

I fear that I am dead.

My thoughts appear muffled, blurred together like the hoard of voices contained within a stadium, shouting in all directions as yet another point is scored. The merciless cold bites at my skin. The smell of mold clings to the air all around me, making me feel sick to my stomach. My fear is reality; I am dead. I don't know why, and I don't know how, but I know it with complete certainty. The overbearing feeling makes me weak at the knees.

I receive only a glimmer of guidance through the heaviness of the dark. A glistening blue light fighting back against the blackness that is trying to engulf its beauty. Still in a state of confusion, I stare at the light. Curiosity becomes my rationality as my hand begins to reach out towards what seems a flickering candle. It billows and shrinks before my very eyes, swallowed up by the stagnant atmosphere that surrounds it. Within the blink of an eye, it's gone. Consumed. What was it, I wonder? When I first saw it, it gave me a warm feeling. Hope, or perhaps something I can't put my finger on.

As I begin to look around, I start to realize that I am surrounded by objects. They surround me in large numbers. At first glance, they seem like random items that you would find in any hoarder's household, but then I look closer. The objects are tangible memories. I can feel their presence as my body rams into a seemingly invisible wall. Glass and stacks of papers fly past me, leaving my arms and legs riddled with cuts and slashes. Why is all of this here? A picture knocks against the back of my head before spinning around in front of me. Fixated on the photo, I see my mother holding my hand as I triumphantly hoist a diploma in the air. Tears crystallise in my eyes as the memory rushes away from my grasping hands, receding back into

the tides of memories. I don't remember the moment, but I remember being happy. Why does it have to rush away?

Realization suddenly dawns on me. I am falling - the memories are suspended in this horrible abyss like a physical timeline. I glance to my side and catch sight of a gun. I pull it out of its set position, sliding my finger on top of the trigger. Blurred memories begin to flood my mind, but I can't make sense out of them.

With an enormous amount of force, my back slams against a desk, flipping my body over like a flimsy ragdoll, causing me to lose my grip on the gun. In a desperate struggle to remember the truth, my hands reach for the weapon. They reach for the memory of how I died, but it floats too far from my grasp. Again and again I crash into soaring debris: old relics, moth-bitten bedsheets and torn clothes. Is there an end to this infliction of physical and emotional pain?

Through the darkness, I feel something sharp latch onto my arm. Wires wrap around my flesh, squeezing my body tighter and tighter until there is no room left to move, as if it were the darkness to my blue light. Is this another memory? Like a creature of the night, it attacks, targeting my weakest points, burying them in layers of metal. They slice my skin covering me in a blanket of agony, digging into every inch of my decrepit corpse. It's barbed wire. I open my mouth to scream, but the devil holds my tongue. In a desperate struggle, I manage to free my right hand. I react quickly, grabbing the wire lacing my face. My hand cries in pain and begs me to let go, but I push the notion aside. It takes all of my might, but eventually I wrench the wires off, clearing my vision, enabling me to breathe. Having blocked out the pain, I begin to thrash my legs. My efforts do not go in vain, and the wires quickly loosen. With both my hands now free, I grab the wires coating the rest of my body and peel them off in clumps.

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Subsequent to the torment, I begin to refocus my vision. Through the blur of my eyes, I see a light. It isn't the same as before. It's much darker - almost brooding. It gradually gets brighter as my body becomes increasingly heavier and as my vision focuses, I notice the light splits endlessly evolving into multiple smaller lights. Some are brighter than others, some look more elevated, and some appear to move with my every glance. The darkness recedes in fear of the lights as I continue my journey, falling away from the objects.

The darkness dissipates. I am consumed by the lights, the brightness temporarily blinding me. With the wind billowing past my body and my eyes readjusting once again to the change in surroundings, the lights begin to develop. It's a city that stretches farther than the eye can see!

