

Chapter 4

Shadows Of Society.

That bastard, that cunt Carl Reed thought. He knew he would double cross him, knew he was up to something, should have known better. Living the criminal life was always going to end like this, it had caught up with him, he knew he was dead. The underworld slowed for no one, forgave no one. Forever it lingered as the sick place where no one cared for each other and no one missed anyone.

He sat wire tied at both ankle and feet to a steel chair, tied well as he felt his blood circuit slow. Bam! Another hit to the jaw, the sweet spot, which sent a mouth full of blood in his left direction. He could feel his nose broken, swollen, throbbing. Could feel his eyes puffed with swelling, could feel the cuts in his mouth stinging, a few dislodged teeth moving around inside, and a few spilt wounds on his face. Two hours now and they were getting nasty.

“You wanna start talking. Come on Carl you know we won’t stop, so please do yourself a favour and let us know where and when. He might let you go, he can be very generous sometimes” Timmy said as he laughed like a hyena. His face shifted and pointed like a snaring wild animal.

The crazed hysterical bastard paced in front of Carl with scavenging eyes, knowing the kill was almost in the bag, he just has to be patient, wait for the order. Carl looked up at him depleted “Let me go and I might give you what you want, but how do I know you’ll keep your end of the bargain”. Carl felt his eyes drooping, felt his time fading.

Timmy stopped pacing and stood over with eager attention.

“You know he will keep his promise, his word is good, he’s on his way. But you could just tell me rite now, it would make life easier for you when he arrives, let’s say some professional curtsey” Timmy said.

“No way, you’re crazy, just a fucking killer. The second I squawk you’ll pull the trigger” Carl replied.

Bam! A punch landed smack on Carl’s broken nose, crunching it to a permanent mangled condition, and it splattered Timmy with blood from the nostrils.

“You sick little rat fuck, got your disease all over me” Timmy growled.

Bam! Another hit to the left temple which sent a sharp pain through his head like a needle had been injected. Carl hurt all over. It was his own fault he knew. He knew when dealing with Regan Owens you were dealing with a bullet to the head, but the credits involved tempted him to deal with the devil.

Timmy began pacing again. His big physic was marred by a slight belly, and his features wore an unshaven face, inflated nose, and deep sunk crazed eyes. His shaved head was menacing and the sleeves of his striped shirt were rolled up to reveal military tattoos that read ‘Lieutenant’ and ‘What Do You Need Us For If There Are No Wars’.

Carl knew all about Timmy, knew how he, Regan, and gang of thugs turned their backs on the Quazar army. Heard the stories about how they used their time with them to unravel the criminal world and become part of it. Any chance of the authoritarian guards or military catching these two fucks disappeared years ago as they set up their cartel with the military’s cover, making them invisible to the law. They were taught how catch the world’s biggest criminals and learnt how to become the ultimate thing that they were

supposed to stop. Every big drug producer knew them. The little ones, like Carl, ran from them. Why he thought did he try to sell to them. Everyone knew about their endeavours, what they did to small time crooks. They would squash them like a cockroach under the boot, like some insignificant fly that annoyed them.

Bam! The gut this time which sent the wind out of Carl. He coughed, spluttered, and groaned with pain.

“I can go on all day, can you” Timmy said with sadistic intent “This is only going to get worse with every blow. I know how you feel Carl, know the hurt inside, the pain ringing in your head. If you want it to stop just let me know, let me know what we both want. You’ll be let go, I know the boss will say so, for helping us”.

Timmy leaned to Carl, grabbing him by the throat, forcing his head upward with a jerk “Tell me where and the pain will go away or your looking at a pain that will be permanent” Timmy said with sullen aggression. His face shifted like a predator desperate to strike.

“It’s ok Timmy, pull me up a chair” Regan echoed from the back of the room with arrogant dismissive talk. Timmy let Carl go, obeying.

Carl sat in a disused industrial factory floor, empty bar the gangsters that inhabited. The concrete ground was wet, filthy, the walls a grainy rust and dirt. The damp environment was shaded in darkness, felt huge to Carl, but the blackness hid its size. The echoes of blows and rage tiptoed the pervasive darkness, almost uncloaking it. Carl knew the pack of animals in front of him were controlling it, using it. He could sense its grasp pulling him toward hell.

Regan stepped from the darkness on his cane, dressed in a clean-cut black suit. His shoes were a polished shine, and his aged looks appeared from the shadow he'd hid in, which revealed his grey hair and weasel like nose and eyes. Above Carl a bulb dangled on a wire from the partially torn high industrial ceiling, sitting him in a pool of dim orange light. Shards of daylight wafted the air around from the beaten roof and Regan stepped into the orange pool. It revealed his miserable figure that was worn from years, but still it was capable of as much evil.

