly. Didn't know which pit of Hell had I just fallen into. I was certainly in a lost area or maybe a quarantine zone, devoid of citizens, pedestrians and vehicles on the streets. Yet, no normal person was found so far.

That's strange, 'cause the rain had also stopped.

I drove along for about twenty more minutes, before parking my car under the shadow of the *Leafy Nut* - a local motel.

The building looked more like an urban version of a classic condominium complex. In a matter of time, I got acquainted with the owner.

The owner was a 24-year old youth who lived in an apartment on the 2nd floor. She escorted me to the softly-lit lobby, where I stored my Remington 870 shotgun and two briefcases (one case was crammed with

fugitive documents, licenses, etc. And the other was a stash of American cash).

After a swift conversation with the woman, I learnt a handful of facts about her. Her name's Catalie Leanut. Her parents had passed away, so they had left her this motel as an estate. She seemed cute and her behavior was motivating, kind, and chatty. I kind of found her spiritual nature "interesting"....more like "attractive".

She led me along a hall of doors (a corridor) and handed me the key to my chamber. I was surprised to find out that I was going to be her neighbor, i.e. her room suite was next to mine.

"Thanks," I bade her good night and shut the door. Ah....a relief. I shrugged off my Harris Tweed and relaxed on a soft bed. I laid my M9 pistols from the personal holsters, on a bedside table. I thought of turning ON the LCD 16" TV, but changed my mind.

The bed was too cozy.

I woke up to the disturbing sound of someone knocking on my suite's door. It wasn't morning yet, I knew. Who could it be, at this late hour? Was it Catalie? Did she require any help or something?

I found the answer when I was just about close range to the door. Someone slid a photograph from under the door.

Puzzled, I picked it up and flipped it over.

The photo was of me, smiling at the café....holding that coffee cup. I didn't remember smiling like that. Maybe some Photoshop geek had edited the picture. And probably the sinister waitress had clicked this photo from the shadows. Who knows? You couldn't trust people.

I felt something wet and sticky drop on top of my head. When I touched it, my fingers were tinted red. Blood. It was blood. Maybe a butcher lived upstairs, and the blood was only leaking down from the ceiling.

But the ceiling was blank when I peered above. Not a single sign of wet patches or

anything. No holes or cracks either. Then how the hell did blood leak out?!

Strange.

I looked back at my photo, and almost got stabbed in the heart with fear's dagger as I noticed the changes.

In the photo, my photo-face turned depressed and tensed. My photo-hand wasn't holding a cup anymore. And my photo-eyes were dark. Dark as sin. Dark as the eyes of the waitress when I had first glanced at them.

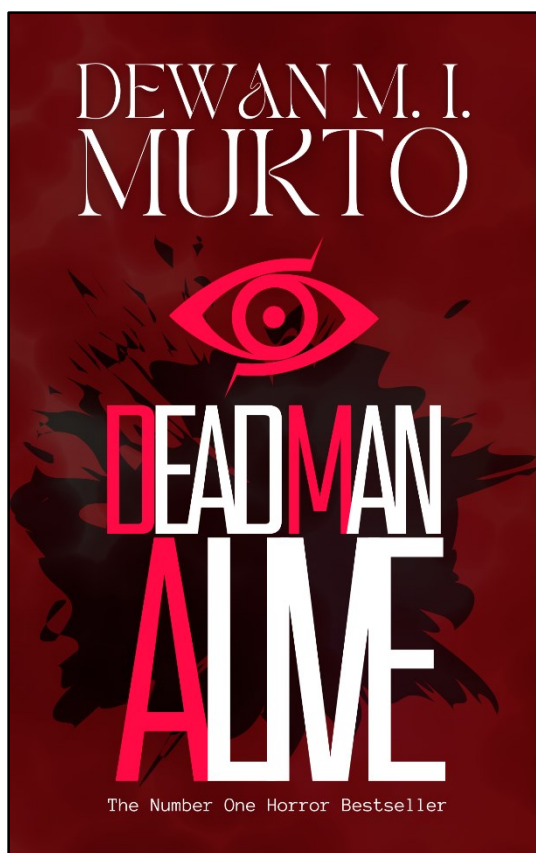
Someone knocked on the door, again.

Dewan Mukto

As of now, physical copies of **Dead Man Alive** can be found via the following ISBN:

- 9781446740972 (Hardback)

And online on Google Play Books.



KNIGHTSPEAK: THE UNIDENTIFIED THING

Genre: Fantasy / Adventure / Medieval

Year Written: 2017

Year Published: N/A

Status: **Incomplete**

The night was for the living, they say. But little do they know what lies beyond the night life. I had been there. I had seen the night as it is, and as it was. I was a born slayer, forged out of the hot anvils of Delnerra. A dragon as human as could be. But still, I was one of the mortals. Those fragile mortals, whose lives were nothing more than the flutter of a tiny moth's wing. If you believe in the words of the mortals, you'd fall into their trap. Their deadly venom that purges the mind full of reckless beliefs, and then slowly renders you dead, in the times of need.

I was born from the ashes of a rising empire, a warrior made to hold the Ancient Axe of

the Mellin. I was named Gradsvid Stormaxe, the locals, and taught to the crafts of warfare by Mallice Undrei. He was a part of Delnerra, as well. But everything turned dark when Aaron Ahaka found the unidentified thing.

The morning had been warm, warm as the heat that seared through the scalp of most travelers that dared to pass the scorching desert of Ananopolis, the city of sands.

But the black night was black and cold as the midnight sea depths.

I picked up the necessary weapons from the state armory, for exchange of gold. An ironwood bow, three dozen iron arrows, and an iron longsword that smelled of wolf leather, which the scabbard was composed of. Delnerra was a village renowned for its low remoteness from the iron mines in the east. Delnerra's folk never dared to risk the excitement of exploring new lands, mastering new skills, and slaying uncouth monsters. But that was the way of the common folk.

To the brotherhood of the Taskars, it was different. Here, all manly acts of valor were appreciated, and free weapons and supplies were donated to the members. But everything changed when a roaring beast came hurtling down towards our land.

The dragon's wrath was outstandingly dangerous. Our village had been ruined by its hungering sense of chaos. The common folk had tried fighting back the dragon with their puny blades and pitch forks, but had been instead engulfed into the mighty flames erupting from the blue dragon's mouth. The flames, they burned blue.

