

William

Chapter 1

There's a small, quiet village named " Angel Haven " where everyone knows everyone and things move slowly. A young boy, WILLIAM CROSS, walks through the bustling marketplace, a small, curious smile on his face as he watches children run by and shopkeepers chat with familiar customers.

His eyes are sharp, as if he's cataloging every detail, every secret. And that's where his eyes meets the very incident that was perfectly timed. An old woman purchasing fish from a shopkeeper happily as if she plans for having a dinner date with her beloved husband.

Everything seemed fine until a guy in his 30's came and gave a terror look at the shopkeeper. They had a silent conversation with their eyes. It wasn't even seconds that the shopkeeper took back the fish from lady and gave it to the man and returned her money.

Helpless woman saw this scene in sorrow as the manifestation was shattered in pieces right before her very eyes. There's a reason why people hate being old, because they feel helpless. So did the woman in the scene. The man went away taking the fish without giving the money leaving both the shopkeeper and woman in acute pain but chronic fear.

Shopkeeper : I'm really sorry miss but if I wouldn't have...

Old woman : Its ok dear. If I were you, might would have did the same. Take care of yourself young man.

And after saying that, she vanished in the crowd leaving her tears on the footsteps of shop. William Cross saw this whole incident and glanced at shopkeeper curious to know what's the reason that made him commit that. He absorbed the whole situation making him also a part of it and being a part means you can contribute a scene. He passed right in front of the shop looking at the owner who was also looking upset with the thing he did with her loyal customer of years.

Forward he glanced at the man going slowly towards the exit of the market. His walk was so normal just like every other innocent in the market.

William started following where the man was heading. After 20 minutes of intense follow-up, he reached to gravestone where non to be found but the dead. The man specifically ceased his search at a tombstone. William paced up and stood behind him. Man sensed someone's presence and with low voice raised a question:

“ For how long I have to do this, Mr CROSS ?”

William with a smile replied-

William : Till I am satisfied.

Man turns around with a tight grip on fish and with subtle anger he looks into 20 year old boy eyes.

Man : Its the 8th time you're saying this to me.

William : Eight times, yes. But with each time, the thrill is new.

The man's grip gets even tighter, a metaphorical lifeline in a web of unspoken secrets. William notices the tremor in the man's hand - fear, or something closer to desperation?

William : Cmon mrs Wilson. Holding too tight won't bring fish to life.

Wilson: You don't understand the price of silence.

William steps closer. The graveyard around them feels like a silent witness to their confrontation. The name on the gravestone - EMMA CROSS - seems to pulse with unspoken history.

William : Price ? Nice choice of words you got there.

William takes away the fish from his hands and starts to walk away from him. "It was so so wrong", the words started echoing in Wilson's head. From anger to sorrow, the shift of emotions was witnessed by the graves of humans. Wilson looked upon the clouds, closed his eyes hoping to ask one last question which means a world to him. But no matter how many times he had asked that, the reply from the other side was never received. Still with broken hope and air in his lungs, he opened his eyes and asked

Wilson : **Is my daughter safe ?**

But there was non to answer that, as William already left the place.

William's home

Carrying a plate of fish and chips that filled the air with the mouthwatering scent of golden batter and salt, William pushed open the creaky door to his room. The dim light of a single desk lamp casted a long, flickering shadow across the walls, dancing in sync with the movement of the curtain that swayed gently in the breeze from the half-open window. He set the plate on his study table carefully and pulled out a small ketchup packet, tearing it open with his teeth.

"Brought your favourite sauce this time," he said casually.

From the far-left corner, the old wooden cupboard rattled slightly, its hinges groaning as if in protest. William's lips curled into a smirk. He walked over, the sound of his footsteps muffled against the worn carpet. He tapped on the cupboard door with his knuckles. "Knock knock," he said, his tone playful, waiting for a reply.

The cupboard was silent. He tilted his head, pretending to listen for a sound, but the seconds stretched on, heavy and silent, broken only by the faint ticking of the clock on the wall.

"Alright then," he muttered under his breath, gripping the handle. At exactly the 49th second of wait for a reply, he swung the door open.

A girl tumbled out with a sharp cry, head aimed straight at him. But William, with a practiced sidestep, dodged easily, leaving her to crash unceremoniously onto the floor. She hit the ground with a painful *thud*.

“Well, miss,” he said, peering down at her, his smirk widening, “you didn’t say ‘Who’s there?’”

The girl groaned, her face contorted in pain as she glared up at him. The ropes binding her wrists and ankles were expertly tied, and a handkerchief gag muffled her angry mutterings. Her eyes, however, were sharp, full of unyielding defiance.

William crouched beside her, tilting his head as if inspecting a curious artifact. “Mean face suits you,” he quipped before standing and grabbing the plate of food from the desk. Setting it down near her, he reached out and untied the gag.

“It’s fish and chips today!” he announced, his tone was cheerful, almost childlike, as he held up the plate victoriously.

The girl spat out a few loose threads from the gag and glared at him. “I’m not eating this!”

William chuckled, leaning back on his heels. “Your father gave it to me,” he said nonchalantly, as if discussing the weather.

The girl stiffened, her glare intensifying. “What do you want from us?” she demanded, her voice was trembling slightly.

William’s smirk didn’t waver. “If I really told you,” he said slowly, savouring each word, “you wouldn’t be able to give it to me.”

She glared harder, but her composure was cracking, her uneven breathing betraying the fear she was trying so desperately to suppress.

“You’re a monster,” she spat.

William didn’t react immediately. Instead, he sat cross-legged on the floor, the plate balanced neatly on his knee. He picked up a piece of fish, its golden crust glistening under the lamplight, and dipped it into the ketchup. He took a deliberate bite, his gaze locked on hers.

“A monster?” he repeated, raising an eyebrow. He chewed slowly, deliberately, savouring the bite as if mocking her with his indifference.

The girl’s hands twitched against the ropes. Her eyes darted to the door and back again, her mind visibly racing, no doubt searching for a plan, any plan.

William noticed. He always noticed.

“Don’t bother,” he said, his voice calm but with an underlying sharpness that sent chills through the air. “I tied those knots myself. You’re not going anywhere, Amy.”

The mention of her name hit her like a slap. She flinched, her defiance flickering for just a moment.

William leaned closer, his expression softening in mock sympathy. “Uh huh,” he said, his voice almost a whisper. “You’ll get used to it.”

It was that moment—the doorbell rang, breaking the unsettling stillness of the house. William rose from the floor, leaving her behind without a second glance as if he couldn't care less whether she dared to escape or not. Reaching the front door, he opened it to reveal his beloved, hapless, and permanent source of secondhand embarrassment—Charlie.

Charlie stood there, his ever-present goofy grin barely masking the weight of his failures. He was the type of guy who, despite repeatedly failing his grades and earning a semester-back, still clung to the pipe dream of an academic comeback. To most, it was nothing short of delusion—a joke he played on himself—but for William, it was Charlie's unwavering optimism that made him tolerable. That, and the fact that Charlie was the first person to share a seat with him on their very first day of college.

Some bonds were unshakable, even if they were forged in chaos.

William leaned against the doorframe, arms crossed. "So... did you pass the second semester this time?"

Charlie's face crumpled into a melodramatic pout as he let out an exaggerated wail. "Brooo! Just missed by 3 marks, freaking tough paper it was."

"Amen, Charlie," William muttered with a sigh, his expression weary. "Anyways, goodbye."

But before William could shut the door, Charlie wedged himself in, his usual relentless energy refusing to be dismissed so easily. "Wait! Where are you off to, cool kid? Robert Pattison, lurking in the shadows."

William rolled his eyes, the weight of Charlie's antics both exasperating and oddly comforting.

"Look, man, I've got some stuff to handle today," William said, his tone casual but firm. "Let's meet some other time."

Charlie, however, was as stubborn as ever. Without a word, he planted his foot against the door and shoved it open, sending William stumbling back onto the floor. Ignoring the chaos he'd just caused, Charlie made a beeline for the kitchen, rummaging through cabinets like he owned the place.

The kitchen, usually a haven of quiet comfort, felt stifling tonight. The air was heavy with an unspoken tension that prickled at the back of William's neck. He stood beside the kitchen door, watching Charlie rummage through the cupboards like a ferret in a pantry.

"Aha!" Charlie exclaimed triumphantly, holding up a packet of Oreo strawberry biscuits like a trophy. "Knew you had the good stuff hidden somewhere!"

William leaned against the doorframe, arms folded tightly across his chest. "Do you ever ask before raiding someone else's kitchen?" he asked.

Charlie, utterly unbothered, tore into the packet and stuffed a biscuit into his mouth. "Why bother? You never say no," he replied through a mouthful of crumbs, gesturing dismissively with one hand.

William's gaze flicked to the window. It was dark outside, the kind of darkness that seemed alive, pressing against the glass with a weight that made the hairs on the back of his neck stand on end. He shook the feeling off. It was just another long night, he told himself.

But then, the whisper came.

Faint at first, like the rustling of leaves.

“Why is he here? Why do you tolerate him?”

William straightened abruptly. His eyes darted around the room. “What did you just say?” he demanded, his voice low and taut.

Charlie froze, mid-dunk of a biscuit into milk. He raised an eyebrow. “Say what?”

“That. What you just said.”

Charlie shrugged. “Mate, I haven’t said a word in at least 30 seconds. Too busy enjoying these biscuits, which, by the way, are amazing. You should try one.”

William ignored him, his attention caught by something at dining table of the kitchen. The shadow in the room seemed... restless. The long fingers of darkness creeping out from beneath the dining table didn’t felt like shadow at all. He rubbed his eyes and went to the kitchen sink, his breath catching when he caught sight of an unknown figure upon the glass of cabinet which was above the sink.