Temporarily preoccupied with my surroundings, I fail to simply look down and notice a concrete path which I am about to crash into. Suddenly realizing the gravity of my situation, I open my mouth to scream, but the racing wind drowns out all noise. I swiftly transform my body into a cocoon, preparing for imminent impact. I can't believe it. I'm going to die for a second time.

I close my eyes and wait, tightly holding my arms against my knees for comfort. I first feel the impact, shortly followed by the immense pain, electrifying and bitter. Every muscle, every bone, every part of my body aches with an incessant longing for death. Laying in a heap with my eyes firmly shut, I start to imagine what will happen when I open my eyes. Will I just respawn in that horrible abyss of memory, or will it be something worse?

After finally amounting enough courage, I nervously peel back my eyelids. Shock spreads through my veins like a bush fire. The fall didn't kill me. There was pain, but I was still alive - well, as alive as you can be when you are dead. As I gather myself together and stand to

my feet, I glance down to witness a small crater underneath me. Any fall that could do that should have been more than enough to kill me. I blink my eyes several times, peer up from where I had just flown in from, and try to resolve what had just happened.

The pain fades much quicker than I would have expected. As I step out of the hole I created, wincing with every movement, the crater starts to repair itself; the cracks refill themselves and the pieces fuse back together. The damage is gone in no time at all.

I look up and notice people ambling through the streets, brushing past me as if nothing had happened. They are people no doubt, but everyone seems to have some sort of unique physical characteristic to them. A young woman with floating hair and a man dressed in 80's clothes glowing bright like an ember walk past me. Instantaneously, I check myself, inspecting my body for a strange characteristic. As I roll back my sleeves, I notice thick black lines are drawn on arms. Is this a clue to my life before I fell into this nightmarish reality? I can't even remember my name. Is this a clue to who I used to be?

Needing immediate answers to my unsettling questions, two drunken men grab my attention as they barrel out the doors of a nearby tavern barely holding onto numerous empty bottles of beer in their arms. With no hesitation, I throw my hands up in the air, violently waving them in order to catch their attention.

"Excuse me? Hey!" They chuckle to each other before putting their attention on me. Having ran towards them, I explain, "Where am I?"

At first, the pair raise their eyebrows, chuckling as before. Something catches the taller man's interest as he looks me up and down, his eyes widening. Catching me off guard, he

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forcibly takes me by the collar of my shirt and eyes me down. Staring into my eyes, he says in amazement, “Your eyes...”

The man, bewildered, swiftly looks over to his friend and says in a high pitched voice, “Sally Mae said he would be a purple.” The second man walks over to inspect me. Having invaded my personal space, he examines my eyes. He turns to his friend with worried expression.

“We need to take him to the headquarters. If he’s isn’t a purple, I must be color blind!”

Increasingly angered, I grab the taller man’s hand and rip it off my collar, reclaiming his attention. I force myself a few steps away from them and regain my balance. Trying to stay composed, I say, “Look guys. I just want to know where I am. You guys seem busy, so if you could just give me a name, that’ll be wonderful and I can get on my way.”

“This place is called Postvitae. It’s the place people go after they die. A life after death, if you prefer. I’m Hank.” explains the taller man, extending his hand which I shake in return. “My friend here is Lester.”

“So, I *am* dead.” I confirm.

“That you are. Postvitae is far from the heaven we all hoped for. There’s usually no crime or anything of that nature, and there is more than enough food and space for everyone. However, that doesn’t stop people from being people. Human emotion is the most destructive element that has ever existed. With human emotion comes the hunger for superiority, and with the hunger for superiority, comes debate, envy and hatred. With envy and hatred comes segregation and that is the main crime of this reality.”

“But everyone has different features. How can someone segregate anyone?” I ask inquisitively.

“That’s where you’re wrong my friend. There is one common trait among us all. We all have either red or blue eyes. No one knows how it’s determined which color you get, but you either get one or the other. The segregation started quite early on in our existence. A small group of Reds felt like the red in their eyes meant they deserved more power than the blues. It took a while for them to get traction, but eventually the group became so large, they were able to appoint a Red king to rule over Postvitae with no opposition from the blues.”