The Taskars had tried their best to resist the dragon's invasion, and had been successful, with all their trained skills and heavy weaponry.

But by the time the dragon had decided to retreat, almost the entire village of Delnerra had been destroyed. The smoking ruins of the village was the first thing I had seen and remembered when I arrived from the chasms of life before birth.

Twenty years had passed, and now it was time for me to go on a quest with my brethren. A quest to find Aaron Ahaka, and investigate what his chief possession truly was.

I paid the armorer fifty gold pieces, coins with the king's face stamped on one side and a knight's helm on the other. No, not the king's actual face! Just a simple replica of a man with golden skin, golden hair, golden beard, golden crown...I think you got the picture.

I gazed at the various items and accessories dangling from the cobbled walls, illuminated by nothing more than torches on the walls, and the thick candle lit on the armorer's table. He extracted a big leather-bound book from a row of wooden planks, acting as a shelf. He placed the heavy book down on the table, right beside the wax candle. I could read the title of the volume, which stated that this was just a ledger. The armorer put the coins in a drawer of the table, and took out a feather quill. An ink pot was already present on the other side of the ledger.

"Yes, and will you please be on your business?" the kindly armorer requested. He was more or less similar to the common folk that I'd seen at Delnerra village. Thick curly hair that reached down to his neck, concealed by an iron war helm that represented a bull's head. Ordinary roughspun clothes, and a belt with a scabbard attached proved to my eyes that this man was more or less warrior-like. A lesser warrior, that is. With such obesity that the armorer had, I doubt he'd ever be able to manage more than a few swipes with his sword, before tiring out.

"Sure, mister. But I was just checking the other items you have got for sale," I calmly replied. The armorer's black mustachios twitched with suspicion. "Have you got any good armor for sale?"

"I'm sorry. We're closed now," the armorer cleared his statement with: "Now please be on your way before I call the guards."

"Never mind, mister. Good day to you," I bade him goodbye, and continued on my path

along the mud tracks of Golomanor. The street was lined with shops and stalls, flourishing with trade as multiple villagers and merchants continued their barter, bargaining, and usual offering. Jewellers, armorers, grocers, smiths, and inns were the chief attraction of this little trading town. Feonor, they called it.

The air was hazy with smoke, and the crescent moon appeared bigger than usual. Small grey clouds settled steadily over the distant peaks of the Scahazahad mountains. Local legends told about one of those mountains concealing a cavern. Adventurers who ever dared to step inside and intervene, word was never heard of their return. But the legends also said that the cavern was an entrance to a vast dungeon, filled with Emetran scrolls, ruins, and treasure.

Emetria was a great landmass, somewhere beyond the hungry Sea of Sickles. I knew that it'd be my destiny to learn about the peoples living there. My previous master, Mallice Undrei, had told me that the ancient ancestors from Emetria had travelled across

the deathly waters, and settled here in Calemarn. And we, the purebred citizens of Delnerra, were the original descendants of Emetria. Since most of the Delnerrins had died during the invasion of the blue dragon, only a few descendants were remaining in this world. I, Gradsvid Stormaxe, was one of the last.

I had received an order from the head of the Taskar brotherhood.

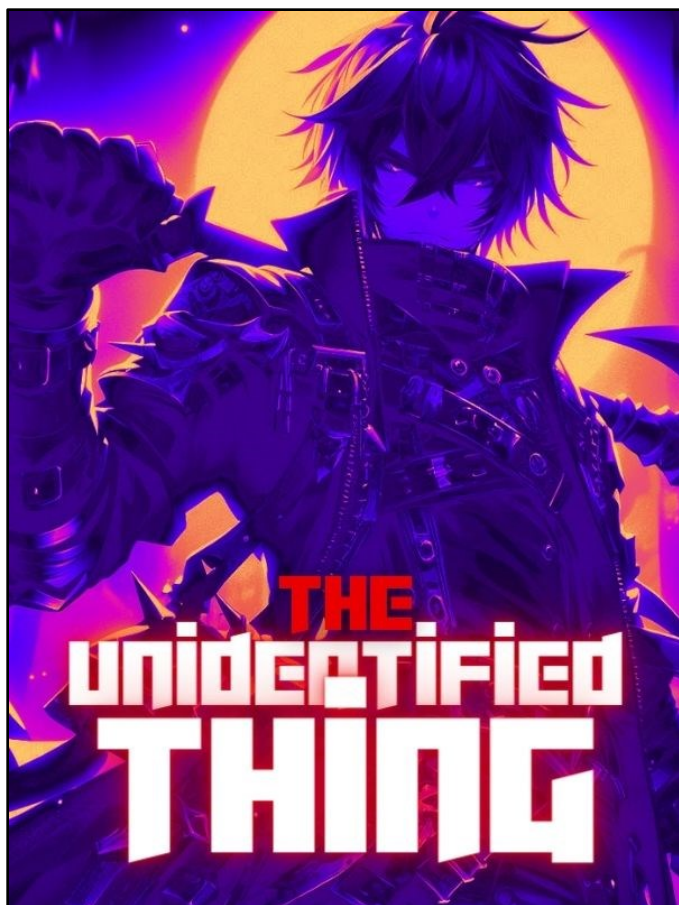
Young lad,

You have been chosen to join arms with our brotherhood. The brotherhood of the Taskars, as you know it, is specially renown for training new adventurers and explorers. You may be just one of them. If you humbly accept our offer, please meet us at the old broken tower, just outside the trading town of Feonor. Make sure you're well-armed and supplied. Meet us there by twilight. We'll be expecting you. -- signed in the hands of Culdrin Eastwok, head of the brotherhood.

The letter had been dropped into my lap, from a hawk's grip, while I was peacefully watching the sun set, down by the Duun river. The text was flawless, so I knew that no one tried to forge this order. But still, I was afraid, especially by the mention of bringing my own weapons and supplies. What could it be? A trap, to claim my rights as a descendant of Emetria?

I didn't know. So that's why I had decided to follow the order and put an end to my curiosity. My violent mind had been giving me violent thoughts, lately. And no one liked having dark thoughts swimming in their heads all the time.