It was only for an instant—a flicker, like a spark before it died—but it was there.

His eyes widened and breath got sharper.

Mysterious figure eyes were too sharp, the smirk too cruel, as if he knew something William didn’t.

The grip with which he held the sink got hard and feet started to shiver as if the cold air entered through his ears. Charlie noticed this.

“Alright, you’re acting weird,” Charlie said, breaking the silence. He came closer to William and with teasing grin on his face said, “Don’t tell me you’ve seen a ghost.”

“I’m fine,” William snapped, a little too quickly.

Charlie snorted, unconvinced. “If you say so.”

Later that night, after Charlie had left, William went to the garage to look at his sports bike which his mother gifted him. The bike was the last thing which reminded him of her. He paced restlessly, the faint smell of oil and metal filling the air. The silence here was even heavier than in the kitchen, thick and suffocating. He ran a hand through his hair, trying to make sense of the evening.

He’d been working too hard, that was it. Too many sleepless nights, too much pressure. The whispers, the reflection—just tricks of an overtired mind. He needed rest. That were his brain 1st thoughts.

But then it happened again.

“Finally, some peace and quiet.”

The voice cut through the silence like a knife.

William spun around, his heart hammering in his chest. The garage was empty. Shadows danced along the walls, casted by the single flickering bulb overhead.

“Who’s there?” he demanded, his voice hoarse.

No answer.

But as he turned back to the workbench, something caught his eye. And then he saw it.

A look-alike figure.

But not quite.

The figure in the leaned casually against the workbench, arms folded, a smirk playing on its lips. It wasn’t an Alien. Not really. The features were sharper, more defined, as if someone had chiseled away the softness to reveal something harder, more dangerous. **A Human.** His face was marginally visible.

“Looks like we finally have some time alone,” the human said, its voice smooth and mocking.

William stumbled back, nearly tripping over a toolbox. “What is this? Who are you?”

The human tilted its head, the smirk widening. “Now, now, don’t play dumb. You know who I am.”

“No,” William whispered, shaking his head. “You’re not real. You’re just... I’m imagining this.”

The human laughed—a low, chilling sound that seemed to echo far longer than it should have. “Oh, William. You can’t run from me forever. I’m the only thing that’s **real.**”

The shadows around the garage seemed to ripple, bending like water drawn to a whirlpool. The human stepped closer.

“And I’m not going anywhere,” it whispered, the smirk twisting into something far darker.

William backed away, his chest tightening as the shadows closed in. He turned and fled the garage, the human’s laughter trailing behind him like a predator in the dark.

“Name’s Edward !” The voice sliced through the air, cold and commanding from the human.

The Playground

William’s heart skipped a beat, and his entire body froze as a chill ran down his spine. His breath hitched. His mind couldn’t process what he just heard. The man’s words echoed in his ears, heavy with authority. His legs, weak with shock, carried him out of the house before he could think. This... *this* wasn’t real.

As he dashed through the empty streets, the world blurred around him, the darkened houses seeming to close in, the shadows stretching longer, more sinister, as if they were alive. He could feel the sharp sting in his neck again, like a knife twisting with each heartbeat. The pain between his eyes pulsed with each step he took, but he couldn’t stop. He wouldn’t stop.

At last, he stumbled into the playground, breath ragged, his chest heaving as if the air itself was too thick to breathe. The world around him felt distorted, like the very ground beneath him wasn't real. The playground stood in the eerie silence of the night, the swings swaying slightly as if moved by an unseen hand. The air was heavy with the scent of wet earth and something else... something metallic, faintly unsettling. He sank onto the nearest bench, his hands gripping his knees, his eyes downcast, fighting the tears that threatened to spill.

"Mom..." His voice cracked as he whispered, and his sobs came in heavy, uncontrollable waves. *"I feel so alone... I don't want to live in this world without you..."* His hands trembled as they clutched at the fabric of his jeans, his body wracked with the unbearable weight of grief.

The wind shifted, rustling the leaves in the trees like a soft whisper, but there was no comfort in it. Then came the voice, soft but sharp, slithering into his thoughts:

"Dumb fuck. How will your story stand different from others if you quit so soon?"

William's heart lurched, his pulse quickened. His breath caught in his throat, and goosebumps pricked at his skin. He didn't look up, couldn't bring himself to look. Instead, he clenched his fists, trying to steady himself. But the voice... it was too real. Too close.

A shadow fell over him from front, stretching across the ground like a dark stain. Slowly, it emerged from the murky depths of the night, drawing nearer with an uncanny calmness.

As it came into view, William's breath caught in his throat. He was taller than William, with messy dark hair that framed a sharply handsome face. The black t-shirt and red jacket he wore seemed oddly out of place in the otherwise dull surroundings, like a burst of colour against a canvas of darkness. The world around them seemed to grow quieter, as though it too were holding its breath.

William's heart thundered, but he couldn't bring himself to look away, even as his mind screamed for him to deny the truth. He stared at the ground, forcing himself not to acknowledge Edward's presence. To hide his tears, he looked down at his knees.

But Edward broke the silence with the words that cut through like a blade.

"You don't have to hide those watery eyes, Willy. I can see them just fine." Edward's voice was soft, but his tone carried a weight that William couldn't ignore. "You've planned so well up until now. So why stop? What makes you want to quit?"

William's hands clenched into fists as he tried to force the words back down, but his heart twisted painfully. He refused to answer. He didn't want to acknowledge this *thing*—this *person*—who somehow knew too much.

But then, without warning, Edward moved swiftly, his hand connecting with William's cheek in a sharp slap that sent him tumbling off the bench. The impact was so real, so painfully true, that it knocked the wind out of him.

Edward stood over him, his face unreadable. "Before you start mumbling excuses," he said, his voice dangerously calm, "let me remind you of something. **I'm Edward Cross, your big brother.** I'm not some figment of your imagination, so stop thinking like that, alright?"

William's head spun. He wanted to scream, to tell Edward to leave him alone, but the words wouldn't come.

“You think you’ve been losing your mind, don’t you? Ever since mom was murdered, it’s like your world shattered inside you. I’ve seen it, Willy. Those night episodes... You’re fine during the day, but when the darkness falls, you start forgetting. And I’ve tried everything—doctors, therapies—they all say it’s something they’ve never seen before. But I’m not helpless. I’m your brother, and I’ll find a way to cure this.”

William felt a strange rush of confusion, followed by a flood of anger. How could this be real? How could this person—*this thing*—be standing before him, claiming to be his brother? He grabbed a handful of sand from the ground, his hands trembling, and threw it at Edward’s eyes in a frantic attempt to block out the nightmare that was unfolding.

Edward blinked, brushing the sand away from his face with a slight frown. “Willy, we can’t keep Amy for long.” His voice dropped to a grave whisper. “We have to switch places, or we’re doomed.”

The words hung in the air, thick and heavy, as the night around them seemed to close in tighter, more suffocating with every passing second.

William’s room

Edward strode into William’s room, his heart pounding with worry. The moment his eyes scanned the scene, he stopped cold. The ropes that had bound Amy lay severed on the floor, the jagged shards of a broken plate scattered nearby. Leftover fish and chips were smeared across the carpet in chaotic streaks.

Edward chuckled darkly, leaning against the doorframe. “Of course,” he muttered, shaking his head. “The worst-case scenario. Brilliant.”

Amy was gone. And without her, everything hung by a thread. Wilson didn’t need much—just her as a witness—to bring the Cross brothers to ruin. If Edward couldn’t fix this, they were finished.

Grabbing the bike keys from the table, he shoved his helmet. He walked briskly to the garage, mounted his bike, and roared off into the night, heading to the only place he could think William might go.

The Bar

The bar was alive with noise and activity. Men crowded around a pool table, cheering and laughing, while others sat at the bar, nursing beers and tearing into plates of grilled chicken wings. An old television flickered above, the sound of the news barely audible over the raucous chatter.

Luke, the bartender, glanced up from wiping glasses. His eyes landed on a boy who looked out of place. William sat hunched at the bar, his expression distant and heavy. Something about the boy’s sadness stirred Luke’s compassion.

“You look like you could use something to eat,” Luke offered, his voice kind but firm.

William ignored Luke. The memories of his mother—her murder—were too heavy, and the bar’s cheerful atmosphere only made his grief feel sharper. Emma Cross had been everything after his father died on the battlefield. And now, with her gone, the void seemed endless.

Luke leaned closer, trying again. “How about a chilled fruit beer? On the house, just for you.”

William hesitated at first but seeing genuine look at Luke face, he grabbed the glass.

“What’s your name?” William asked.

“Luke. Around here, people call me ‘**BLACK**,’ but trust me, i’m here because the pay’s good.”

William managed a faint smile. He nodded his thanks, took the beer, and walked outside the bar, where the night air was cool. Stars dotted the sky, faint against the glow of city lights. He spotted a table and approached it, only to find someone already sitting there.

“Would you mind if I join you?” William asked quietly.

The man turned, smirking. “Why not, Willy?”

William’s chest tightened. That voice. It was Edward. Without thinking, he hurled the fruit beer at Edward’s face, anger spilling out of him.

“I was born ALONE!” William’s voice trembled as he shouted. “I never had a brother! And I’m not stupid—I know something’s wrong with me. That’s why you feel so alive to me.”

The commotion drew a crowd. Onlookers murmured, confused and intrigued. But when they looked closer, they realised William wasn’t even yelling at Edward—he was yelling at the bike.

Among the crowd stood a man with a RedBull in hand, an unusual sight in the lively bar. He wore a dark olive-green shirt and off-white pants, his blue eyes studying William closely. Setting his RedBull can down, he stepped forward.

“Shut the hell up!” the man barked, silencing the onlookers. “And the rest of you, clear out. Let the boy be.”

