# Chapter 3: Phoenix

Her fetters burst, and just released from prison,   
A virgin phoenix from her ashes risen. - Christiana Baldwin

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## Arrival

It was early afternoon in late January, my south-west train stopped at the Bournemouth train station. It was chilly and I was prepared for the cold air that would cut through my skin. I didn’t rent a house before I got here, I thought it would be just a good idea to go and check out myself the houses I would want to live in. I took one of the yellow cabs just outside the station, the driver put my language into the trunk, which in all amounted to three large air travel language bags. And off I went to the White hall hotel, besides the fact that I got the cheapest deal to stay there for about a week till I found a house to rent, the hotel was close to the beach which I wanted the most at that time.

I just slept in my room for two days straight, neither did I wanted to go out nor did I bothered myself to do it. I searched online for houses for rent, mostly shared houses to share with other people, I was bit scared to live all by myself, it would have been another ordeal. In those two days I shortlisted some 4-5 different houses listed online, I had to make sure that it is also close to my job location at West Cliff road. It was better here, better than London, with respect to the amount of travel that was needed to and from work. A 20-30 minute walk was manageable.

My joining date with Inferno Media was 15th of February, so I still had about 2 weeks to finalise my residence. On the third day, I called the landlords with the listings which were around same 20-30 minutes walking distance, all were shared accommodation and double bed rooms with shared kitchen and bathroom. I was very uncomfortable with all that, and with my salary I really could have afforded to rent a flat in an apartment, but the comfort was not as important as wanting to be with somebody. All the houses I saw were kind of good but also were kind of repulsive, in the sense, given the proximity with the university they were habituated with students and had very shabby kitchen, which was a bit of a downer for me and 2 of them I saw were to be shared with professionals with clean kitchen but one were too low light rooms, that would have further lowered my blues. I spent some two days looking at these houses but to no avail. I still had time so I was not really worried, but that was also a priority and living aloe that hotel room without anyone to talk to was also getting miserable. On the third day I took break, again loathed myself in my room. Next day I tried visiting the estate agent offices which were in the town centre and in surrounding area, hoping that they might directly be able to show me the required house. And so on that day I again saw few houses with similar problems, I was getting desperate. Finally I looked at the last agent google maps was showing me, Adams Letting Agents Wimborne road. It was almost about 5 p.m. by then and it was going to be closed at 6:00 p.m., I was some 40 minutes walking distance, so I decided may be tomorrow will be a good idea as I was tired anyhow. So the next day at around 11:00 am, I trudged to Wimborne road. The agent took told me happily that there was a room available, but not in a shared accommodation but as a paying guest with a landlady just behind the road at Bryanston road. I checked it out with him and I liked her immediately, Mrs. Russell, Maureen Russell, had a single room available at her house on with a clean kitchen and an add-on of a garden and a living room which was up for use. I took it immediately without hesitation. I asked if it was OK with her I will move in tomorrow itself. So I did the paper work, paid the agent, and went to the hotel somewhat triumphant, or rather at least relieved.

So that was it, my new home was now 137, Bryanston road, for next whatever time I was going to be there, till whatever event that was happen, which might take to wherever I would be next. The very next day, I called the radio cabs, and offloaded my language at Maureen’s house. She was a very lovely British women who looked to be in her mid-sixties but I later got to know to be in her mid-seventies. Maureen had a cute little Pomeranian cross breed girl whom she adored, so Lilly was our third house mate. I still had some 8-9 days left till my job began, I rested for few more days, as it was winter I was not much interested to really go out. I just spent time having some chat with Maureen or watching the TV with her. Sometimes cooking for her or just sitting in my room staring at the ceiling.

I was in a rather good location, as I checked on the google maps, Inferno was just about 25 minutes’ walk from my house and good thing was that the market which included Waitrose as well as Lidl was just about 5 minutes’ walk. So I felt like I was set for a new life at least for the time and all set to off load my emotional baggage. I was sucked into this hell hole of depression, which I needed to conquer desperately. I spent some lazy days doing nothing more than exploring Wimborne road for next few days till the day to join Inferno. Wimborne road was lined with all sort of shops with an exception that there was no Indian restaurant, though there were some Pakistani shops selling Indian food stuffs.

It was Monday morning, and still winter, I plodded towards the Poole road, with the google mas now it was not very difficult to find places. Actually the job at Inferno was a sort of demotion as I would not be doing anything in continuity with my last job position. I was not hired as a Game designer, rather I was hired in a sales team. Given my 6 years of experience at Digital Dreams, my understanding of customer needs and overall ecosystem of Gaming market, I was a desirable candidate for the job, though not exactly a best fit. I needed to be here for reasons other than career advancement and as Inferno was a very small company with size of 11 employees, the work on sales team was of manageable stress. That was sort of exactly what I wanted.

“Hi, I am Leela. I have an appointment with Malcom Marshall.”

“Good Morning Ma’am. He is expecting you. Just right through that corridor, first door.”

“Good Morning Malcom.

Hi…Leela…”

“Good Morning Leela. How are you? Glad you are on time.”

“Ya…Good morning…I am fine thank you.”

“Did you have all the living arrangements settled well in Bournemouth?”

“Yes, I kind of got tucked in well. Spent some week here.”

“Well that’s good. Then I’ll say you are all set to get on your new job.”