As of now, **Knightspeak: The Unidentified Thing** cannot be read anywhere since this version of the story has not been published yet.



KNIGHTSPEAK

Genre: Fantasy / Adventure / Medieval

Year Written: 2017

Year Published: 2023

Status: **Incomplete**

The night's cold winds drifted away in the western direction, cutting off the draughts and refilling them with a new, cold sense of humor.

Hama and his consulted friend, Prejin, were two of the hundreds of passers-by who witnessed the first hints of a long, harsh winter stirring up ahead.

Nikneferon had warned him not to dress like the sweet, old, warm summers. But people seldom obeyed the retired wizard's advice or commands. During King Utheros' reign, he had been a welcome visitor to Gondelin's Castle. But one of his healing potions had failed. This particular potion was handed over to the king as a bottle of blue-red waters. At night, when the king had returned from his royal throne to his elaborate

quarters, he took a swig from the transparent glass bottle – to satisfy his thirst. But the drops of liquid had burnt his tongue instead.

The wizard had to spend five years in jail trying to figure out his mistake in the previous concoction. Then it struck him! He had forgotten to add the main key ingredient – Honeybrew’s finest mead. After he was set free again, Feron sought two of his apprentices and gave them a small, but important, quest: to bring a bottle of mead from Honeybrew, a trading town just ten miles away from Gondelin.

And so there they were – Hama and Prejin – the two apprentice squires who were walking along the Road of Eagle’s Peak. The century-old road had been used for transport of all sorts of goods. The pattern of stone-cold, hard-as-steel stones randomly repeated amidst the softer patches of wet mud.

Hama’s father had once boldly told him that in his days, every paved slab of stone that

was set in the road had been made of a very hard rock. But erosion had weathered all the glory away, leaving behind remnants of the past. At some muddy slabs, tufts of grass sprang out to breathe in the cool nightly air.

Beneath the cloudless sky, revealed by the light of all the 398 stars and the full moon, the Road of Eagle's Peak ran stiff as a goblin-forged sword.

There were no goblins now. Not here, not in the peaceful sanctuary of the kings. Perhaps they lived in caves, far away in the distant Blue Hills in the west.

Hama wondered how long it had been since the last legion of goblin blacksmiths had set foot in the kingdom of Gondelin.

A horse cart nearly rammed right into Hama's knee and wobbled off behind them.

'These roads aren't straight,' he thought. If King Utheros had heard the comment, two knights armed with steel longswords would've been on his trail by now. He turned towards his friend.

“Hey Prejin, how long has it been since we left for Honeybrew?”

Prejin scratched his head.

“I don’t know. Shouldn’t we have arrived by now?” he stopped a nearby mule cart carrying hay and asked the driver, “How far is Honeybrew from here?”

“Honeybrew, huh?” the bald, bearded farmer squinted off towards the north. He was dressed in brown roughspun and ragged robes. “Well, if the old roads be true, there’s the ‘Brew in all the glory!” he pointed a bony finger to the direction the two squires were heading.

“Thanks a lot, sir.”

Hama and Prejin broke into a brisk jog.

The sought-after center of trade was just half a mile away. Seeking the distant town gave them hope to continue the mission.

Smoke wafted from houses’ chimneys. Every house almost looked the same: brick-tiled roofs that sloped downwards, cobbled walls

with a mixture of stone bricks, wooden doors cut and shaped by rough hands, iron bars in the windows.

From the nearest inn, the squires could hear a merry tone of music playing. The crowds of people on the road became a lot denser as the squires inched closer to the trading town.

As they got closer, they could hear an argument between two highly-respected people. Crowds gathered round the tavern, eager to listen. Stalls and shops were bursting with items for sale. Food, weapons, armor, shields, swords, hammers, axes, anvils, bows, arrows, crops, vegetables, fruits, cakes, and clothes were just some of the wonders of Honeybrew.

But the principal attraction was the best quality mead produced by the meaderies. Each inn was flooded with people trying out different flavors.

From a two-storeyed inn, named 'The Shallow Sea', a man brought out his mouth

outside an open window and vomited a sticky mass of yellowish ale.

“Death to Utheros!” the man was clearly a drunkard. Being drunk was his passion, it seemed. He brought out more throwup and resumed drinking from a tankard of ale.

“If this is the condition of a town,” Prejin asked Hama on the way to the ‘Purple Whiskers’, the inn mentioned by Nikneferon. “I wonder what a city would look like.”

It was quite unusual for those two to see so much chaos, hear and experience noise pollution, and to even sniff the dirt from the hazy smoke that covered the town like an invisible blanket.

Back at their village, it was much peaceful and quiet. But here in this town, it was madness. Folly. Chaos.

The steel stone road turned into a muddy cobblestone cart track, which diverged into multiple paths, lanes and alleyways crammed between the aging brick-tiled and cobble-walled buildings. A gigantic maze of streets.

To supplement the faint moonlight, oil lanterns hung at every shop, stall, inn, house, tavern and corner, illuminating the place with an ochre hue that bathed the blocks in the hopes of the people being able to see as clear as daylight. But even the burning flames of the sun couldn't defeat the matching opponent – darkness.

Prejin heard some glass shattering and a man cursing in the harshest of Orchish tongues. He peered inside the 'Polyoak's Patch' and saw a mob gathering round a round table, upon which two wrestlers tried to smother each other. The innkeeper handed out a tray of mugs of beer to the most excited fans.

"Havin' quite a night, righ'?" the innkeeper grinned at Prejin for a bit before continuing his duty.

The duo turned to a lane and stopped in front of a single-floor inn. Hama glanced at the wooden sign, painted in purple with silvery text shining off the oil lantern hung

from a lamp post – now covered by a thin sheet of dust.

“Is this the place?” Hama didn’t recall the place much. He rarely went out of his village for visiting neighboring towns and holdfasts.

“Yes, I think this is it,” Prejin unsheathed his hidden blade. For five years he had been working with the Sand Eagles, an agency of vigilantes that sought out possible assassins to hire. Enizo Mefici and Korles Anos had taught him well enough on how to use weapons. The half-meter of bitter steel had gone cold with frost. The chilling enchantment was still active.

It was deemed a punishable offense for any squire to wield or own weapons before reaching the stage of knighthood. Nonetheless, Prejin was a young man who’d rather chase after danger.