William turned sharply, his fists clenched. “Wait, Mrs. Justice. Who the hell are you, and what gives you the right to tell me to shut up?”

The man smirked, folding his arms. “Name’s Cavil,” he said smoothly. “Your new journalist in town with lot of powerful connections—.”

But before he could complete William spoke in between-

“Once, my father told me,” he began, his voice calm but cutting, “that if a man has to use connections to win rather than himself, he’s not smart—he’s just a dependent donkey. That’s what you look like to me, Mr. Cavil.”

Cavil raised an eyebrow, clearly amused. “Weren’t we talking about rights? But look at you, mistaking it for a competition. Listen, kid, grab a book or two—you’ve got a long way to go. Lucky you, I’m in a good mood today and It’s my first day in town too, so I’ll let it slide.”

William’s eyes narrowed, his voice dropping to a warning. “Then let me save you some spoilers. Good journalists in this town don’t last long.”

Cavil smirked, his eyes glinting with mischief. “Who said I am a *good* journalist?” With that, he turned and walked away, leaving William bristling with frustration.

Edward, still drenched in fruit beer, sighed and ran a hand down his face. “So, we finally meet a hero, huh?” He gestured at William sarcastically. “Listen, Willy, i’ve found Amy. She’s at the back of this bar tied up but really tight this time.”

William’s frustration was palpable as he brushed past Edward, ignoring his presence entirely. His instincts screamed that the Edward’s words were a lie, but the mention of his mother lingered in his mind, nagging at his conscience. Against his better judgment, he decided to check the back of the bar.

The alley behind the bar was eerily quiet, shrouded in shadows. The air was damp, and a single flickering light barely illuminated the area. In the distance, he spotted a lone man having a drink, the man’s face obscured in the darkness.

But there was no sign of Amy.

Disgusted, William turned to head back to the bar’s front but before he could take a step, Edward appeared out of nowhere and struck him hard in the chest with a swift, calculated kick. William hit the ground hard, the wind knocked out of him.

“So, you think you can disrespect me in front of everyone and I’ll just let it slide?” Edward loomed over him, his voice low and menacing. “Learn to respect your elders, Willy.”

Before William could respond, the man from the alley approached, his steps calm and deliberate. He extended a hand, helping William to his feet.

“Whoa there, kid. Took a nasty fall, huh?” The man’s tone was casual, even friendly.

William being on ground muttered, “I’m fine. Thanks.”

The man smirked. “Next time, plant your feet better, Willy.”

William froze, his eyes narrowing. His gaze darted back to the man’s face—it was **Edward**. Yet when he turned to the spot where Edward had been standing moments ago, no one was there.

The realisation sent a chill down his spine. He clenched his fists, his patience finally snapping. The endless games, the surreal episodes—they all pressed down on him, and he desired for the daylight. But it was barely 1 am., and the oppressive night still had its grip on him.

Without hesitation, William spun on his heel and launched a powerful kick in the laying position, executing a perfect cartwheel kick that connected squarely with Edward’s face. The blow staggered Edward, who stumbled back, momentarily stunned.

William didn’t stop. He charged forward, grabbing Edward by the collar. His voice was sharp and demanding. “Okay, big brother of mine, let’s play a little game. Shall we? At what age did Mom’s friends betrayed her on her birthday?”

Edward’s eyes widened, panic flickered across his face.

“Oh, you don’t know? Fine. Let’s make it easier.” William’s voice grew colder. “What date did our father died?”

Edward stammered, “Th-thirtieth of August. Cardiac arrest... during the war.”

William’s lips twisted into a bitter smile. “Wrong.”

As soon as the word left his lips, Edward’s form began to falter. His hair disintegrated into the air, strands dissolving like smoke. Cracks formed along his skin, light seeping through them, and tears spilled freely down his face.

“One last question,” William said, his voice steady now. “What day were you born?”

Edward’s lips quivered as he whispered, “February 23rd, 20—”

“2023,” William finished for him.

Edward’s form shattered completely, his body crumbling into dust that scattered in the cool night breeze.

William stood alone in the alley, his voice barely above a whisper.

“You were born the same day Mom died.”

Wilson Home

Amy stumbled into her home, slamming the door shut behind her, her voice trembling with raw terror as she screamed:

“Mom! Mooom—”

Her cries echoed through the dimly lit house. The sound jolted Wilson and his wife, Marie, who were in their bedroom. The couple, startled and alarmed, rushed towards the hall where Amy’s scream had come from.

The house was eerily quiet as they reached the hallway. The door was closed. No sign of Amy.

“Where is she?” Marie screamed in panic. Wilson shook his head, breathing heavily, his eyes scanning the hall.

They quickly turned on all the lights, brightening every corner of the hall. The harsh glow revealed nothing—no Amy, no footprints, no signs of a struggle. Wilson rushed to the main doorway, flinging it open and stepping onto the porch.

The night air was cold, and the faint hum of crickets filled the silence. His heart sank as his gaze fell on something lying on the porch— Amy’s watch.

“Marie!” he called, his voice tight with dread.

Marie joined him, picking up the broken watch. Her hands trembled as she cradled it like it was a part of Amy herself. Tears welled up in her eyes, and she turned to Wilson, gripping his shirt tightly.

“She was here...” she whispered, her voice cracking. “She’s... she was... *Give that boy the thing he needs and get our daughter back! My daughter matters most to me, Wilson!*”

Wilson’s face was pale, his eyes hollow. He shook his head slowly, his voice barely above a whisper. “I know, Marie. But what he demands... I just can’t fulfil.”

Marie’s tear-streaked face twisted in anger and desperation. “*What does he want?*” she asked, her voice trembling but forceful.

Wilson hesitated to answer so he returned to the hall from the porch ignoring his wife question and stood underneath the chandelier where angry Marie joined leaving the door open. With his tone heavy with guilt and shame he spoke :

“2 things. First, me surrendering to the police—confessing to my involvement in his mother’s murder and exposing all the secrets of **the Cult**. And Second ...” He swallowed hard, unable to meet her gaze.

“His mom.”

Marie froze, the thirst for answers was vanished. Her lips parted as she struggled to process the weight of his words. *Both demands were impossible.*

“*His mom...?*” she whispered, her voice broke before she could say anything more. A mixture of uncertainty and shocked captured the nerves of her mind. But then something replaced it, the only emotion which causes and elevates the whole situation to its peak. RAGE !

Rage replaced her shock and she lunged at Wilson, slapping him across the face with trembling hands.

“Why, Wilson?! Why?! What have you done to him?!” she screamed, her voice raw with emotion.

“Why does my daughter and I have to suffer for the sins *you’ve committed*?! Bring her back!”

Her every strike rained down relentlessly, each one fueled with the pain and anguish that consumed her. On her 8th attempt, Wilson caught her wrist mid-air. His grip was firm but filled with regret. His voice choked as he finally admitted:

“It was the **money**... Marie. I didn’t care about the consequences—just the money I would get from the Cult.”

“*What is this Cult, Wilson?!*” she demanded, her voice trembling with both rage and determination.

Wilson’s eyes darted around the hall, his paranoia evident. He leaned closer, his voice dropping to a whisper.

“It’s... no. I can’t tell you. She’ll kill me if I do.” And stepped back from her.

Marie shook her head in disbelief.

“Is keeping a secret more important than having our daughter back? Tell me, Wilson. *What is it?*”

Wilson was terrified, his hands shaking as the weight of his decision pressed down on him. He knew the cult’s rules—breaking them meant **death**.

All he could think about was Amy, his daughter, his world. The thought of her in danger was worse than any punishment the cult could inflict. All the actions he has taken to get her back had not

shown any significant results to him, as he's unsure about the promise of getting his daughter back from William but If telling Marie the truth could save her, then so be it.

"Marie," he said, his voice sharp and trembling. "I'm breaking their rules. I don't care what happens next. All I want—all I need—is for Amy to be safe." Wilson looked straight into Marie eyes and said, "the cult,—"

"The Cult of Human Sacrifice."

She stared at him in shock. "What? You've been involved with..." He nodded, his expression grim. "I didn't want to be. But they find you when you're weak. They wait until you're broken, and then they pull you in. When we lost our old house, and Amy was so sick, I thought I'd failed as a father, as a husband. They offered me a way out—a way to fix everything. They promised MONEY. And I believed in them because that's all I needed at that moment."

A cold breeze flew from the main door of the hall with whispers of fears that made both of them shiver. The goosebumps were so strong that they felt butterflies in there stomach ... *butterflies of death*. Marie went and closed the door and stood next to it staring at the door handle. Wilson continued—

"It's... it's a system. They're ruthless. They look for people like me—people who are lost, desperate. They make you feel like you belong, like.. like you're part of something bigger."

"There are rules," Wilson added. "Rules you can never break."

"Rule 1: Never talk about the cult. Ever. If you do, they'll kill you—and everyone you care about."

"Rule 2: Loyalty to the leader is absolute. She's young—only 20—but she's terrifying. No one's ever seen her face. She always wears this black mask with gold designs. They treat her like she's some kind of god."

"Rule 3: The sacrifices are sacred. They say the rituals brings a person soul from hell(dead) which tells you future. And once you know it, you can cheat with time and win in life. The person who makes the sacrifice can only see & hear it. Just bring someone who you want to be sacrificed. "

Marie felt the hall spinning. "And you... you helped them?"

Wilson looked up at her, tears pooling in his eyes. **"I had no choice.** My job was... logistics. I found places for the rituals, made sure no one saw anything. I didn't hurt anyone. Not at first. But the deeper I got, the darker it became. There's no way out. And then... then it became personal."

"What do you mean, personal?" Marie asked, her voice barely audible.

