

## Freedom

One more night...

We only needed one more night before we could leave.

Before we could be free.

had the train tickets, and we were all packed.

It was late, I was tired, I didn't think much about the nightly search. Then They found your meds.

They're twisting it, calling you a criminal, an addict. It's just Ibuprofen for your back pain. Dr.

Silvey prescribed the pills; it's not like you stole them or something. I know their game. They want me here working on their next pointless massacre.

My love, your optimism amazes me like nothing else. You almost convinced me this could work, that we could be away from this hell of my own making. Even after Alice... After that, the men took our daughter away.

At the funeral, it was you who kept me going. You, my love, are the reason I get out of bed every morning. It was your optimism, your compassion, that convinced me that this pitiful life was worth living, that I had something worth living for.

But I digress.

Your "addiction" will keep us here. The appeals and bureaucracy will take months, and I doubt we could afford an attorney. The fees are enough to put us into debt if we don't refund the tickets. I know why this is happening, why they are holding us back. My expertise in military technology is too valuable to them. I have access to knowledge of weapons that make Oppenheimer look like a child playing war.

They don't want me in neutral territory.

They don't want me passive in this violence.

They want me here, building atrocities to rip apart families.

Just like they did ours.

I'm dragging you down, my love. As long as I'm here, They will keep you here. There is no escape.

Except one.

I just want you to be safe, I want you to live the life I could never give you. I want you to live the way you want, not the way They are making us.

I love you, Caroline, so I have to do this. For you.

What even is freedom? What does it truly mean to be free? I don't think any of us really know.

Everyone has something controlling them. Drugs, sex, money, even our friends and families.

Perhaps no one is truly free.

I suppose you could say freedom is choice, control over your own life. It's been so long since I've been free, so long since I've felt the sun on my face, seen the flowers blooming. I know you loved the flowers. Every time I manage to bring you one from the market, you light up like a child on Christmas. I want you to know that happiness at all times, I want you to be free of the horrors of this world, to know only that happiness. To be truly free.

So I have to do this, because as long as you are tied to me, you will never be free. As long as I can help them take lives, hurt people, end families.

There is no other escape.

The last life I shall take shall not be for this sorry excuse for a nation,  
Only set you free.

It's amazing how a simple handgun is all it takes to be free.

A dead man and his widow are of no use to them.

Live free, Caroline.

And know that I love you.