"Sorry about this Carl" he said in his sly voice "it's just you have something that is not yours, sure you made the shit, but lets be fair you couldn't sell it for shit".

"Mister Regan, please, please let me go, I'll give you credit, I'll give you contacts, names. If I tell you about tomorrow they'll kill me" Carl said with a supplicate voice, a voice that was battered and withered from brutality.

"If you don't tell me I'll kill you. It's catch twenty two you hear what I'm saying. You've fucked up" he said standing before him. His cane waved about in front of him like he was conducting his emotions.

Timmy returned with metal chair in hand and slammed it down in front of Carl, which dispersed an echo around the wide open room.

"Thank you Timmy" Regan said as he sat down cross-legged. His weasel face stared disgustedly at him, his cane resting upwards beside.

The supercilious bastard Carl thought, the malevolent cunt. He wished he could turn back the clock and pass up the offer of the drug deal. He'd spent his life producing a respectable amount of Mentha in a small unit he owned. His cover was a jacket business, also run from the unit. It took him a year of his life to rig the small room at the back of

his unit to make the drug. It was easy when you knew how. All you needed to know was which plant the key ingredient came from. Like Heroin of earth, Mentha was a natural substance that only needed extraction and liquidating. Easily grown, easily covered, all you needed was a front to blind the law and credit holders. If Carl sold a handsome amount of Mentha, a bogus sale with the jackets would explain the appearance of credit in his account.

“Let me tell you a little about me and my business Carl” Regan pulled a coin from his pocket, an ancient American nickel and rolled it from finger to finger, then back again repeatedly “Let me tell you why I do this, this planet is a prison, one big cell that humanity has been placed in. Humans should not be here. Humans are from earth. Certain members have moved us here against our will and hold us captive” he stopped rolling the coin and placed it in his pocket.

He retrieved a small plastic pouch, no bigger than the coin with a short needle protruding. The black liquid Mentha filled the deathly pouch “And this is the release humanity needs to help them by, help them get over their worries, concerns and imprisonment. I couldn’t give a fuck if the human is five years old; he deserves a little release from this place. Call me a psycho, but only a psycho would put a race in a place like this”.

Carl had heard about Regan’s vicious nature, heard it cut like a blunt razor. His sadistic violence had stirred the criminal underworld with fear and twisted respect. He’d heard once that Regan had murdered a member of his own clan for bad mouthing him when he paid nothing for a small job he’d carried out. Nobody wanted to mess, or get close to him because of his violent incorrigible past.

“What’s wrong with this place” Carl replied with a pain filled voice.

“Each to their own Carl, but there are plenty of like minded people out there who need the escape from the mundane prison that’s called life. You should know this, why do you push the drug” Regan asked.

“Credits, all for credits” replied Carl.

All Carl was ever interested in was credit. He didn’t particularly care who injected the drug, male, female, adult, child, just that they had the credit. It’s what talked if you’re in the business of narcotics.

Regan pulled the Nickel back out and held it up to Carl “You see this, real money. I would give anything to live in a world where you could hold your money. None of this sneaking around with make-believe money, but real money, real notes, coins. You see this world has taken away peoples ability to do what they want. This world, this so called utopia is just a façade that is created to control us, to hold us. This is no utopia, this is a fucking prison. How can people decide what is best for us, force us into their way of life”.

“You’re fucking crazy, and I hope they catch you and put the pin too your head by tossing you into a real fucking prison, so you know how it really feels. There’s a fucking screw loose somewhere with you guy’s, oh and by the way where is the perverse fuck Nexus. He’d usually be here now, so I’ve heard, raping some poor hooker in the corner” Carl barked.

Regan sat stunned momentarily, then smiled and laughed with a slyness that made you cringe with hatred and shiver with dread.

“Timmy, get the communicator” Regan ordered disturbingly amused.

Timmy pulled out a small black rectangular pocket communicator and handed it to Regan who flipped it open and switched it on.

“Here you can ask him yourself, he needs to know the exchange point for the deal, so he can work his magic on the credit readers and chip locators. He’s not just a perverse, sick person, he’s an expert in Quazar technology and the reason why we have managed to get by undetected by the authorities, go ahead ask him yourself”.