Wilson's face twisted in anguish. "There was a journalist. Emma Cross. She was getting too close, asking too many questions. The cult doesn't tolerate threats. "They told me it was my responsibility —my test of loyalty. I refused at first, but... they threatened Amy. Said she'd be the next sacrifice if I didn't do it."

"So I... I killed her, Marie. I killed her." Marie gasped, recoiling from him.

"Emma Cross? The reporter? The mother of that boy—William Cross? " Marie said.

Wilson nodded miserably, his hands shaking. "Yes. And now William knows. He's found out about the cult. The sole reason he's taken Amy because he wants avenge for his mother."

The room felt colder but the dots of past connected which lead to the growth of silence between the couple. “Money never came from a good friend of his but the dark cult.” Marie gripped the truth. The silence was strong until they heard a sound. A sound from hallway. It was dark, the kind of suffocating dark that seemed to press against the walls but then, from the shadows, it came again—the footsteps and a voice, cold and sharp.

“My dad’s a criminal.”

Wilson froze, his heart lurching. From the darkness of hallway emerged Amy, her face pale and unreadable, her voice trembling with a quiet accusation. From behind, another person joined her with both hands in his pocket, stepped **William Cross** with a cruel smile and glittering eyes of confidence.

Flashback

Amy had darted through the streets. All she wanted was to be home, to feel safe again. But William already had anticipated her move. While she was on her way to home, he mounted his bike and sped toward her house straight from that bar, arriving well before she did.

He slipped into the house silently, waiting in the shadows. When Amy burst through the door, he struck—grabbing her from behind, muffling her scream with his hand. He tied her mouth while he closed the door with his leg and took her to the kitchen where he whispered in her ear, his voice like ice.

“ I understand the desperation of your’s to be in this home, but what’s about to happen next will make this same place a hell you’ll cry to leave ”

They sat there in the dark kitchen, backs pressed to the cold walls, the silence broken only by the conversations of Wilson and Marie. William didn’t said much, but the air around him buzzed with menace, his calm demeanour making the moment even more terrifying.

The Present

“Ah, Wilson,” William said “You’ve made my work so much easier—and your life so much worse.” He laughed, the sound echoing coldly in the hollow space of the hall. He turned to Amy and winked at her , his grin widening. “Told yaa, didn’t I? Heaven to hell.”

Amy stood frozen, her mind reeling. Everything her father had said—everything he’d done—played on repeat in her head. The man she’d idolised, the man she’d thought was her hero, wasn’t a hero at all. **He was the real monster**. Her heart pounded in her chest, each beat louder than the last. She felt sick, betrayed, and completely lost.

Marie broke the silence, rushing to Amy and pulling her into her arms. She sobbed uncontrollably, her tears soaking into Amy’s hair. “Oh, Amy,” clutching her daughter like she might disappear. “My baby, my baby...”

Wilson stood a few feet away, tears streaming down his face. He wanted to hold his daughter too, and tell her that everything he’d done was to protect her. But how could he? The truth had already destroyed her trust in him. He could see it in her eyes—the way she couldn’t even look at him now. The room felt colder, heavier, and the walls seemed to close in around him.

William watched it all unfold, leaning casually against the doorframe. “She’s all yours, Mrs. Wilson,” he said, his voice dripping with mockery. “But will she ever gonna call you ‘Dad’ again?”

Wilson’s chest tightened. He opened his mouth to speak, but no words came. His daughter was back, but she was gone, too—gone in a way that no apology could ever fix.

William chuckled darkly, stepping toward the main door. He paused, looking back one last time. **“You’re fucked Mr Wilson.”**

Chapter 2

the cafe

Morning 5:23 AM

William stood in the chilly morning air at the same market. The sky was painted in soft cream clouds, and the dim sunlight barely pierced through the haze. The streets were eerily quiet, almost as if they belonged to the night. William's eyes lingered on a coffee shop name—"Cathie Coffee" glowed neon faintly in dim light. A fragment of memory flickered in William's mind: the time he sent Wilson to rob pastries and coffee packets from this very shop—and others down the row—for Amy. He smirked to himself at the thought.

Pushing open the door, he stepped inside. The faint smell of coffee beans filled the air, mixing with the warmth of the shop. Behind the counter stood a sleepy girl, her eyelids heavy with exhaustion, while her father, in an irritated tone, scolded her about her smartphone addiction.

"You're always glued to that screen. No wonder you slept at 4," he barked.

The girl muttered a half-hearted defence and were so engrossed in their argument that neither noticed William for a full minute. He leaned casually on the counter, listening the epic drama. Momentarily victorious, her father softened his tone as he turned to him.

"Sorry about that. What can I get you?" he asked.

"Just a regular coffee" William said with a nod.

The scolding continued while William waited. Minutes later, the father handed over the coffee, still grumbling about how careless her daughter is. William, ever the gentleman, took his cup and moved to a table by the window. He pulled out his earphones, shuffled his Spotify playlist, and stirred two teaspoons of sugar into the steaming drink. He was absorbing the aroma of his coffee and that's where he noticed a strange symbol on the bookshelf in the cafe which was not even a regular logo. The first sip was just inches away when a guy outside the shop caught his attention.

He was running toward the cafe. The figure looked familiar. William leaned back in his chair, eyes narrowing as he tried to recognise the face.

Cavil. The guy with piercing blue eyes. He looked like he'd sprinted through the entire neighbourhood, a newspaper was clutched in his hand.

Cavil burst into the cafe, breathless but composed, scanning the room briefly before making his way to the counter. He left two seats between himself and William as he sat down.

"Black coffee," he said to the girl, his voice steady despite his disheveled appearance.

William sipped his coffee, pretending not to notice the man sitting on the other end of the café. He could never forget that face—the way the man had threatened him with a cocky grin last night. Ignoring him seemed like the safest move. He turned up the volume on his earphones, letting the music drown out the tension in the room.

Cavil, however, had already spotted him. “That boy from the bar,” he thought, watching William from the corner of his eye. “Huh! ..Moron.”

Cavil had big dreams—making a fortune in journalism, even if it meant walking a dangerous line. His theory was simple: gather dirt on powerful people, and they’d pay through the nose to keep it under wraps. He thrived on the thrill of control, knowing secrets that could crumble empires and shatter lives. To him, **fear was currency**, and he knew how to spend it. Of course, there was always the risk of those same people sending someone to silence him permanently, but Cavil didn’t care. He wasn’t afraid of getting burned—he planned to set the whole game on fire. After all, *where’s the fun in playing safe?*

The manager brought the coffee over his table. Cavil didn’t touch it, not yet. He stared at the man, his lips curling into the faintest smirk.

“You see them, don’t you?” Cavil said, tone casual but cutting.

“See who?” the manager stammered.

“The rich. The careless. The untouchable.” He leaned forward, his eyes burning into the man’s. “They trust this place. Trust *you* to stay quiet.”

The manager froze.

Cavil tilted his head, the smirk deepening. “But trust is a funny thing, isn’t it? Fragile. Profitable.”

“What do you want?” the manager whispered.

Cavil finally lifted the cup, taking a slow sip. “Details. Patterns. Names.” He set it down deliberately, the sound echoing like a gavel. “You’re sitting on gold, and I’m here to dig. Play smart, and you’ll shine too. Play dumb...”

He didn’t finish. He didn’t need to. The silence said it all.

William lost himself in the pulsing rhythm of "Overcompensate" by Twenty One Pilots, the words tangled in his thoughts, the beat thumping like a second heartbeat in his chest. He wasn’t paying attention, not really—until something flickered outside the window.

His heart went cold.

There he was.

Edward.

He walked toward the café with the kind of slow, deliberate pace that made the world hold its breath. Like he had all the time in the world, and William? He didn’t. Every step was measured, purposeful—too much control. The music faded, the noise of the café dimmed. William’s mind scrambled, but one thing stood clear, like a bell ringing in the dark: Edward.

Edward strolled over with an unsettling ease, like he owned the entire café. He sat down across from William, a smile curling at the edges of his lips—smug, knowing, dangerous.

Without a word, he gestured for William to take out his earphones. But William, paralysed by disbelief, cranked up the volume instead, the bass pounding through his skull as if it could drown the nightmare sitting across from him.

Edward's smile only grew, a silent amusement in his eyes, and he leaned back, arms crossed, waiting patiently.

The world around William seemed to close in, the music a dull roar in his ears. Then, the tap on his shoulder. A girl, her voice soft but insistent.

"Anything more, sir?"

William yanked the earphones out, his face flushed with embarrassment. "Uh... no, thanks."

She nodded politely and walked away, and William, still disoriented, braced himself for Edward's disappearance. But when he looked back, there he was—still sitting, still smiling, like some twisted spectator who had no intention of leaving.

"Men," Edward said, his voice smooth as velvet but laced with mockery. "They really are biased when it comes to listening to women, aren't they?"

The words hung in the air, thick and suffocating, like a warning he couldn't quite understand.

William's breath caught, his mouth went dry, and his mind scrambled to catch up. "But... but you died. I killed you. At the bar. How... how in the hell are you here?" His voice cracked at the end, like it didn't quite believe its own question.

Edward's chuckle sliced through the air, hollow and low, like a dead man trying to convince you he was alive. "Killed me?" He leaned forward, slow and calculated, as if savouring the taste of William's confusion. "Really? A cartwheel, and some random nonsense? That's not enough to perish this big brother of yours Willy"

William's blood ran cold. "Stop calling yourself my big brother!" His voice shattered the quiet, sharp and desperate, loud enough to draw eyes.

Cavil, the manager, and the girl all froze, turning toward him with those wide, unsure stares. A cold sweat prickled at William's neck when Edward stood, his movements slow—too slow, almost... rehearsed. The whole room seemed to shrink around him as Edward met his gaze, his stare colder than the grave.

