Each bullet, a piece of my soul.

The odd aroma of burnt rubber filled the night of the city well past its blooming days, the days that I’m not proud to call my childhood anymore. With cracked walls on every corner, graffiti filling all the hard work of past individuals, the city thrived on aspects that will mentally distort a being, simply from a few vulgar sightings. Speaking of such sightings, I hold my breath and step over a feast of ants devouring a mouldy rat carcass, making sure nothing comes in contact with my premium leather boots, as I unwillingly come across the playground. It was a place I used to dwell with loving friends, singing nursery rhymes and learning the alphabet as we have the times of our lives. Now it rots and is a stage well below my memories, it simply cannot be elevated. The obstacles in the ground had come face to face with opposite day, losing its once engaging and mood lighting colour. The effluvium of rust was rich, and if any kid were to try the monkey bars, they will simply baptise the grounds in blood. I did not attempt to touch anything, however I had a faint feeling that I will never have the privilege of riding them again, in the sensational spring weather, with the majestic flowers, the sun out, and mum yelling “SLAP ON YA SUNSCREEN”, well, not in this life at least. As I linger around the hostile environment, the element of absolute stillness starts to bug me. And above that, the mood is just continuously drenched, abandoned clubs and cafés, all of which expanded the nightlife, are simply soulless, and almost impossible to imagine, ever being resurrected.

Faded flowers on the side of the road, every house, empty, transparency in windows, gone. I start thinking to myself, 'what, could have done such a thing?'. Meddling down the main road, I focus my eyes on the dehydrated wooden bench. It was a salient factor, I hadn't slept in a couple days, and my chain of thought was starting to run with the wolves. I carry myself over, and pick up a book from behind the bench, which felt as if it had been inside a meat locker, also accidently breaking free a web from underneath, and revealing millions of spiderlings, giving me a nauseous feeling. I scrub clouds of dust off the cover, and my eyes traced the title reading, ‘A.J Rutherford’s Incorporated’, in a very faint font, and inside were numerous pages of infrastructure plans. I didn’t do very well in mathematics as a teenager, so all of this seemed as random shapes. ‘Humf’, typical I thought, as I lob it into the murky river beside the bench, hoping that it vanishes, so the next ‘man’ doesn’t see it, if anyone.

Suddenly, I hear a continuous noise, assumingly of a rolling tin can. My heart levels rise, and I feel as if my body had just froze. I remain standing still, and reach out to my front belt to grab the ‘purifier’, hoping he hasn't realised. And when all is set, I remember the art of this job, is worth than the pain of an icicle being shoved down your spine from the suspense. So without hesitation, I turn to 5'o clock, and begin making poetry, continuously pulling the trigger with the anger of all my dismantled childhood memories alongside me. Rapidly the window of a store starts to shatter into millions of shards, yet the rascal, nowhere to be seen. Momentarily, a breeze of wind blows across my face, slapping sense into my brain on its way. And to seal the moment, I see the tin can move for a quick second, but then, the anthem of nothingness overcomes, and begins playing its chorus all over as if it were the aftermath of a war, except this time, with no blood. I tilt my head up, only coming to the sense of fire that has broken out from the store I shot. 'Annas Café', and in a blink, flashbacks hit me of the times where life was much simpler. Aunty Anna was her name, the store was the place where mum used to tell us to wait after school, while she continues her tireless job on the streets, for the little of what we had. My brother and I didn’t know much of what she did back then, we would just take waiting at the store as a play date, and continue colouring pictures for the billboard that Anna had put up in the store. Sadly, we aren’t like water, to hold up our ‘ships’, and slip through hard times in life, so all we can do is re-imagine our favourable times, and hope for a slight smile. Back to reality, the fire continued to disrupt everything in its path, I didn't have any water, and the city lacked any source of purity, therefore I made a run for it, taking a mental note of what I’d done, "Each bullet, a piece of my soul".

For a split second I peek around a corner, instantly catching the sighting of a mirror on the wall, only then meeting the eye of how my body shamefully camouflages the depths of the cities agony. I loosen the grasp of my paint brush, all the dirt drenched on my stale fingers take a second to breathe away from the trigger. “This task is taking a deep dive into some sense”. My job has been to come here, and chuck a couple bullets, each encoded with the word ‘consequences’, though, I just found out that my paycheck isn’t high enough to do so. I progress towards the mirror, looking at it dead straight, I see the swing set behind my sinfully small body in comparison to its large purpose. I imagine of all my selfish friends, of who I shared the cherishable times with, on that very swing set. Knowing they will not ever come back here, brings a tear to my eye. As my body has completely covered the mirror, I once again grasp my object, with the same hard emotion I first came here possessing, for one last rodeo. The chamber containing only one piece of ammunition, 'simply perfect', I hum to myself, knowing this is my curtain call, and as the stage is set ... the performance begins… "Each bullet, a piece of my soul".

* Shehan.W

*“No need to fix what God already put his paintbrush on “*

*‘Why does a rose need water? Why does the night need moonlight? … Not for nothing’*