Hama knocked on the doubled doors, but it was unlocked, strangely. Darkness crept up inside like a blanket of death, allowing no light to enter. He was confused. The old

wizard had mentioned this exact place for collecting the ingredients.

“Wait a minute!” Prejin reached out into the darkness with his hand. The darkness seemed to melt away in a puff of black smoke, instantly. And inside, the room lit up with a pure white glow.

“Sorry to disturb you, my fellows, but may I enter first?” a voice suddenly interrupted them.

Both squires turned to face the newcomer. He was a bearded human with bluish-grey robes and a crooked brown wizard’s hat. His arms were crossed beneath the loose long sleeves. A friendly smile was on his face, with his eyes glistening with knowledge. He seemed to wear knowledge as a badge of high rank.

“Wh—who are you, sir?” Hama lowered Prejin’s hand, still clutching the hidden blade. The old man didn’t reply.

He took out a long thin piece of wood (it looked more like a branch of a dark oak) and

aimed it at the glowing door. He gestured at the two squires to move aside.

The old man looked like a wizard by trade, but his actions were similar to a warrior. But his appearance was more of a king. Who could he be? Another wizard?

He paced slowly towards the room with the wand held at arm's length. He muttered some words and yelled out a spell.

“Thuponikas Shomongous!” the change in his voice was astonishing. The friendly, happy tone had turned into a commanding one. From the tip of the wand, a spark of red energy bolted into the room and burst like a firecracker.

The bright white light died down to a yellowish hue spread out from the ceiling inside. Smoke hissed and a smell of burnt leather entered everyone's nostrils.

“You may come in now,” the wizard allowed them in.

Hama and Prejin found the source of the burning smell – an overgrown rat-like creature had been roasted like minced beef.

“Let me take that,” the wizard carefully lifted the corpse and dropped it into an empty bucket in the corner. After he was finished, he dusted his hands together and sat on the chair behind his desk.

“So, how can I help you?” the old man studied each squire and leaned closer. “Is it any potion you want? Any special brew? Or something vintage? How about a beer?”

“We’ve been sent by Nikneferon to collect some of the finest Honeybrew mead,” Hama answered and took out small, red bag of coins and laid it on the wood-carved table. “I hope this would suffice.”

“Hmm... Honeybrew mead?” the wizard turned behind him and examined the rows and columns of vials and stacks of barrels and casks full of drinks. “I think I’ve got a barrel or two around here somewhere.”

While the wizard busily searched around for the mead, Hama took his time looking at his current environment.

From the ceiling, a bronze chandelier hung about ten feet above their heads, casting light from its blazing candles. To the left-hand-side of the two squires, a bookshelf was crammed with books of all sizes. From tiny, thin paperbacks to huge, bulky hardcovers and leather-bound volumes; every book was written by the end of the last decade and had been neatly arranged in arrays. To the right-hand-side, some cauldrons bubbled and frothed with liquids of strange colors. One contained a blue liquid with white swirls. One had violent bubbling and frothing from a red tinge. One even contained a colorless liquid with lime green droplets floating and sinking and floating in a convection cycle. And the smell from those 'potions' were a mixture of some exotic spices mixed with garlic and sugar.

When Hama looked at his leather boots, he found an ornate carpet spread out beneath him.

“Oh, I’ve got it here... somewhere...” the wizard wasn’t making much progress. Partly it was because of his short-sighted vision; partly it was due to too much strain while working late into the night, spending hours alone, thinking about rare magic and taking his own notes among his personal collection of books. “Oh, yes, there we are! There. A gallon of Honeybrew mead. How much do you actually need?”

“Um.. we’ll just take a pint.”

“Oh, no, no! Nikneferon was one of my old friends. He deserves more than just a single pint of this brew. I’d have given it to you for free. Here, take this entire cask for your master,” the wizard smiled with all his heart as he handed the wooden cask to Prejin. “By the way, why does he need mead at this time of the year?”

“He’s making potions,” Hama replied back.

“Potions, is he?” the wise old man stroked his beard. “Could you bring me news about your master from time to time? My name is Rondellof. I was once a sworn protector of

the realm. Until the old king was assassinated. So sad...”

Hama suspiciously glared at Prejin for a quick moment.

They both didn't think the timing was right for hearing such words of sorrow. They walked backwards and made for the open doors.

“Okay, Mr Rondellof, maybe we should leave now. Our master's waiting.”

“Sure... sure... Just drop by my place anytime for a free drink,” the wizard stood up from the chair. Every bone in his body cracked and each tendon contracted as he got to the double doors to bid them away. “Goodbye! And take care now; I hear the roads aren't as safe as they once were.”

The doors slammed shut as soon as they both stepped out of the so-called ‘inn’ which seemed more like a storage cellar or a study for a scholar. Even the fire on the oil lantern's wick was extinguished.

Now the darkness was around them again.

Highly-educated scholars had once walked beneath the stars. But most had fled to Eldron during an age of chaos – a time period that haunted every living creature – against the Orchish invasions. The Orc kingdoms couldn't succeed in bringing the kingdom of Utheros to ruin. A league of powerful mages and paladins had helped remove the stain of devilry away from the sacred foundations of Gondelin.

If only the paladins knew about the current condition of these lands! Let alone sacredness, had the kingdom any good left? Knights no longer fought thieves; they themselves became thieves at the dead of the night and stole villagers' gold, sheep and household items. In short, Gondelin had become a terrible place to live in.

Hama thought about these subjects as he and his partner traced their footsteps back to the main streets. Prejin hefted the wooden cask like a bale of hay on his shoulder. The weight of the treasured mead didn't seem to bother him much.

They arrived at a trading center for spices. They didn't need to look at the inventory of the shops. All they had to do was breathe in the natural fumes to feel the plant material running down their windpipe. The usual hubbub of customers and traders argued, talked and bargained about the goods available for sale.

Cold, rushing winds blew over the people and toppled lightweight objects over. Oil lamps swayed and danced in accordance to the merry tune of a nearby harpist and piper.

Hama searched around for his bag of coins. When he failed, he suggested that he had left the bag back at the 'Purple Whiskers'.