Edward's lips curled into a cruel smile, his eyes glinting like knives in the dark. "Now, let me think," he said, drawing out the words like a cat toying with a mouse. "Was it your left cheek I graced last time, or was it the right? You know what? Doesn't matter." His smile widened, the edges of it sharp and predatory. "You're getting another one."

Without hesitation, Edward swung again, his palm slicing through the air with deadly precision. But this time, William was ready. His hand shot up, catching Edward's wrist mid-swing with a forceful grip. The loud slap that Edward was clearly expecting never came. Instead, William smirked, in tone so calm, "Predictable as ever, brother of mine. Better luck next time."

William shoved Edward's hand away, his movements sharp, the heat of anger burning through him. He stormed toward the door, his boots echoing against the café floor. As he stepped out into the street, a cold shiver ran down his spine, as if something unseen was crawling just behind him. The footsteps, steady and too close. It wasn't the usual rhythm of the crowd. They were following him.

His pace quickened. So did the footsteps.

The air felt thicker, heavier. He was close to the corner, just a few more steps.

Then a hand, cold and solid, gripped his shoulder.

William's body reacted before his mind. He spun around, fist already raised, words ready to tear through the silence.

"Alright, Eddie, now you're really—"

He stopped. His heart slammed against his ribs.

It wasn't Edward.

Standing there, holding out a small black case, was Cavil, a bemused expression across his face. His lips twitched into a sly smirk as he raised a brow. "Relax, champ. Just your earbuds case."

William blinked, momentarily stupefy, then quickly lowered his fist. "Sorry about that. Instant reaction," he muttered, running a hand through his hair in embarrassment.

Cavil's gaze and his smirk widening into something halfway between amusement. He let out a soft, pointed sigh through his nose, the kind that spoke volumes without words. "Yeah, sure. Instant reaction." He handed over the case with a flick of his wrist. "You left this back at the cafe."

William snatched it quickly, mumbling a barely audible "Thanks."

As he turned to leave, Cavil called out, his voice light but laced with teasing. "By the way, nice mid-air dodge earlier. Looks like last night's beer is still doing wonders for your reflexes."

Cavil chuckled softly and walked off, leaving William standing there. As Cavil walked further he noticed a pendant hooked to his left side pocket from behind which had the same symbol that he noticed on the bookshelf in the cafe.

For a moment, William stayed rooted to the spot, gripping the earbuds tightly in his hand. The frustration simmered inside him, a restless storm he couldn't quite put into words. No one else could see Edward. No one else could feel the weight of his presence, the constant tension he brought. To everyone else, it was just William, overthinking, overreacting, spiralling into some inexplicable madness.

He shook his head and started toward home, muttering under his breath. "It's not madness. It's not..."

But before he could finish the thought. Edward came flying out of nowhere right in front of him with a 3-second sprint turning into a mid-air kick. His foot connected squarely with William's chest, the impact sending him crashing to the ground.

The world tilted, blurred, then faded as William slipped into unconsciousness.

Edward landed gracefully, standing over his crumpled form. "Predictable behaviour, huh?" he said to no one in particular, dusting off his hands with mock satisfaction.

"Well, brother of mine, you're not wrong. But *I've always been one for theatrics.*"

William's room

William's eyes fluttered open, his head pounding, vision blurred. As his surroundings sharpened, he realised he was tied to a chair. His heart sank. This was where Amy had once sat, pleading and helpless. The afternoon light streamed through the window, casting long shadows across the room. On the bed, Edward lay sprawled, his legs crossed, casually flipping through William's personal diary.

The rustle of paper stopped as Edward noticed William's stirring. Peeking over the edge of the book, he smirked, his voice laced with mockery. "Awake at last, Mr. Cross?" His tone was a taunt, sharp and cutting. Slowly, Edward closed the diary, set it on the table and stretched. The sound of his fingers cracking echoed in the tense silence.

"Page 42," Edward continued, his grin widening. "Such a heartbreaking entry. *'The girl I've only ever loved had a crush on someone else.'* Honestly, could be the next big Korean drama." He let out a low chuckle, the kind designed to crawl under your skin.

William's cold stare locked onto Edward. His mind was racing, tumbling through a whirlwind of thoughts, the chaos threatening to overwhelm him.

Was Edward real?

Was this all just a symptom of something darker—something clinical? The words floated unbidden into his mind: *Dissociative Identity Disorder*. A god-level mind-bending experience, one that blurred the line between reality and imagination.

But as Edward continued to spew his taunts, the room around William seemed to fade. The scene turned hazy, like a dream dissolving into smoke. His thoughts sharpened into a singular realisation:

The more I deny, the more he'll make me cry.

Then, an idea struck him—rare, instant, and almost absurd in its clarity. *What if I stop denying his presence? Not accept him, but listen to what he actually wants to say? All he's craving is attention.*

Before William could test his theory, Edward's voice cut through the fog, sharp and smug.

"I don't crave attention, Willy."

William's eyes snapped wide open. The haze evaporated in an instant. Edward was grinning at him, his gaze piercing, almost amused.

"You... you've been reading my thoughts," William stammered, his voice barely a whisper.

Edward tilted his head, his smirk deepening.

The weight of that one sentence was enough to crush any lingering doubt in William's mind. Edward wasn't just a figment. He wasn't just a disorder. He was something else entirely—*something brilliant and terrifying.*

"I'm sorry," William said softly.

Edward waved a hand dismissively. "Save your apologies, Willy. I don't need them. Hell, I don't even care about them."

William narrowed his eyes. “Says the guy who throws a tantrum if someone doesn’t show respect to elders.”

Edward let out a low laugh, pacing slowly around the room. “If you’d just listened to me instead of drowning in your denial, we wouldn’t even be here.”

William leaned forward, the ropes biting into his wrists. “Then what do you want to say? What’s your grand secret?”

Edward stopped, his face turning serious. “That I’m not your disorder. I’m real—”

“Lies!” William barked, cutting him off. “If you’re real, then why can’t anyone else see you?”

Edward’s expression darkened. “Because people can’t see **souls**.”

William let out a bitter laugh, shaking his head. “Right. A soul. Sure. Honestly, it’d be easier if you just admitted you’re a disorder. This whole act? It’s ridiculous.”

Edward’s voice dropped to a whisper, that seemed to seep into William’s very bones. “Ever wonder what it’s like to die in a car crash and wake up near a cathedral at night? To see a woman, barely clinging to life, lying there in front of you?”

William’s breath caught in his throat, a cold sweat breaking out across his skin. The words hung in the air like a dense fog, and a memory, buried deep in the recesses of his mind, rushed forward, uninvited. His mother. Her body, cold and lifeless, found the next morning near the cathedral. The image flashed before him like a cursed photograph.

Edward’s voice softened, but there was no kindness in it—only the weight of truth.

“Yes. Emma. Your mother.”

The world around William started to close in. His heart pounded, every beat echoing in his ears. “No... no...” His voice broke, raw and shattered. The tears sprang unbidden, warm, stinging his eyes. He gasped for air, but it felt like the walls were closing in, pressing the breath from his chest.

“Yes,” Edward’s voice was a razor’s edge, cutting through the horror, “It was her.”

A rush of grief flooded William, a tidal wave crashing through his chest. His hands clenched, and his body jerked against the ropes, as if trying to tear them apart to escape, to wake up from this nightmare. “Why didn’t you? Why didn’t you save her?!” The words were torn from him. His cries echoed in the empty space, the pain unfurling like a wound that would never heal.

Edward stood there, unmoving for a moment, the weight of William’s screams hanging heavy in the air. Slowly, he moved behind him. The sound of Edward’s hands working to untie the ropes was almost mechanical. The bindings fell away, but the relief was hollow—like escaping from one prison only to find another.

Edward placed a hand on William’s shoulder, the touch gentle, almost tender—but there was no comfort in it. “I know it’s hard, Willy,” Edward said, the words slipping out like ice. “But right now, we need to focus. Your emergency funds—they’re running out. You’re only in your second year. No internship will save you from this. We need something more stable. We need a steady income to survive next week.”

"Answer me!" William yelled, his voice breaking as tears streamed down his face. His fists clenched in anger. "Why didn't you save her?! Why didn't you save my mom?!"

Edward stood still, his face calm, almost unnervingly so. The silence stretched between them almost suffocating.

"Ask the right questions," Edward said "And you'll know why."

William's head dropped, his voice trembling. "Why me? Why are you tied to me?"

Edward hesitated. "I don't know. I wish I did."

William's voice sharpened, laced with anger. "It's her. That bitch who's the leader of the human sacrifice cult."

Edward's eyebrow arched. "And what makes you think that?"

William's mind raced. "The 3rd rule Mr. Wilson mentioned— *In exchange for a sacrifice, a soul comes from hell to guide.*"

Edward's expression shifted, a glimmer of excitement crossing his face. "Well, well, look at you, connecting the dots. Impressive ! "

William's voice was almost a whisper, the pieces clicking into place. "My mom's interference in the ritual... it tied her to this. It brought you here. But if that's true, then..." His gaze sharpened. "Then you might have abilities. Powers."

Edward threw his head back and laughed. "Stop right there, Sherlock. I'm a soul, not GOD."

William frowned, his voice firm. "You can't deny that this isn't normal. If you exist, then something brought you here for a reason. There's more to this."

Edward's grin faltered as he leaned back, his voice barely above a whisper. "I wish I could tell you everything, Willy. All I know is... I was driving too fast, rushing to work. It was the third day on the job, and I didn't want to be late which lead my to fatal accident behind the truck."

William's eyes narrowed, sharp as a blade. "**You're lying**," he hissed, the words cutting through the air. "If you can remember that, you remember more."