“Why don’t the Blues fight for equality?” I query.

“Well, the Reds have played the field well, making it increasingly difficult for the Blues. The Reds started their operation small to gain the Blue’s trust. First, they set a law limiting what the Blues could eat, putting it down as ‘Health Reasoning’. Then they began to restrict books and set curfews. Suddenly, they began inhibiting the Blues from going to small areas that gradually got bigger. It took hundreds of years for them to get this far, but look where we are. No one dies around here because you can’t kill what’s already dead. The Blues realized the faults in the system when it was already too late. The Reds had established an army, a capital, and unwavering control over most of this world, and all the blues could do was sit back and watch. Nowadays, the Blues can hardly eat anything under the watchful eye of the Reds. They have a strict diet of bread and only bread, wasting away in their sordid little houses.”

“Wait. You both have red eyes. Why are you talking about segregation in a negative way while you are benefiting from it?”

Lester’s face drops slightly, “Like Hank said, when you die, you don’t lose your human emotion. Everyone still has the ability to differentiate between right and wrong. I don’t know

what originally drove the Reds to such extreme measures, but I do know this. Just because everyone else thinks it's right, doesn't make it any less wrong."

"What about me? What color are my eyes?"

"We can't talk about this now. If they catch us out here in the open, they'll hold you as a prisoner indefinitely. We have to get you back to the others." Hank informs me.

Lester taps Hank's shoulder. "Hank, we better get moving. Fast!" I look behind me to see a man covered in red armor, holding what seems to be a gun across his torso. His stride lengthens as he approaches us.

"Come with me. This place is crawling with them. Lester, you stay here and stall the guard." Lester nods.

Hank turns to me. He waves his hand, motioning for me to follow. I stick to him like a shadow as he maneuvers through bustling streets. As we walk, I try to allow my brain to catch up with all that I had just learned. I replay everything Hank and Lester said in my mind over and over again, trying to force myself to adjust to this strange new reality I have literally just crashed into. Repeatedly, I pinch myself, silently hoping that I will wake up from this horrific nightmare.

"Do you remember your name?" I barely hear Hank's voice over the clamor in my head.

"No," I reply. "I don't remember anything."

"That's how it is for all of us. No matter how hard you try, you won't be able to recover any of your memories." He pauses, glancing back at my disheartened expression. "You'll just have to start over like the rest of us did."

Hank stops at a dead end in a dark alley, raising fear in my chest. He moves his palm softly along the smooth wall until he comes to a sudden stop. He very carefully presses the wall

and it sinks back, deep into the building. The whole wall comes alive, bricks and mortar moving around like a rubix cube, constantly changing, until there is a great gaping hole where the wall once stood.

“How did you do that?” I ask, amazed.

“I used my telekinesis.” He explains.

“You used your what?” I exclaim.

“Oh, let me explain. In this world, some people have ‘powers’. For example, with telekinesis, I can move objects with my mind. I can only use it when I’m in close contact with an object, but it’s not very strong. That’s why I can’t open a bigger entrance.”

I stare at him in disbelief, but he doesn’t even glance my way. I must be dreaming. Stepping forward, he enters the fissure in the wall, pulling me in just as it begins to close up.

There is no change in the absorbency of my mind. Although I can’t remember what normal is, I know this world isn’t it. After walking through the hole, I immediately realize that the room we have entered is staffed with people of different colors. There are both Reds and Blues, working together.

“This place is our headquarters. Everyone, meet our new member. What should we call you?”

“Daryll.” I blurt out.

“His name is Daryll.” Hank says. Some start coming towards me while others just wave from a distance. Overwhelmed, I ask, “Where is the bathroom? We still use those things, right?”

“Of course we do! We’re not barbaric.” I stand there staring at him, awkwardly waiting for some direction, but he gives none.