Regan held the small screen in front of Carl. It flickered on and displayed a head shot image of Nexus in a sultry state of pleasure inside a sky-mobile. His shoulder length, curtained black hair clumped a greased mess, his face a deranged sight.

“Nexus, there’s someone here to speak to you” Regan said.

Nexus looked at his fixed mobile communicator, lifting a beehive red haired hooker up from his lap. Her face was a smudged lipstick mess as her head appeared and disappeared from the image.

“Good damn it, I almost had you there” the hooker moaned.

“Shut it bitch. Yes boss what is it” Nexus asked with detumescent eyes.

“Tell mister Carl here what you need for tomorrow, he seems to be lost for words”.

Nexus looked into the camera and Carl.

“Take a beating can you Carl, must be quite a man to withstand the persuasive approach of Timmy. Thing is I need to know who and where the exchange is being made. We have to be able to locate all of the chips involved, so we can read their whereabouts and personnel information. We wouldn’t want to walk ourselves into someone who is being tagged by the authoritarians. See we have the technology to read what the authoritarians are thinking and doing, in fact our military training enables us to read anyone on the

planet, their whereabouts, history, every little detail, so be a good boy and let mister Regan know exactly what he asks you. I think you'll find he's forgiving" Nexus sleazed.

Regan looked at Carl with wanting eyes as on the screen the hooker's arm stroked at Nexus's cheek.

"Quit brown nosing me bitch and wait till I'm finished" Nexus continued "Now Carl I know you'll pull through this minor incident if you'll just talk, it's as easy as that. Boss I'll ring you later after the beehive has been honeyed, ha, ha" Nexus said with salacious sleaze and reached for the camera, turning it off.

Regan flipped the communicator closed and held it up for Timmy to take with obedience, which he did without a word.

"So Carl" Regan said "What's it to be. Is it you tell me all I need to know rite now, or is it a gruelling, painstaking, tour de force in torture to get from you exactly what I need to know. You see the human mind is a fragile thing. When it begins to experience something that harms it in any way, it usually submits to whatever will stop it. You see neurons, the key electrical force that governs everything we feel, touch and think, in fact everything that consciousness allows us to experience, will fire in your head when we get started and will beg your mind to stop resisting. The pain"

Timmy pulled a small crafted bronzed handle from his pocket and held it to Carl's eyes threatening,

"you see Carl will overcome your rational thinking, because the neurons I'm going to fire will scream in your head to just tell Regan what he wants to know as they carry it around. The mind and body cannot withstand anything I am about to throw at you" Regan said with twisted demented confidence.

“Meet my McGovern, it’s what I call it. My tool of pain” Timmy said with evil force, as he pushed a button on the underneath of the handle. A razor thin red laser knife emitted from the handle, six inches in length.

“You Carl are my gangster number one, my current top threat. When you enter someone’s territory, I’m sorry, you have to be able to fend for yourself or the local talent, in this case me, will just kill you. Last chance before I set him on you, and believe me he is extraordinarily good at firing those neurons for me, and I really mean that” Regan stated.

“Ok, I’ll tell you” Carl said as Timmy waved the knife in front of his eyes, his pupils feeling the heat from the laser blade, his brows singeing “It’s going down up your arse, because that’s the only place neurons fire from for you”. Carl tried to laugh but it hurt too much, what came out was a half hearted attempt and cough.

Timmy walked behind Carl and sliced five fingers from his right hand, making him scream in pain “Ahhhh, ahhhhh, ahhhhh” as the laser coarderised the cut. The fingers dropped to the floor, leaving sickly burnet stumps where they once were attached. The sadistic Timmy picked up the index finger and walked frontal of Carl who knew all he had to do was not give in, not let them take the goods and his life.

“Carl pull your finger out and tell us what we want, or something else is going missing” Timmy said throwing the finger on Carl’s lap.

The kill was within sight for him. His patience had paid off. Carl felt Timmy smelling the inflicted scars like a wild scavenger of earth. Must block out the pain he thought, must hold strong. Sure all of my life I’ve been bad, but nothing compared to this dragon, this creature of hate, this poison of society that infects like an incurable

instigating seed. The cause of all things bad, a child killer with the intoxicating drug named Mentha. I hope the authoritarians make his demise as painful as mine, he continued thinking, before extinguishing his lights for good. Neurons, I hope he takes one too many hits of his own creation and fires an ecstasy of neurons that turns his mind to jelly.

“Now Carl, what do you want to tell us” Regan asked again, still sitting legs crossed.