Edward hesitated, his gaze dropping to the floor, as if searching for answers in the cracks of the tiles. A sigh escaped him, long and heavy, like a man surrendering to the weight of his own ghosts. "Fine," he muttered. His voice thickened, layered with something darker. "After I saw her—your mother—I went home. Or what used to be home."

He paused, his hands fidgeting, the mask of his composure cracking just enough to let something raw slip through. "I walked through the front door like I always did. Everything looked the same. The smell of food made by mom. The sound of the old clock in the hallway. But then I saw it."

His eyes lifted to meet William's, and for the first time, they weren't cold or mocking. They were haunted. "My photo, Willy. Hanging on the wall. I didn't think twice. I yelled, I screamed. Did everything to get their attention. My dad was sitting right there in his armchair, and I was inches from his face, but nothing—nothing. They didn't see me. Didn't hear me."

With his voice dropping to a trembling whisper. “And that’s when I realised... being seen, being heard—that’s what makes us human. Without it, you’re not alive. You’re not even dead. You’re just... **NOTHING.**”

William leaned forward, his voice low but sharp. “Why are you helping me then?”

Edward smirked, counting on his fingers. “One, I’ve got no one else. Two, I hate what happened to you. Three, revenge sounds fun. Four...” He paused. “Umm.. I want to know if I’ve got powers. What they are?”

William scoffed. “A ghost with a revenge arc which is not even his? Sounds like a bad movie plot.”

Edward leaned closer. “You’re the one living it.”

William’s smirk faltered, his voice growing heavy. “I already took down Wilson. Exposed him to Amy. Doesn’t my arc seems complete ?”

Edward’s expression darkened. “Wilson? A pawn. He’s nothing compared to the ones pulling the strings. How many lives do you think have been ruined because of that cult? You know the truth, William. Do you want their stories to end like yours almost did? ”

William hesitated. “I just... I don’t know—”

Edward’s voice cut through like a blade. “Do you want your mom’s death to mean nothing?”

That hit hard. William froze. The weight of Edward’s words clawed at his chest. After a long, tense moment, he wiped his face and stood. His hand reached out, trembling but steady. “Let’s do this. For her.”

Edward clasped his hand, grinning with a rare warmth. “**For Emma.**”

“And what’s with this ‘big brother’ thing you keep calling yourself?” he asked, the words slipping from his lips before he could stop them.

“You never really had one, did you?” Edward’s words were slow with genuine happiness, “So, I thought I’d become one.”

Three hours later...

The hum of the engine roared like a caged beast as William's sports bike cut through the evening, the neon city lights streaking past in a kaleidoscope of chaos. Edward, clinging tightly behind him, shouted above the din, "WILLIAM, SLOW THE HELL DOWN!"

William shot him a glare through the side mirror, his voice sharp with anger. "Wasn't this *your* idea? You wanted to bring in a third player for the revenge arc!"

Behind them, headlights pierced the darkness, illuminating the relentless red tie gang pursuing them in sleek black sedans.

The air screamed as they narrowly dodged a truck, skimming its side by mere inches. A deep honk blared behind them, swallowed by the cacophony of screeching tires.

Edward smirked despite the chaos. "Well, I'm a soul, so all those assholes see is *you* on this death ride. Not me."

William's lips twitched in irritation. He threw a quick, mocking side-eye—not at Edward, but at the unseen readers beyond the pages, breaking the fourth wall for a fleeting, absurd moment.

"I hope you're all *enjoying* this, but —" William muttered, then tapped his earpiece. His voice raised. "Mission abort. I repeat, mission abort. We've been tricked. They've got future-seers on their side—they knew we'd be here."

A tense silence filled the line for a moment before a single word hissed back from earpiece, "*Fuck.*"

The voice on the other end continued, "Dissolve into the crowd. Get out of sight, *now*. If they catch you, it's over."

The chase took a dramatic turn. One of the red tie gang's sedan surged forward, matching their speed. William gritted his teeth, swerving sharply into oncoming traffic. The screech of tires tore through the night as the gang car tried to follow but clipped the rear of a delivery van.

Edward glanced back at the chaos, shaking his head. "Well, one down—"

"Two more to go," William finished, his voice tight. The remaining cars were still in relentless pursuit, their engines snarling like wolves on the hunt.

"Alright," William growled, gripping the handlebars tighter. "I've got a plan. You're gonna laugh. Can't believe I'm about to pull something out of *GTA San Andreas*."

Edward rolled his eyes. "What !!! "

William grinned darkly. "We jump into the sea with the bike. They'll think we're dead."

Edward's jaw dropped. "You idiot. That was a *game*! This is real life. Don't think from your balls. Use your brain! Take a small road—where their damn cars can't fit!"

The voice crackled in their ears again. "Angel Avenue. Compact streets. Take it. Now."

William grunted in agreement. He swerved hard, veering toward the narrow side streets. But just as he made the turn, a gunshot rang out.

A sharp, searing pain exploded in William's left leg.

He hissed in agony, his leg jerking involuntarily. Blood began to soak through his jeans as the gear shift became slippery under his boot.

Edward noticed immediately. "Shit! You're hit!"

William grit his teeth. "Keep talking, and I might *forget* you're already dead."

They barrelled down Angel Avenue, the alley walls a blur of graffiti and grime. The cars behind them screeched to a halt, too wide to follow. Their pursuers slammed the brakes, cursing as the bike disappeared into the maze of side streets.

Finally, after weaving through the alleys and dodging every stray dog and garbage can in sight, William and Edward skidded to a halt beneath a decrepit basement entrance.

William collapsed against the handlebars, his breath ragged. Blood dripped steadily from his leg, pooling on the cracked concrete below.

"You're welcome," Edward said, jumping off the bike like he just won a race.

William winced, clutching his leg. "Yeah, great job, man. Really helped me out back there—next time, how about you take the bullet and leave the *riding* to me?"

The earpiece buzzed again. "You've reached the safe zone. Head inside. Quickly."

The metallic whine of a heavy shutter echoed as it creaked open, revealing a dimly lit staircase spiralling down into the darkness. William hesitated, then stepped inside, Edward trailing behind.

At the bottom of the stairs stood a man, his figure silhouetted by the dim yellow glow of an ancient bulb.

The man stepped forward, his sharp features cutting through the shadows.

It was **Mr. Wilson**.

Chapter : 3

Cavil's Apartment

The night was alive accompanied with the touch of drops from heaven. Cavil drew hard on his cigarette—his fourth in the last hour—and flicked the ash into a tray already spilling over with burnt ends. The room reeked of stale smoke and desperation, but Cavil didn't care. He thrived in the stink of it.

On the desk in front of him lay a file, its pages crumpled and curling at the edges. It looked like something dragged out of a storm drain, but to Cavil, it was a goldmine. The cult wasn't just a half-drunk bar rumor anymore. No, it had a pulse, a heartbeat that thudded beneath the surface of the city, spreading like a cancer. He could feel it now, in the low hum of the streetlights outside, in the steady drip of the leaky faucet behind him. But fear? No, fear wasn't his problem. Fear was for the poor bastards who didn't know how to wield the truth like a blade. Information was the only thing that mattered, and tonight, he had it in spades.

few hours later...

The drops turned into rain tonight, smearing the grime on the windshield of Cavil's clunky old sedan. The city was a bad dream tonight, all puddles and shadows, and Cavil didn't trust it one bit.

Not that he ever did. The dashboard lighter clicked, and he drew in his fifth cigarette of the night, the ember flaring in time with his exhale. He didn't even roll the window down this time. Let the car stink. It suited him just fine.

The night had claws, and now it was dragging him to this all-night diner. Harris. Nervous, suit too perfect, hands too clean. That kind of man didn't end up in a place like this without something to hide. And Cavil? He thrived on secrets. The dirtier, the better.

Inside, the diner hummed with fluorescent light and quiet desperation. A couple of truckers swapped stories over black coffee; a waitress with tired eyes wiped a counter that would never truly be clean. Harris was tucked in a corner booth, hunched over a mug he hadn't touched, the steam long gone. He looked up when Cavil slid into the seat across from him, all nerves and darting eyes.

"Relax, Harris," Cavil said, leaning back like he owned the place. He swirled his coffee with the spoon, not because he wanted it sweeter but because the sound seemed to put people on edge.

"Let's talk about the girl."

Harris flinched like he'd been slapped. His fingers picked at the edge of the table, shredding it bit by bit. "I don't know her name," he said, voice low. "Nobody does. But I've seen her. At the warehouse. **Mill Street.**"

That got Cavil's attention. He stilled the spoon and leaned in just enough to make Harris squirm. "Go on," he said, his voice smooth.

Harris licked his lips, his gaze darting to the door. "They call her the "Horacle" made up 2 words Hell and Oracle," he whispered. "But she's... she's not right, man. She doesn't talk. Just stands there, watching. Like she's looking right through you. And if she's there—" He swallowed hard, "—someone's not walking out alive."

Cavil's pen hovered over his notebook, but his face stayed blank. Never let them know what you're thinking. Rule number 1. "So why tell me?" he asked, his voice quiet but edged with steel.

Harris looked at him like a drowning man begging for a life preserver.

"Because I'm out. I can't do it anymore. I won't."

"Won't what?" Cavil asked, but Harris's eyes snapped to the door, wide and panicked. Something outside had spooked him.

Without another word, Harris shot out of the booth and bolted for the exit, his untouched coffee sloshing in its cup. Cavil didn't move, didn't so much as flinch. He just watched.

Through the diner's grimy window, he caught a glimpse of Harris running into the rain, his steps frantic. And just behind him, there it was—a sky-blue suited MAN. Too tall, too deliberate, sliding through the night like it belonged to the darkness itself.