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“Where is it?” I repeat, trying not to sound too eager.

“Oh it’s down this hall. Second door to your left.”

I turn and walk down the immaculate hallway Hank gestured me towards. Shortly, I find myself standing in front of a regular door. I open it slowly, afraid of what I may find inside, but everything thankfully looks normal. I need to find out what is so special about me. After closing the door, I spin around and peer into the mirror.

Purple eyes stare back at me. Shocked, I stumble and slip, tumbling onto the ground. How can I have purple eyes? I take off my clothes to check the black patterns. They continued on throughout my body, starting with one line at my left heel and ending on my forehead in a strange but satisfying spiral. What does it mean? Perhaps, it relates to my power, if I have one. Perhaps I have telekinesis like Hank. Okay, let’s try telekinesis. I put my right hand forward and focus on turning the knob connected to the sink but to no avail. It won’t budge. Could I have enhanced strength? Assuming this whole world operates like the sidewalk I crashed into, whatever I hit will just repair itself anyway. I turn to the wall adjacent to the toilet and ball up my fists, concentrating my mind on the wall. Closing my eyes, I begin to throw punches as I slowly approach the wall. After throwing three punches, I know the wall is within reach of my next punch. I scrunch up my nose and hurl my arm at the wall. But I feel nothing.

I open my eyes to see the wall without a scratch. I reach my hand out to touch the wall, and as my fingers make contact, they seamlessly pass through as if the wall didn’t exist. I retract my hand and hold it up in disbelief, examining it only to find that it is completely okay. A knock on the door throws me off guard.

“There are other people in line, so get out already!”

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Embarrassed and scared, I quickly open the door and hurry past the heckling girl, my eyes fixated on the ground. I walk down the corridor and find Hank sitting at a small table, drinking a tall glass of liquor alongside Lester. “Hey! Daryll! Come here!” His stench fills my nose as I advance towards him.

“Hank, cut the crap!” I demand. “You still haven’t explained to me why I’m here.”

“Okay, okay, you don’t have to shout.” He turns to Lester. “The siege is tomorrow so we ought to tell him everything now.” Lester nods. Both rise and seize me by the shoulders. They escort me to the end of the long corridor where a large door stands, frequently looking behind around. Lester pulls out a key and inserts it into a hole hidden under the handles. The doors automatically slide open, revealing a grand room. Inside, there is a big round table where six people sit around it, staring at us as we enter.

“Hank, who is this?” asks a woman.

“This is Daryll. I wanted you to have a look at him, I think he may be what we are looking for.” The old woman sprouts from her chair and briskly walks toward me. As she comes closer, Hank sticks out his hand to stop her a few feet away from me. I can see that she’s blind.

In a composed voice, she whispers, “They’re purple. He is the one. I am sure of it.”

Gasps fill the room. Murmurs begin to buzz around the table, but I refuse to be kept in the dark any longer.

“Will someone for God’s sake explain to me what is going on?” I don’t realize how loud my voice is until it becomes the only one in the room.

“Hank, didn’t you explain everything?” The blind woman asks.

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“I only told him about the segregation.” Hank admits, ashamed. “I might have left everything else out.”

The blind woman frowns with disappointment. “Oh, dear. My name is Amosis Timoteus. Daryll, you are in the headquarters of the anti-segregation movement. We are a combination of Blues and Reds who have teamed up in an effort to stop the oppressive Red King. It was once said by our senior-most official that only a man with purple eyes, the perfect mix between red and blue, would be able to bring an end to the segregation. We have awaited your arrival for ages and nearly thought you would never come, but here you are. Tell me. Have you discovered your power yet?”

I look at the other five people sitting at the table and then back at Amosis. “Yes. If I concentrate hard enough, walls become nothing to me, and I can pass right through them.”

“A very useful skill, indeed. It will serve you well.”

“Why? For what purpose?”