"Let me go and get it back," he tried to convince Prejin to follow him but couldn't. He offered a 50-50 offer to the distribution of the money.

"No, no! I'm not going back to that stranger's sanctum!" Prejin brought the cask down to the ground with a *thud*. "That wizard is a creep. He makes me feel nervous for some reason."

“Fine. Then I’ll go by myself. But give me your blade first!”

“Here. Take it. I don’t need it anymore,” Prejin handed him his hidden assassin-tier blade. “Now don’t come back for a reward from Master. I’m going back to the castle to claim my own gold.”

Hama watched Prejin lift the cask back up to his shoulders and let it rest there. Then Prejin turned south and was walking along the road of Eagle’s Peak.

Eagle’s Peak was the enormous mountain that shed its shadow over Gondelin’s Castle. Its namesake road connected the town of Honeybrew to the rural villages.

With his nose, Hama tasted onion, garlic, cinnamon, clove, mint, oregano, basil, paprika, nutmeg, cardamom, and many other sought-after spices whose names he had read in a book called ‘The Wayner Plants’, compiled by a philosopher who was an expert in studying plants and their uses. Hama couldn’t recall the name of the philosopher though. All his mind thought

about now was the pile of fortune lying on Rondellof's desk.

He knew that the wizard said he wouldn't charge any purchases. All he had to do to pinch the gold coins was to make up an excuse to grab them.

Finally, after dodging another mule cart, a drunkard's spit, and an angry scribe's quill, Hama retraced his steps back to the 'inn'.

He wasn't sure whether to knock or to kick the door open. Everything seemed as lifeless as it was before. Not a single sign of life was to be seen, heard, smelled or felt.

To get rid of the uneasy sensation, he unsheathed his blade and posed to strike. With the blade's fastenings and belt secured to his left wrist, he stretched out his right arm and knocked with his fist. The dark oaken doubled doors echoed like a hollow boulder.

He tried opening the doors inwards but they didn't budge. He pressed his body up against

the wood and pushed. With both hands, he pushed. But nothing happened.

‘That’s weird,’ he thought to himself. ‘A little while ago the door was free as an oiled gear. But now, why is it refraining to open?’

A person cleared their throat behind him. Hama turned to face who it was.

It was the wizard, Rondellof, again. But something was wrong. He wasn’t smiling that friendly smile anymore. Instead, he was frowning. His wand in his hand.

“Well, well, what are you up to, lad?” the wizard used his left hand to throw a charm onto his wand. The wand began to grow longer and longer, till it became a staff. “Hadn’t I told you to return back to your master?” He threw another sparkly charm onto the staff, turning it pearl-white. The top tip of it twisted around a shiny, red diamond-shaped ruby. “Perhaps now the time has come for me to show you my true form.”

He held the staff high, one-handedly, and dropped it down to the earth with a *slam*. The ground cracked where the bottom tip had touched.

“T-there’s no need, sir. No need!” Hama didn’t want to see any more of the wizard’s revelation. “All I need is my bag of coins, sir. That’s all I need.”

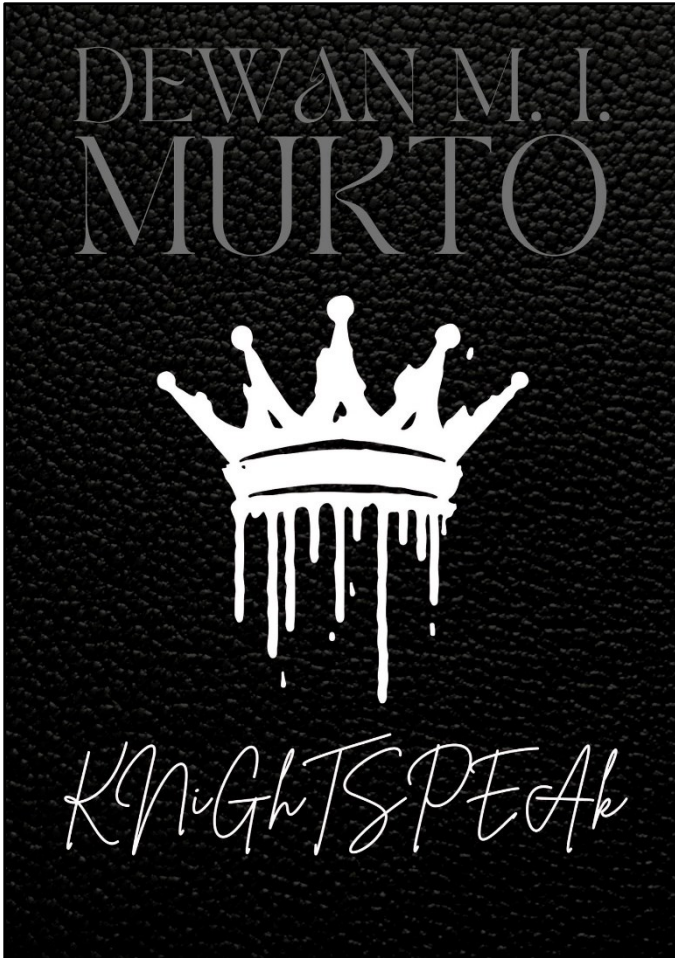
But the wizard wasn’t listening. His eyes turned fully white with power. His energy glowed white throughout his body. His dirty robes fell away to reveal a shade of white light so bright, Hama had to squint to look at him. His entire body was full of light. Night had become day. Only his face, buried amidst tufts of hair, and his hands clutching the staff, was visible.

“You’ve made a big mistake, my boy. Very big, indeed!” the wizard pointed the blood-red ruby, shimmering with energy, at the squire. “Azadon Kezaladeen!”

A bolt of blue charge headed towards Hama.

“Noooo!” Hama tried to stab the wizard with his blade, but all his memories turned to shadow as his soul was blown off by a breeze.

As of now, **Knightspeak**'s first 4 chapters can be found online on Google Play Books.



COOPER BLACK

Genre: Action / Humor / Modern

Year Written: 2016

Year Published: 2023

Status: **Complete**

Hot waves of dusty breeze tackled swiftly across the face of the Sonoran Desert. A tiny wooden shack - roughly built out of pinched timber - accompanied the lonely cacti, dead bushes, and the numerous insects straddling along. The sun played its game of light and beat down a shower of rays onto the thatched roof.