Cavil lit another cigarette, the flash of the lighter throwing his sharp features into brief, jagged relief. He took a long drag, smirked, and muttered to himself, "Now we're getting somewhere."

He tossed a crumpled bill onto the table and stepped out into the storm. Harris was gone. The MAN was too. But the game? Oh, the game was just getting started.

William's Home

Across town, Charlie being Charlie—which meant doing everything other than working towards the bad grades in college. He had let himself into William's home (the spare key was under the mat; rookie move), and now he was elbow-deep in William's meticulously organized desk drawers.

"Bro," Charlie muttered to no one but the empty room, "it's not stealing if you're just... borrowing without, you know, the whole asking part." He flashed his best innocent grin to the lamp. He rifled through a stack of boring paperwork—bills, receipts, a suspicious number of expired coupons—before his hand landed on something far more interesting. A folder. Big, thick, and ominously labeled in William's perfectly neat handwriting: **"Cult Research."**

Charlie's eyebrows shot up. "Oh, come on, Willy. Which Netflix series you're watching which I ain't aware of !"

He flipped the folder open, skimming through its contents. There were photos of weird symbols, grainy black-and-white pictures of creepy-looking warehouses, and some handwritten notes in William's careful scrawl. Most of it looked like something out of a bad conspiracy documentary.

"Man," Charlie muttered, turning one of the pages sideways to make sense of a diagram, "you've gotta start watching normal stuff on Netflix. Like cooking shows. Or rom-coms. Not whatever the hell this is."

He pulled out his phone, held up the folder, and snapped a selfie with it. Grinning like a lunatic and quickly typed out a caption: **"Treasure hunt without me? Rude. 🔥👁️"**

He sent it to William and laughed to himself, fully aware of the impending angry texts he'd get in return. But Charlie didn't care.

As he flipped through the folder, one photo grabbed his attention. It showed a warehouse door, old and rusted, with a black-and-gold insignia painted across it. The symbol looked like something you'd see on the cover of a bad heavy metal album. Beneath it, William had written a single word:

"Mill Street."

Charlie tilted his head at the photo, squinting like it might start talking if he looked hard enough. "Mill Street. Uh! What's so interesting that you gave a date of visit which is ...tomorrow!" He shoved the folder back into the drawer. But the curiosity was gnawing at him now, like an itch he couldn't scratch. What the hell was William up to? And more importantly, why hadn't he invited him to whatever weird treasure hunt he was on?

Charlie grabbed his jacket and checked his phone. No angry texts from William yet. Perfect. He glanced at the grainy photo again and grinned. "How hard could it be?" he said to himself as he headed out the door.

The answer, of course, was: **very hard.**

The Warehouse(Mill Street)

The street stretched out in a crooked line of broken houses and rusting factories. Charlie pedaled his creaky bicycle slowly, his music radio bouncing in the old backpack strapped to his shoulders. The sun had bled out hours ago, leaving the evening air cold and restless. He'd spent all day looking, searching, but the warehouse from William's file had remained elusive. The thing about being a hero, Charlie figured, was that it only looked easy in the movies. Heroes always seemed to stumble across answers just in time for the big crescendo. Real life, though? It was nothing like that.

"Guess I'm not the main character after all," Charlie muttered to himself, his voice flat, a little bitter.

It was 9:20 p.m., and he could already hear his mom's voice in his head. She'd chew him out, sure. Twenty-one years old or not, a mother's scolding was eternal. But more than her words, what really gnawed at him was the question of dinner. What was waiting at home? The thought made him sigh and roll his eyes.

Charlie stopped pedaling for a moment, letting the wheels of the bike coast. He turned off the radio, its crackling music giving way to a heavy silence. Above him, the sky was crystal clear, the stars staring back like watchful gods. He tilted his head back, letting out a slow breath. "Where the hell is William?" he murmured, his annoyance rising. This whole hero thing wasn't meant to be a solo gig. William was supposed to be the Batman here, and Charlie his Robin. That was the deal.

Far down the road, a flicker of light caught his attention. Then another. Then another. They multiplied like fireflies, bright and fast, headlights streaking through the darkness. Charlie squinted, counted. Four. Six. Twelve. Eighteen.

"What the hell?"

The SUVs were tearing down the road like angry hornets, and Charlie's stomach turned to ice. Panic flooded him, raw and unrelenting. He threw himself off the bike and scrambled toward the nearest factory, pressing his back against the cracked, crumbling wall. The iron was cold against his spine, his breath coming in short, jagged bursts.

The cars roared past one by one, their engines low and guttural. He tried to count them, keep track, but his mind was buzzing too loud to focus. Then, just as the last SUV, **it stopped.**

The engine went quiet.

A man stepped out.

Charlie froze. The man was older, in his fifties maybe, with a deep blue suit so clean it almost glowed in the gloom. His hair was perfect, his face calm and impassive, one hand tucked casually in his pocket. He didn't look like he belonged here, not in this wasteland of rust and ruin. Slowly, deliberately, the man began walking, his polished shoes crunching the gravel. He was headed straight for Charlie's bicycle.

Charlie bit down on a scream, his whole body locked in place, terror rooting him to the spot. The man stopped just short of the wall Charlie was hiding behind.

And then he spoke.

"Really, Crema? But why? Just because he's important in the upcoming story?"

The words hung in the air like frost.

Charlie's terror twisted into confusion. Was the man talking to himself? To someone else? Someone invisible? He couldn't make sense of it, and his heart pounded so loud it felt like the world would hear it.

A long, eerie silence followed—20 seconds, maybe more. It felt like an eternity.

Then, the man spoke again.

"All right. But don't come crying to me later when we had a chance, and we didn't take it."

And with that, he turned and walked back to the car, got in, and drove away.

Charlie slumped against the wall, his chest heaving, his hands trembling. The whole encounter had lasted less than a minute, but it had drained him completely. Fear. Confusion. Anger. Anxiety. It was all a swirling, suffocating storm inside him, and yet, beneath it all, something else flickered to life.

He stared down the road at the retreating taillights, the warehouse now visible in the distance. Maybe he wasn't the main character in this story. Not yet.

But maybe he could become one.

Charlie stood, wiped his face, and climbed back onto his bike. His fingers grabbed handlebars tight, legs pumping as he followed the tire tracks. The warehouse loomed ahead, a hulking beast in the dark. The SUVs were parked out front in neat rows, but there were no guards, no signs of life. The main doors stood open, yawning like a mouth.

"Back doors are for heroes," Charlie muttered under his breath. "Main doors? That's just suicidal."

But he pedaled closer anyway.

He left the bike in the shadows and crept toward the entrance. From inside, he heard voices—a low, rhythmic chanting. Prayers. It wasn't comforting; it was the kind of prayer that made your skin crawl. Charlie shivered but pushed forward, one careful step at a time.

The closer he got, the louder the voices became, rising and falling like waves. His body screamed at him to turn around, to leave, but he ignored it. Then, he felt it: a presence.

Something—**someone**—*was behind him.*

Charlie froze. His breath caught in his throat.

Before he could react, a hand clamped over his mouth and dragged him into a side room. The darkness swallowed him whole, and Charlie's fear exploded, hot and relentless. He thrashed, his mind racing with every worst-case scenario imaginable.

Then, a small flame flickered to life—a lighter.

A lighter of **CAVIL**.

"Do you even have the slightest idea where you are, hero?" Cavil's words cut through the silence like a blade.

Charlie's breath hitched, tears threatening to spill, but he refused to let himself break. He bit back his sobs, willing his heart to stop pounding. He stopped his cry and forced his body still, pretending, just for a moment, that he was helpless. But underneath, he really was.

"Why don't you tell me first, *Batman*?" Charlie shot back, trying to mock the man, even though he felt like the world was closing in around him.

Cavil's eyes gleamed. "I'm... *ugh*," he began, irritated but still in control, "You know what, kid? It's not too long now. You don't want to know what happens next. Just leave this place... *if you wanna see tomorrow*."

Charlie straightened up, his voice dripping with defiance. "What if I decided not to?"

Cavil's smile was as cold as a glacier. "Pulling movie dialogues in relief doesn't help, bro. You think this is all some kind of game? Better just leave, or you're done. Really."

Charlie's mind was racing, fighting the panic that clung to his throat. But there was something else—something primal pushing him forward, a realization settling deep in his chest. "Okay, I got it. But I don't want to. Because at home... I'm just forced to live a life that's sort of like the *Matrix*, you know? Fixed. Predictable. But here... *here*? It's real. It's different. And that's why... I don't want to leave, *sir*."

The words hung between them, sharp as knives, and Cavil's expression flickered—just for a second—before returning to his usual unreadable mask.

Cavil's tone hardened. "Then don't open your mouth until I do my job."

Charlie's heart pounded. "What j—"

But before he could finish, Cavil's hand came down over his mouth, silencing him completely.

"No questions," Cavil muttered, his voice eerily calm, almost too controlled. "You'll understand soon enough."

The cold concrete beneath their feet echoed as they moved through the dimly lit warehouse. Charlie's breath came in short, quick bursts, his heart thumping with a rising sense of dread. But Cavil... Cavil didn't rush. His pace was steady, deliberate, like a man who knew the rhythm of the world—and who knew when to break it.

Charlie couldn't shake the feeling that something was wrong, that something was watching them. The building groaned, the air thick with the scent of old dust and rust. Every step up the creaking staircase felt like a countdown, like the clock was ticking down to some inevitable, horrible end.

They reached the second floor, and the space around them shifted. It was no longer a warehouse—this place had been transformed into something older, darker. It reminded Charlie of the churches he'd seen in movies—sacred and oppressive, full of the weight of forgotten things. The tall windows let in slivers of moonlight, casting long, skeletal shadows on the floor.

And in the center of the room, there they were: the masked figures.