“Did you tell him nothing at all, Hank?”

“Basically.” he hesitantly replies .

“Only you can kill the King, Daryll. Only you can bring order to this world and take the throne. It is your duty. We have scheduled our siege on the capital for tomorrow. With your help, we can bring back freedom, fairness, and equality to Postvitae.”

“I thought it was impossible to kill people here.”

“It is. However, there is a weapon that fires a special bullet that can completely freeze anyone into a statue-like form. The Red’s have it too, but this bullet is special. The effect will

last forever. It's the closest thing we get to death around here. We have only one bullet, Daryll. Only the purple eyed is able to fire it, and that is you."

"It's getting dark, and Daryll looks exhausted. He needs to get some rest." Hank interrupts, resting his hand on my shoulder.

"Very well." responds the woman. "This meeting is dismissed."

Hank and Lester guide me to my room deep in the headquarters and remind me to get a nice rest. "Tomorrow is big day," Hank says. "for all of us." However, I find that I am unable to enter the much needed slumber. Rather, I gaze out the window set in my room for hours, processing the information I heard at the meeting. Having finally given up on the hope of sleep, I sit upright in my bed, still staring through the window and out into the night. Eventually, I grow so restless I throw my blanket off and hop off the bed. It must be the middle of the night by now. I can't stay here. I have to get some air.

I examine the window, looking for cracks, pins, locks, or anything that could help me open it. Finally, I find a neatly hidden trigger near the top right side. I flip it and feel a stream of cold air rush into my room. Quietly, I give the window a tap, and it slides open, allowing the sounds of the night to lay over my ears. My room seems to conveniently be on the first floor, so climbing out and shutting the window behind me takes me no time at all.

Glad to be outside, I take my shoes and socks off, embracing the grass with my feet. This is the first taste of peace I've had since I arrived in this crazy world. I lay down and admire the beauty of the clouds. Suddenly, I find myself speaking out loud, "This is crazy. I've barely met these people, and they're asking me to kill someone. I'm just a normal guy who happens to have

purple eyes. I can't do this. I don't want to do this. These people aren't my masters, and I'm not their slave."

Suddenly, I hear something rustle in a bush only a few yards away. I'm lying in the shadow of the headquarters, so whatever it is shouldn't have noticed me. I stare at the bush for what feels like hours, staying on top of my toes in case I need to make a run for it. Then, out of the bushes, two people, a man and a woman, jolt forward, sprinting as if their lives depended on it. Confused, I remain motionless. Seconds later, two Red guards dash after them, and I realize what is happening. As I continue to watch the scene, my suspicions are confirmed. The Red guards catch up to the woman, tackling her to the ground. While the man continues to run, the Red guards give up on chasing him and begin to drag the woman. The woman is a Blue. Frightened, I sink back into the shadows and fall asleep.

My eyes flutter open, bright light spreading over me. I use my hands to feel my surroundings, taking note of the concrete building still supporting my back and the luscious grass hugging my legs. But there is also smell. My eyes widen as I realize what it is. I jump up to my feet and run out from under the building's shadow, gaping in horror as I see the capitol building. Smoke coats the air as soldiers scurry to protect it, only a mile away from the headquarters.

"No. Don't go. You don't have to do this." I tell myself. However, the horrific image of the blue eyed woman getting dragged on the ground last night fights my instinctive senses to run. Without thinking, I begin to run towards the smoke. If I have to maneuver my way through the city, it will take me at least double the amount of time to get there. It's time to put my powers to the test. I keep my eye on the smoke and then notice a building directly in my way. I stare at the

wall, concentrating on it and blocking out all fear as the wall quickly approaches. My body instinctively tries to force me to flinch, but I shut the motion down.

“Three, two,” I close my eyes. “one.”

I reopen my eyes, and I am in the building, but the next wall is quickly nearing. Again, I concentrate and run through it. After passing through several walls, I finally make it only fifty yards from the capitol building. As I continue running, I am suddenly tackled to the ground by someone.