Malcom briefed me a little bit more on the company and its workings, which I obviously knew. Inferno was not exactly in gaming as my previous company was, it was a media company. They basically designed custom made gaming stations for outdoor utility which were used for advertisements. These were interactive stations, hooked up with the internet, and social media, all new age fancy stuff trying to get closer to the Minority Report style public engagement.

“As we are still a start-up we just have four sales guys. Three of the other guys will be covering London which is our main market and you are to be covering coastal regions.

Our main cash flow is through our service which we provide to the companies, but you are to be focusing on our first flag ship product ‘Cyborg’, which is our own customizable station. And so it will be bit different for you from the other guy’s, at least in the beginning. As you will be working with one of our Engineer or Hacker as I like to call her.

So that is it, Leela. You can ask me if you have any questions any time, or otherwise anything that might bother you about your job profile.”

“Thanks Malcom. I think I am good at the moment.”

You can have a talk with Amal at the reception, she will show you the desk.”

“Cool…Sure…Thanks.”

I was dismayed at the size of my desk and the overall ambience of my space, given that I compared it with my small furnished empire in London. On top of it I was to share it with this she-hacker, I donno who.

“Hi, Miller…Susan Miler. Malcom just told me you are here…I am the technical part of Cyborg. We will be working together and also you like it or not sharing this office…ha…”

“Hi, Leela…nice to meet you…

Yes…Malcom told me…the hacker will join me.”

“Ha ha…that’s just what he likes to call me, he feels it’s cool, but he doesn’t know yet it has become such a cliché word, that it’s not cool anymore. But whatever you can call me Susan, or as I prefer just Sue.

I hope everything is good with your logistics.”

“Yes, I rented a nice house, everything is cool at that front.”

“That’s cool. So tell me more…”

Sue was very talkative, and we stuck a very good friendship in no time. There was a good amount of acceptance in her eyes for me, even though I had become a bit of a laconic, given my blues. She made me feel comfortable, and explained this Cyborg thing, which was nothing but just a fancy name for a bit of a modified gaming station which was also customizable. But whatever, now it was getting mysteriously cool as I was working to sell Cyborgs at Inferno with a Hacker.

As I learned, Sue was this carelessly informal New Yorker, supremely at ease in her casual blue jeans and t-shirt amid all other well-dressed employees. But I mean, she didn’t had to, her part was of the computer nerd with the bit black glasses that she sported so well, but she was laid back nonetheless. Apparently, she was in the UK for last 2 years and had left the States to explore the ‘land of her ancestors’ as she herself liked to put it. She was bit of a wild ‘other cultures’ fan.

To her fellow geeks in the office, Sue was the second coming of Steve Wozniak, who could hack in to any hardware. To me she was the cover-up for work lag that was about to happen as I was not really there to do any work. I was in this limbo of sadness and depression and nothing really was going to make much sense to me and nor was I there with any grand ambition to give the company a million dollar turnover. I was there to ruminate, ruminate over my pathetic and miserable past and get my lessons and move on. Though at that point nor did I knew what grand lessons were kept there nor did I had any idea how to move on.

And months passed with me and Sue visiting customers on the east coast as well as around Bristol. Our potential customers were the hoteliers, theatre producers, movie producers sometimes banks and anyone else who needed to do some chick tech publicity. My job was to make the sales pitch and Sue was to customize the Cyborg. But my heart was not at all with work which Sue had gauged within a week of me at work but she was kind enough not to inform Malcom and as an add-on she really backed me up at the sales pitch. So practically she was doing both.

## Bournemouth Pier

Almost 7 months passed with similar routine, and the fall arrived.

Put the stuff about solitary walks and the life in depression.

Mrs. Russell inquired, “Are you alright dear? You don’t really look happy ever since you have arrived here.”

I told her my entire story, and that was such a relief to off-load my burden. She told me that she herself was been married twice in her life and finally she had a toy-boy for her for some time whom she finally kicked out of the house. But at that point my problem was not getting a new guy, neither was it wanting to get a new man in my life, my problem was this hole of meaninglessness of both life and love that had got punched in my soul. I had been seeing a therapist in London but at that time the issue was really sadness caused due to my crumbled relationship, now it was more like post-divorce depression, loss of faith in love and struggle to find the meaning to my mutton-chopped life.

“Why don’t you go visit Dr. Frankl at the Bournemouth Hospital. My friend Marian had similar problems. He is quite good. You should book an appointment.”

“Doctor who?”

“Dr. Frankl. I recommend you should.”

“OK, I think that is helpful. I will surely be doing that.”

I was actually in such a thoughtless desperation that I didn’t bother to do any check about the reviews and surfing other psychotherapists. I took my phone and googled the Royal Bournemouth Hospital, looked up the number and booked an appointment. For Saturday, 3:00 pm with one, Dr. Frankl.

## Therapist

Appointment with Dr. Frankel

Suffering and the meaning of life. Put the stuff about necessity to formulate the meaning of life. Do the research and write about the interactions with the therapist.

## Susan Disappears

Sue got a new lead from one of her friends

Prof. Rufus Drake Department of Neuroscience, University of Bristol,

# Chapter 4: The Mystic

## Meeting the Mystic

The mystic from the east we call Him ‘the blessed one’, nobody knows whether He’s Indian or Tibetan or may be even Japanese, He kind of looks like He’s neither or sometimes feels like He’s all three.

## Meeting Ma Prem Saraha

# Chapter 5: Liberation