A circle of them. Silent. Their black masks, each bearing a golden insignia, gleamed in the faint light. They moved together, as if in some dark symphony, their chanting a low, rhythmic hum that vibrated the very walls of the room. It was like a pulse—a heartbeat of something ancient and wrong.

Charlie's stomach churned. His skin prickled with cold sweat as the air thickened, pressing against him like a physical thing. He glanced at Cavil, expecting him to react, but the man was already pulling out his camera, fingers moving with the practiced ease of someone who had done this too many times before.

Click. The first picture was taken, but there was no shutter sound. No flash. Nothing. It was as if the camera itself had swallowed the sound, and the picture—no, the moment itself—was stolen from reality.

Charlie was staring at Cavil's face when it happened.

A *crack*—almost imperceptible, like a twig snapping underfoot, but sharper. The air itself seemed to freeze. Charlie's blood turned to ice as he turned just in time to see it.

The man.

He had been standing just behind them, so close Charlie could almost feel the weight of his gaze.

Suddenly the man's head snapped back violently, his body crumbling like it had been hit by something far stronger than a bullet. It was so clean, so sudden, that it didn't feel real. His mouth opened in a silent scream, eyes wide with shock, and then—his body collapsed to the ground, limp and broken like a doll tossed aside.

Charlie heard it now—the soft, wet thud of the man's body hitting the floor. But it wasn't the sound that terrified him. It was the silence that followed.

The chanting stopped. The air grew thick and heavy, pressing in on Charlie, choking him.

And then, the blood.

It spread out in a dark pool, staining the floor. The man's face was still, lifeless. His wide, empty eyes stared into nothing, like he'd never seen the world again.

That's him.

The SUV. The man who had stepped out of it, speaking to no one but himself in the dark. The way he had paused, his eyes flicking around, speaking to some invisible presence. The voice that had been so odd, so disconnected from reality.

"Really, Crema? But why? Just because he's important in the upcoming story?"

That man.

Charlie's pulse raced. He didn't know why, but that simple recognition made everything feel even more wrong. It was like a puzzle piece falling into place, but the picture it formed was one that he could never have imagined.

He swallowed hard, a wave of nausea hitting him. "Oh, god..." The words left his mouth, but they felt hollow, like they were being swallowed by the air itself. He wanted to scream. He wanted to run. But Cavil? Cavil didn't even flinch.

The man, ever composed, turned slowly to face Charlie, his cold eyes gleaming with some knowledge Charlie didn't have. He looked like a man who had seen it all—who had experienced the worst and walked away unscathed.

“This...” Cavil said, his voice low and steady, like he was explaining the rules of a game Charlie had never agreed to play, **“is where the game really starts.”**

The silence wasn't just eerie—it was suffocating, as if the night itself held its breath. Charlie crouched low, trying to make himself as small as possible, his pulse hammering in his throat. The crowd in front of him wasn't moving, their eyes fixed on the dark left corner of the warehouse. But their hands moved in unison, raising silver-plated guns that gleamed coldly under the moonlight.

Charlie wasn't sure what terrified him more: the guns or the fact that they weren't pointed at him or Cavil. Instead, they aimed at the warehouse corner as if waiting for something—or someone.

Cavil, crouched beside him, didn't look scared. Hell, he didn't even look concerned. He put a finger to his lips, motioning for Charlie to stay quiet, but his calmness unnerved Charlie even more. *What the hell is wrong with him?* Charlie thought. A man had just been shot dead behind them, yet Cavil's expression hadn't even flickered. If anything, it looked like he was... enjoying himself.

Charlie's mind churned. This whole scene—it felt off. Too deliberate. Too staged. The kind of thing you'd see in a thriller movie where everything was scripted down to the last bullet. But this wasn't a movie. This was real. A man had been murdered, and a dozen guns were out in the open. *And Cavil...* Charlie's stomach dropped. *What if he's part of this?*

Charlie swallowed the lump in his throat and shifted uncomfortably. The thought hit him hard: *Maybe I shouldn't be afraid of the crowd. Maybe the real danger is sitting right next to me.*

Then, from the shadows, a figure emerged. His face was painted like the Joker, smeared with greens and reds that glistened in the moonlight like wet blood. He slung a sniper rifle casually over one shoulder, his crooked grin wide enough to split his face.

“To all the first-timers,” the man called out, his voice dripping with amusement, “sorry to spoil the fun, but there's no soul from hell coming to visit. No one's here to whisper the future in your ear. You all better—”

The shot came out of nowhere, cracking like a whip. The man's head snapped back as blood sprayed into the air, and his body collapsed like a puppet with its strings cut. Charlie flinched, his ears ringing from the sudden violence.

One of the cultists had fired. No hesitation. No remorse. It was as if killing the man was just another step in the process, like checking a box on a to-do list.

And then the chanting began.

“Horacle, speak, where shadows creep, of truths that wake the dead from sleep.”

Low and rhythmic at first, the chant rolled through the crowd like an approaching storm. Their voices grew louder, faster, and clearer with each repetition, the words stabbing into Charlie's mind.

He clamped his hands over his ears, but it didn't help. The chant wasn't just something you heard—it was something you *felt*, burrowing into your bones.

Charlie turned to Cavil, hoping for reassurance, but what he saw only made him feel worse. Cavil was grinning. It wasn't a big grin, but it was there, curling at the edges of his mouth like he'd just heard a joke no one else understood.

And then Charlie remembered something: the warning. Earlier, when Cavil had told him, *You should leave if you want to see tomorrow*. At the time, it had sounded like typical Cavil—dramatic, maybe even sarcastic. But now, with one man dead behind them, another shot in the warehouse, and a crowd of chanting fanatics, Charlie felt the weight of those words.

Cavil pulled out a cigarette, lit it, and muttered to himself,

*“Didn't thought they'd push me to **Plan B** this fast.”*

Then, louder, he shouted, “You sons of bitches! You see me standing here in the moonlight, don't you? And yet you let your guy—your little pet—pull that shit? What the hell are you waiting for, Horacle? WHAT ARE YOU SEEING THAT I'M NOT ?”

The chanting didn't stop, but two people from the back of the crowd started to leave. One of them glanced at Charlie and Cavil, then jerked his head—*follow me*.

Cavil stood, brushing off his coat. He didn't look at Charlie as he said, “Kid, leave. Now. Get out of here while you still can.”

Then he just walked away, right past the crowd, as if they weren't even there. He stopped at the Joker-painted corpse, bent down, and pulled the sniper rifle off its back. Slinging it over his shoulder, he followed the two masked figures out of sight.

Charlie stayed frozen for a moment, unsure of what to do. But then he noticed something: the crowd was gone. The people who had been chanting just seconds ago had vanished. But the chanting itself hadn't stopped. It echoed through the warehouse, disembodied and chilling.

Charlie's stomach turned. He felt the kind of fear that wasn't just about what you could see, but about what you *couldn't*. Like the terror of a lizard disappearing under your bed—when it's gone, it's worse.

He ran.

Taking the stairs two at a time, he bolted for the main door. Behind him, he heard footsteps—four of them, gaining on him. One of them grabbed his arm. Charlie screamed, the sound ripped straight from his soul, raw and desperate. He yanked his arm free and sprinted harder, his thoughts a mess. *I should've stayed home. Should've had dinner with Mom. **Should've just been a regular kid.***

But life didn't care about should-haves.

When he reached the main door, eight more figures from outside closed the door. He couldn't stop in time. He slammed into the metal door with a sickening thud, the impact knocking the air from his lungs.

He turned, gasping, and found the four cultists behind him. They weren't chanting anymore. They were just staring, their faces masked but their intent clear.

One of them stepped forward. The gun in his hand was unmistakable—it was the same one that had killed the Joker-faced man. “You should’ve never come here, boy,” the man said, his voice cold. He leveled the gun at Charlie’s head. “Now you won’t see morning.”

Charlie froze, tears stinging his eyes.

The man cocked the gun. “Sorry too cuz... I don’t believe in last wishes. Goodbye—”

A shot rang out, straight through the man’s head.

Charlie flinched as blood splattered across his face. The man crumpled, lifeless. Charlie stared, stunned, as one of the other cultists standing in middle lowered his weapon, the barrel still smoking.

“What the hell?! YOU TRAITOR ” another cultist standing to his left shouted. Another shot was fired by the cultist standing to the right next to the traitor, causing his head to explode.

The traitor— pulled off his mask just enough to reveal half of his face.

Charlie’s jaw dropped. “You son of a bitch...” and hugged him tighter than his life.

It was William.

“Not the time for hugs, kid,” said the cultist. “We’ve still got work to do.” William turned to the cultist and replied

“Mr. Wilson, it’s time to roll.”

For Charlie, it still didn’t feel real. But he knew one thing for sure: the nightmare was far from over.

never ever I expected I would be so glad to see you here man. Im just oh man. Thank you so much .
Said Charlie in streaming tears from his face.

William : we seriously can do this somewhere else. Charlie.. 1st have to get hell out of here cuz now they know that we are not with them.

Wiping the tears of Charlie William grabbed his hand and went towards the main chanting area where everything was happening and wilson was keeping them gaurded with his gun. When they were running where the 2 cultist with cavil went .. wilson noticed that the body of joker was disappered. But his didnt alerted William about it. Wilson thought- what the hell they took his body to ? Ive worked with them but never they disposed body that fast until we take out the organs for selling, something just doesnt feels good to me now.

William and Charlie along with wilson made outside the warehouse safe back to Wilson’s car where Edward was waiting. They hopped into the car and wilson was on driver seat.

Edward : wtf .. weren’t our mission was to catch the Louis Parker. And what the hell this fuckhead doin here

William : oh well, ive realized one thing for sure. They are much smarter than I was expecting.
Wanna know how ?