“Daryll!”

“Hank?”

“Where have you been? Our forces are holding on by a thread.”

“I’m sorry. I just needed to be by myself for a little bit.”

“Well, I hope you got your alone time. We need to make our assault now. Here’s the plan. You, me, and Lester will sneak past the soldiers while the other guys distract them. We’ll get you as close as we can to the main hall where the King is. From there, you’ll use your powers to pass through the walls and take down the King before he even realizes what’s happened. Lester and I will escort you there and then do our best to guard the entrance. Got it?”

As I nod, Lester comes up behind Hank. “You’re not going to like what I’m about to tell you. The Reds have secretly been manufacturing more bullets behind our backs this entire time. They have enough to freeze our army twice over.”

Hank’s eyes widen. “Should we abort the mission? Did Amosis say anything?”

Lester looks his friend in the eyes and then at the ground. Almost in tears, he says, “Amosis... they shot Amosis.”

“Oh my god.” Hank covers his mouth with his hands and takes a deep breath. Anger flashes through his eyes. He puts his hand on his friend’s shoulder. “Don’t worry. She’ll be okay.”

Hank turns to me, digging into his pocket. His face is grim. He pulls out a golden bullet and loads it into his gun. “This is it. You have one shot.”

“Will the gun go with me through the wall?” I ask as I store the gun in my back pocket.

“If your clothes do, then hopefully the gun will as well. Let’s get going. We’ve already lost so much time.”

Following Hank, we run to the front lines where Lester gives the go signal to one of the commanders. Subsequently, the commander turns to his soldiers and waves his hand forward. The soldiers bravely run into the middle of the battlefield, dropping smoke pellets as they race for the Red guards in an effort to steal a radio or gun.

“Now’s our chance! Move!” Hank exclaims.

Staying near the smoke, Hank leads us closer to the capitol building, bullets whizzing over our heads. Hank’s orders are muffled by the noise of chaos ringing in the air. Gunshots and screams fill my ears. The only thing I am able to stay focused on is Lester’s back which frequently becomes submerged in smoke.

Suddenly, a Red guard leaps out of the smoke, tackling me to the ground as Lester disappears into the smoke in front of me. I attempt to let out a cry for help, but the guard covers my mouth with his right hand and uses the other to hold a gun to my chest. However, he doesn’t immediately shoot. Confused by the color of my eyes, he stays motionless on top of me for a few seconds, afraid he may kill one of his own. Slowly, he cocks his gun. I plead with my eyes, the

one reason he is about to lock me in a frozen state. His finger slides onto the trigger like mine did in the abyss.

Hank dives through the smoke, catching the soldier off guard. Lester comes from behind and seizes the guard's gun from under him. As Lester trains the gun on the Red guard, Hank removes the guard's helmet and gives him a hard blow to the head with his fist, knocking him unconscious.

"That was a really close call." Lester remarks.

"The smoke is too thick to see, but we're right at the feet of the capitol building. Once we get to the columns right next to the entrance, you should have a straight shot for the main hall. Let's keep moving."

The other soldiers do a good job of distracting the Red guards as we make our run for the columns. By the time we reach them, the smoke has began to clear, leaving me little time to get inside. Backed up against the column, Lester checks his ammunition while Hank reports back to the commanders, telling them that we'd made it to the building in one piece. Hank then takes a look around the column to get a view of the entrance to the main hall. Immediately, he comes under rapid gunfire.

"Why are there guards stationed there? We were told it was going to be clear!" Hank screams.

"Some of the guards must have dropped back to the entrance when the smoke became too thick to see through! We'll have to find another way!" Lester replies.

"There is no other way! I looked for every possible entrance to the main hall, and this is the only one with any possibility for success!"



Lester pokes his head out from behind the column and instantly comes under fire.

“ If we get shot, they’ll take us and Daryll! Hank, we can’t get through this way! We’ll all get shot!”