Joe Catshoe Black had seen far warmer summers and temperatures than this. His mouth was grim and silent as a shadow, tensed with a deep fear inflicted in him. Sweat perspired on his forehead and his hands - they had a luster that outmatched ordinary oily glow. Blonde beard tingling of stress, head tilted at an angle like some drunken brawler, he cradled his injured arm

on his lap as shades of a rosy liquid poured out from bullet holes in his flesh.

Joe's mind was stumbling over facts faster than a copy of the latest computer processor. It pained him to recall of the series of events that he'd witnessed, that he'd foreshadowed and dreamed of; he was never sure that one day it might come true.

The past was the past - gone to smoldering ashes and oblivion. The present was a scourge of lost hopes, corrupted hearts, rising chaos, and political power.

The future, yes. Joe finally collected an option from his mental well of ideas. The future still holds the truth. The apex of a trail of corrupted men.

Time was slipping free from the universal hour glass. How could time ever be stopped? It was about time that the glowing embers of previous worldwide wars were about to light the fires of a new revolution. The beginnings of the new era were drawing closer, and so was death inching forward to witness the final moments of Joe Catshoe's life.

His shelter was all he could afford now. His land and money at California were now decaying with the new arrival of an infiltrating army from the biggest country in the world. He'd once lived peacefully with his family, living their dreams of a better tomorrow, a new dawn, a dawn of pure happiness that clarified souls. How stubborn his family had been; they hadn't cared to evacuate on time.

They'd stood rooted to their home, their grove of sacred trees of tradition, not long before the huge planes intruded the airspace and ejected deadly bombs and missiles on the West Coast.

Thinking of the past hurt him more than anything. Joe tasted curdled venom and sunburnt wine, as his mind flashed pictures of his brother retreating after his sister-in-law, while all nearby suburban buildings toppled and collapsed under the weight of deafening booms and bangs and sizzling bombs.

"Ghaaah..." Joe dropped from his chair as the cries resonated inside his mind like echoes from a distant valley of torment. Nostalgia was of two types, and sure enough, the old cowboy was being attacked by the tragic ones.

He resolved to his desk and picked up a ballpoint pen with a hand bandaged from wrist to fingertips. With trembling fingers, he scribbled a note on a piece of paper. He inserted this into a manila envelope and rolled it up into a tube.

His only family had been gone within a flutter of a moth's wing. However, somewhere deep in his heart brittle with sorrow and broken with so many losses, he believed that his nephew, Cooper Black, was still alive.

His last strand of hope to accomplish his dream was in the palms of Cooper, that wasn't until the envelope was delivered.

Pain bubbled and fizzed in the hotspots of his left arm. The hut was providing little

protection from the sun's hobby of boiling the Earth's atmosphere.

In the distance, something buzzed and hummed. It wasn't a bee, and that was sure; bees cannot survive in deserts. The strange disturbing sound appeared closer and louder - like a thousand beats of some humongous insect's wings.

"In the name of---" Joe's eardrums were ringing like a tuning fork struck continuously. The agony of his left wasn't bothering him anymore. He knew that his arm was as good as dead. His bloody arm limply dangled loosely as he rose from the chair again and walked over to a corner of the barely two square meter hut, where a tool of defense awaited him. "Now this'll come in handy. Hmm...handy and powerful, indeed."

The deafening beat of the flying object was about to be answered by a M1014 shotgun. In the field of handling guns, the forefathers of the Blackburn family tree were never beaten

and always respected; Joe Black belonged to this family.

He slipped a chain free from the indoor lock mechanism and proceeded to step outside, in the scorching world of sunlight borne from the smiling sizzling sun. The pupils of his eyes took their time and slowly adjusted to the sudden gradient from dark to light. By squinting heavily, the helicopter could be seen shining like obsidian in the near hand horizon.

'Russians' was the first thought that struck his mind. His hands willed to shoot it down with brute force, although he wasn't 100% sure that it was part of the usurpers' military.

The helicopter was a giant black beetle clad in heavy armor, so shotgun shells and bullets were worthless in contact. The AH-64 slowly flew around the visible corners of the desert, according to Joe Black's point of vision, before turning towards his hut's direction. What were the pilots thinking? Were they going nuts?

"Speak of the devil," Joe felt uneasy as the helicopter started to descend, the distance between him and the machine vehicle decreasing with each second. His right armpit tucked the shotgun into a stable position as his hand fingered the little trigger that controlled the outflow of shots.

After trudging helplessly, Vandermann's throat was as dry as a piece of sandpaper lying in the middle of the Sonoran Desert for weeks. He was indeed in the Sonoran Desert. He was an U.S. Marine, and Marines were all real tough guys. But what could he do, when all the tough guys are down, killed by some nasty Russian paramilitary? The Russians had captured the entire west coast of America, to get their dirty hands on the damn nukes beneath the Yucca Mountains. The U.S. president had sent for the American troops to go ahead and intercept. But what could they do, in the heat, the unbearable heat, of the desert that lay between the mission destination, and the army base?

Obviously, the Marines had to use aircraft to get there, right? Well, they did. But on the way, Sgt. Vandermann Vugerton's helicopter had suffered an engine failure. So he and his partner, both escaped from the chopper, before it hit the sandy ground, and exploded. They found a tiny wooden hut, where a cowboy was lurking in the shadows. Vandy's assistant had a fight with the guy, but the guy had a damn Remington 870 shotgun. So there was a bang! bang! and both the cowboy and Vandy's assistant, dropped to the ground, covered in blood.

In his dying moments, the cowboy, named Joe Catshoe, handed Vandy some letters, crammed into an envelope.

"Take them," the cowboy had said, spitting a bit of blood out of his lip as he spoke. "And give them to my nephew, Cooper Blackburn. But when you...when you'll hand these...these letters...tell him..."

"Tell him what?" Vandermann took the envelope from Joe's severed hand. "Tell him what, sir?"

"Tell him...that...ahh..." the cowboy's body gave a quick jolt, and his words barely escaped from his mouth. The last bit of info was really crucial, but Vandermann missed it. Too bad.

So there he was, walking along the cursed sand, with no hope left in mind. But hope reappeared, in the form of a vehicle.