“I want to tell you” Carl said dripping with sweat and pain “that tomorrow night the exchange will happen at your mums, because she communicated with me earlier and said that your father was a dickless, good for nothing ass who couldn’t hit the spot, even when she open herself up and pointed straight at it” Carl said slipping in and out of consciousness.

His puffed head rolled with fight, his desire to live no more. Regan stared like a statue then sniggered with an evil that would scare Lucifer himself.

“I can see you are a hard man Carl, can see you have a strong breaking point, but I’m almost there” Regan said nodding to Timmy.

Timmy lowered on one knee and with a swift clean strike sliced Carl’s feet off above the ankle. He screamed with spasmodic movement in his chair “Ahhhh, ahhhhh, ahhhhh” as Regan shouted over his pain “Carl I can wait for you to wake back up, I will keep you alive until I get what I want, your choice, I know you hear me”.

Timmy picked his left foot up, shaking the wiring from the ankle and threw it on Carl’s convulsing lap “You’ve put your foot it now Carl” he remarked.

Carl dropped his cordarised legs down on the floor, his stumps pressing into the rust and filth, then lifted them back up in screaming agony as water dripped from the smoking amputations “Ahhhh, aaaaahhhhh”.

Carl never thought it would end like this. What the fuck did he do to deserve this he thought?

“Carl I want you to hear me ok” Regan continued “All you’ve got to do is tell me where and who, easy”.

Carl writhed with pain, holding his legs from the floor, his body a foot shorter. “The next piece I’ll take from you Carl will change you forever, so tell me now where and when” Regan calmly asked.

Carl sat, head rolling around, eyes opening and closing, mind slipping in and out. “Carl an answer is all I want” he moved closer to him “All I want Carl, come on give it to me”.

Regan gave Timmy another nod, ordering him to take another piece of his body. He lifted Carl’s head, threatening the razor blade at his face. “Carl, it’s going between your legs if you don’t tell us in the next ten seconds” Timmy said with his gruff coarse voice.

He lowered the knife and moved it between his thighs. His legs smelt of burnt flesh and his face was dowsed in sweat. Carl looked down “Please stop, please” he feebly begged.

“Then tell us Carl” Regan repeated.

The laser blade moved closer to Carl’s manhood, smouldering into the chairs seat as he started whimpering “Please, please”.

“Tell us now or you’ll have to change your name” Regan said.

“Ok, ok I’ll tell you, I’ll tell you” Carl submitted “Everything you need to know is on the chip card in the sole of my shoe, who, when, and where. The order left my unit yesterday, has been held by the courier over night, it’s out of my hands”.

“That wasn’t so hard was it” Regan replied.

Timmy removed the knife from Carl’s legs and stepped back.

“Will you please let me go, I can get medical help” Carl pleaded.

“The thing is Carl you know my business” Regan said as he pulled a slick thin laser blaster from his jacket “Which means it’s not going to be as easy as that. What I can do”,

Regan positioned the gun sideways and twisted a power enabler button from four bars, down to one bar “Carl is stop the pain, make things comfortable for you”.

Regan lifted the gun up centre forehead “Thank you Carl” and pulled the trigger. Carl knew he was dead the second he sat in the chair, knew it was going to be painful, was relieved the pain was about to stop. Some people say that your life flashed before your eyes when faced with death, not Carl’s. His past held memories that were best left forgotten, disgusting things, things that changed you, like selling to kids, selling to pregnant addicts, being involved with people who had no morals, no self dignity, no life, just a mess, a disturbed way of living, a hate of the world, a twisted mentality that bent your life to fucking hell. Carl knew his life was a sick one, knew that he was one of the deranged people who never gave two fucks about the person next to him, never gave two fucks about himself. He always lived in fear of the authoritarians, always hiding, lying, and being the repulsive scab that clung to society with putrid disease. The authoritarians always tried to pick him off, clean him and be rid of him. Knowing he was that person

scarred him and warped him into experiencing the world in a demented way. Carl realised this after his first Mentha sale, realising that his income was infection, his clients the infected, people who would rather buy a hit than buy their kid's food. People who were dependant on escaping reality too a place in their mind that was confused, dirty, rotten. Carl knew he was dead the second he sat in the chair, knew he was never going to sell another infectious hit, knew he was going to hell.

The laser burnt through his head, an inch in width, and coarcterized the wound which smoked with fried brain. A perfect hole tunnelled through as Regan lowered the gun.

"Timmy, get the information over to Nexus" Regan said rising on his cane and turning to leave "Oh and by the way, good work, good work son" Regan praised as he walked back into the shadow, leaving Timmy to search the amputated foot.