His right hand clutched the envelope tightly, to protect it from the harsh, dusty desert winds blowing from the southeastern direction. His eyes stung from being assaulted by sand grains. His M4A1 carbine rifle was hanging from his back, swinging this way and that.

Here follows a bit of a brief biography of this newly-met character.

In the year 1740, Vandermann's great great great father's grandfather had settled in Arizona of the United States from an ancient town called 'Chinkinaliknalcholi' from Peru in South America.

In 1989, Vandermann was born – in a subway tunnel. His birth was a disaster indeed. As soon as he was out in the world, his parents' train clashed with another incoming train from the opposite direction. During the impact, Baby Vandy had been thrown off through an open window by his mother, with tearful eyes, as both parents were crushed to death. Due to some miracle, the boy had survived with only a few bruises as he had landed on another woman's lap through the window of another passing-by train. So you could say that Vugerton learnt to do acrobatic stunts from the time when he was still in nappies!

The woman who found him was the depressed Mrs Vugerton, who always wanted a son. She was praying for a child when suddenly, in her hands, was a live one! She was so impressed by God's blessings that she gave up smoking for a month!

Thirteen years later, Vandermann's fighting abilities could be seen in his hobby of collecting pictures of war, maps of war-torn

countries and watching movies full of violence (and war).

He was immediately taken to a military school where he launched his first assault (demonstrated his talent). In a few hours, he worked out a cross-country battlefield defense maneuver technique, which he performed in front of an Army General. He got an instant diploma and was rushed for training.

After a number of years, he had his first real-life war experience. It took him only 3 minutes and 47 seconds to destroy the enemy base. All of this was the cause of an ‘accident’.

While he was testing the turret of an M1A1 tank, he accidentally stepped on the accelerator while the tank’s gear was in reverse. As he pulled a lever, thinking it was the gear shift, he had elevated the turret upwards by 25°. It was all thanks to a tiny fly which landed on a button, after stinging Vanderman, that his hand went to swat the insect. Instead, he hit the button. Big

mistake! The button was the launcher of the turret cannon, which shot a heavy 120 mm shell towards the enemy frontlines in the North. The shell pierced through the fences and exploded over the enemy headquarters – due to some thankful defects in that particular shell itself.

The Russian encampment (the enemy) got shocked to such an extent that they instantly began departing away from the States to gather more reinforcements.

And the rest is history.

Now.... Back to the present....

In the horizon, he could spot a few clumps of cacti, and dead bushes and scrubs. Nothing interesting, just regular desert crap. The sky was an ever-blue blanket of infinite proportions, cloudless, and bright with hue. Usual weather. Nothing fun, nothing extraordinary. Just the lonely, sandy desert. Typical.

Slowly, a soft rumbling of an engine drifted towards his ears. It was a 4x4 jeep, by the

looks of it, mounted by soldiers and cowboys. Great, so now more shitty cowboys were coming to take revenge for what Vandy's comrade had done to that old wretch. Hostile or not, he wasn't so sure. The sun was burning the back of his head. This had to be it. He deserved medical help, ASAP. And chance was peeking at his opportunity.

"Hey! Stop! Stop-halt!" Vandermann raised and waved his arms, to try to grab their attention. And sure enough, he did. The jeep decelerated calmly. But sand slipped through the tire treads easily.

"Yeah, how may we help you?" a cowboy with black aviators and big jaws spoke on behalf of the driver, sitting beside him. "Speak!"

"Um...I'm a Marine, so learn to respect men of high order. But that's not the reason I stopped you. I need help, sirs. Get me to a city or human settlement. I lost my air transport vehicle. So please let me in your gang."

"Okay, we'll see about that!" The tough-looking cowboy sunk into deep thought, for

a while. He was wearing black in everything, except for the yellow outer jacket. A black cowboy hat sheltered his shoulder-length hair, dark as black. "Are you part of, or in association with, or allied with the Russian forces?"

"No, sir."

"Then what the hell are you doing, standing there, homie! Get in. Our gang is free and friendly to those who oppose against the damn Russians. We are a type of rebellion force, run by agencies back at New York. Ever heard of the Mission Integrated Workforce (MIW) or the Integrated Mission Force (MBC), buddy? Those are our sponsors! And this—" he widened his arms, indicating that he meant the jeep. "—is our mode of transport. Like or not, we'd have chosen you to join us, even if you hadn't tried to stop us. And do you need anything else, homie?"

"I need to see Cooper Black..." he showed him the envelope. "To give him this."

"Oh, in that case..." the cowboy loaded a Colt.45 pistol. "You are certainly welcome to come with us."

Vandermann gulped, as he slid into the space available at the back of the jeep, between the two soldiers.

"So when do I get to him?" he asked after a couple of minutes.

The cowboy beside the driver grinned.

"My dear friend, you already did!" he shot a round into the heart of the sky. Vandermann understood.

As of now, physical copies of **Cooper Black** can be found via the following ISBNs:

- 9798880654475 (Paperback)
- 9781446748886 (Paperback)
- 9781446638897 (Hardback)
- 9781446640715 (Paperback)

And online on Webnovel, Wattpad and Google Play Books.



ACTION HEROES

Genre: Action / Humor / Modern

Year Written: 2015

Year Published: 2023

Status: **Complete**

It was about time before Major Mord Dickens got his hands on the 5:FT, the greatest weapon on Earth. John Luther, the first eyewitness of the incident, had managed to call someone from the MIW, a secret organization that had the total control over the Symbiocyte Pharmaceuticals.

The very particular person's name was Harrison Garison, the great and skilled gunman agent of both the MBC and the MIW. Harrison had just returned from a hard month's work and wanted to take a vacation. He decided to go back to New York and settle there for a few years.

The plane landed at the local airport. A truck with a staircase came up to the door as it opened slowly, as if it didn't want to

show itself in the hot-baked sunlight of the fresh autumn wind.

As the door was fully open, two men wearing black men-in-black coats with brownish-grey pants proudly stepped outside. The two men both looked the same, almost the same: one of the two had a moustache and was black, the other was handsome and wore a pair of black aviators.

They walked briskly to the black limousine that was parked on freshly-picked gravel.

"Well, Mr. Garrison, I hope you're not spending your time here in NY," the man sitting next to the driver asked. He, too, was dressed in black. "Because I heard this place is full of blockheaded idiots and violent mafias. Certainly, I don't want you messing around with these sorts of people."

"It's all okay, sir," Harrison replied. "As long as I'm in my country, I've got no one to fear."

The limousine had an in-built radio and MP3 player that was playing MH21's (now named Mahir Beats) "Flight".

"Yes, and you know, last night I got a call from someone named John Luther. He was asking for you, Mr. Garison. I think he needs help or something."

"You can't always judge people by their names or their face," the man next to Garison blurted out. "You need to see their actions then judge their qualities."

"Okay," the man in the car announced. "I think we'll be taking our leave now. Goodbye and goodluck, Mr. Garison."

"You too, Jim Buavora."

The men got into the limo and sped off to Los Angeles, leaving Harrison Garison alone.

"Phew!" he sighed. "It's getting hot in here. Better take a taxi."

Later, on the same day, but at night, Harrison reached his old living quarters that he once used to live in, before he joined the MBC.

In front of him lies the most unusual type of housing, that a man like Harrison could afford. He could've afforded a stay at a five-star hotel or even a mansion, but yet, he likes to live in places where he can get reminded of the precious, old memories of his previous days. All around him is noise and air pollution. People walking, children crying, cars honking, cops shouting, thieves running, drug cartels smoking,

robbers shooting, glass breaking, etc. was the usual noise produced near his housing.

The building where Harrison was staying was an old, 1980s, deteriorated motel named Lucky Charms. After a few years, the people started to become corrupt and greedy. They spray-painted tags all over the brick walls till it looked a slum house. The same thing was done to the entire neighborhood, creating the new name for this area: The Monster's Grave.

It was home to the world's biggest, deadliest, and meanest thieves, thugs, burglars, and robbers alike.

"Hmm...the building's looking too old nowadays. When will these stupid people learn to respect and take care of each other?" Harrison said to himself with a sigh as he took his suitcase and knocked on the door.

"Who the heck are you?" an elderly man answered the door with a shotgun in his hand. "Don't you know what time it is?"

"Whoa! Chill, chill, sir. Please calm down. There's no need to get angry at me! I only need the key to my apart-"

The door closed with a thud.

"-ment."

Harrison checked his watch.

[11:43 pm]

He had to find a way into his apartment. The motel was 5-storeys high. The 4th storey belongs to Harrison Garison.

Harrison looked around his environment. There was not a sound, not a trace of life on the streets tonight. He took out a 9mm pistol from the suitcase and left it there. He was glad that he had brought a few

weapons with him, if not for defense or killing people, surely for scaring people.

He strode off to the door again, but this time, he didn't knock or anything. He directly kicked the door open and stopped the old man at gunpoint.

"You'd better take me to my apartment soon. Or this pretty little bullet shall lodge into your blockheaded brain and will send your soul to the hands of God," Harrison said in a commanding voice. "Hurry up, you stupid schmuck!"

"O-o-okay," the old man stammered. "As you w-wish my li-liege."

One thing that Garison had learnt from all these years of experience is that: Everyone does as you say when you face them at gunpoint.

Garison's apartment was not at all, in a bit, as it once was. The floor was covered with litter.

Paper, magazines, pizza slices, dead flies, CDs, and lots of ketchup was spread out like a carpet on top of the polished granite floors.

The smell was generally fatty foods, and musk mixed with cologne. The evidence was already there. It was crystal clear that...

"Someone's been here in my apartment!" he cried, red with rage. "I won't spare him at all costs!"

Harrison dropped the contents of his suitcase on the floor and sank into his bed, that was sticky with hair oil and sweat. Before he could even know it, he fell back asleep...deeply asleep. He was too tired. Whoever the culprit was, he could wait until tomorrow.

Then, a few minutes later, his phone started ringing. Harrison couldn't believe his luck.

Yet he answered, still dozing from his sleep,
"Hello, Garrison speaking. Who is this?"

"Mr. Garrison, we need to talk. It's urgent."

The storyline of **Action Heroes** had been derived from **MIW New Dawn** and later integrated into **Cooper Black**.



Concept Art 6: Cooper Black and Harrison Garison

MIW NEW DAWN

Genre: Fan Fiction (M:I:III New Dawn – Max Payne 2 mod)

Year Written: 2014

Year Published: 2023

Status: **Complete**

It was about time before Major Sean Dickens got his hands on the ‘5:FT’, the greatest weapon on Earth. John Luther, the first eye witness of the incident, had managed to call someone from the MIW, a secret organization that controlled the Biocyte Pharmaceuticals.

His name was Ethan Hunt, who was a good shooter when it comes to handling weapons.

Ethan’s mission was to find out more about Sean Dickens and about Biocyte. Hunt had always a feeling that something was wrong between MIW and IMF. And now, the story begins...

“Alwat?” Luther screamed through the phone as if it was a microphone. “I always thought

that Alwat was not a person but a thing. A... thing.”

“No can do, sir,” Ethan said on the other end of the line. “Looks like the place used to be a gun workshop, but the cleaners must’ve swept all those weapons clean.”

“Where did you find Alwat’s body anyway?”

“Oh, I found him lying on the floor in a small pool of blood when I came in from the back door of the basement. And right now, there’s [gun sounds]... um... can’t talk now... bye.”

“Wait, Ethan, ETHAN! No!!!”

“[rifle sounds]”

“Ethan, talk to me buddy, just one word.”

“[more gun sounds]... um... I’m kind of busy right now... [shouts]...”

“What was that?”

“Luther, come quickly to my location. Help needed. Too many thugs. Run out of bullets.”

“Okay Ethan, hang on, I’m coming...”

This story had been modified and updated to turn into the basis for Action Heroes. The only physical copy is a 89-page hand-written manuscript.



Concept Art 7: Cooper Black and John Luther

Congratulations on reading through ten years of my writing history!

You have become a witness to my evolution throughout the decade-long journey of how a collection of video games had inspired me to embark on my own original stories and characters.

P.S. Miyumi Rakkan from One One One is actually an OC (original character) of Maliha Rasul.

All illustrations and concept artwork were generated via A.I. (artificial intelligence) image generation software.

Thanks for reading **Sun of a Beach**.