“Not all of us.” Hank mutters. Leaning into my ear, Hank whispers, “On the count of three, run for the door. Don’t look behind you, understand?” I nod, my stomach twisting into a knot in dread as I realize what is about to happen.

Calling for a reply, Lester shouts, “Hank! What do we do?”

“Don’t let this ever happen again, Lester!” Hank orders.

“I mean now, Hank!”

“One!”

“Hank?”

“Two!”

“Hank, why are you counting?” Lester speaks frantically now.

“Three!”

“No, Hank!”

Hank leaps out from the column, firing his tranquilizer rapidly at the guards. The shots from the guards come just as quickly. Staying low, I swing around the column, unnoticed by the guards who continue to mercilessly fire at Hank. I can hardly hear anything over Lester’s screams and the noise of the gunshots as I race towards the door. Concentrating on the main entrance, I rise to a full sprint, only a few feet away. One of the guards finally notices me, but it's too late. By the time he turns the gun on me, I am already through and the bullets bounce off the door.

Standing in the middle of the main hall is the King, tapping away on a small screen. He didn't notice my entrance, giving me ample time to pull out the gun from my back pocket. I raise the gun and walk cautiously towards the King. Having heard my footsteps, he says without looking up, "How may I help you, general?"

"I'm not a general." I reply, cocking the gun.

Looking up, the King immediately flounders back in dismay. I hold the gun steady, aiming it directly at his chest. One clean shot anywhere can permanently freeze him. Just as I back him up to the wall, he begins, "Why are you doing this? I've never done anything wrong."

"Are you really that blind, or are you just acting? Either way, you deserve to die."

"Wait! I'm sorry. I'm sorry for persecuting the Blues, but I can make it up to you. I can give you anything you want. Just please don't shoot me. That's the lethal bullet, isn't it?"

I remember Hank who sacrificed himself for me to be here. I think of Amosis, a blind woman who gave her life fighting for the freedom of people she couldn't even see. I recall the image of the woman getting dragged by the Red guards.

I look at the red eyed King. All I need to do now is shoot him, but I can't bring myself to place my finger on the trigger of the gun. My arms suddenly become numb as if they are waiting for me to make a decision. The gun, still pointed at the King, now vehemently shakes in my hand, depleted of all strength. I come closer to the King, only a few feet away.

"When you want to vocally get a message across Postvitae, how do you do it?"

The tension in his expression collapses and relief shows in his eyes as he reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small silver box with a tiny lever on the middle of the top side. He tosses it

to me, and I catch it in my left hand, still holding the gun in my right. “Just flip the switch and speak into the box. Now, just please stop pointing that gun at me!”

I flip the lever and raise the box to my mouth. “Citizens of Postvitae!” I begin. “I am here to put an end to the segregation that has torn this world apart! I ask you to lower your arms and listen to what I have to say. I know you may be wondering who I am, but that person doesn’t matter.” I pause. “Why do we insist on fighting each other even after we’ve died? We came here because we are done with all of the trials which life used to throw at us, so why do we insist on replicating them? We have a chance to be better here. We are given enough of everything we need to never hate one another again! There’s no reason to fight except our own stupidity. But we’re not too far gone. We can still come back. We can end the suffering, but I can’t do it by myself.” I drop the gun to the floor. “Everyone needs to be united to make it happen.”

Suddenly, the King presses his hand into the wall, revealing a secret compartment from which he yanks out a gun. Immediately he turns to gun to me, smiles menacingly, and presses the trigger. I imagine everything about the bullet. Its size, material, color, and shape all create a vivid picture in my head. Having closed my eyes, I await impact. Perhaps, I’ll never see anything again.

Finally, I hear the sound of the bullet bouncing off the door behind me. Opening my eyes, I realize the bullet passed through me like I pass through walls, but it left a growing pain in my head. The pain quickly becomes more intense and then unbearable. Flashes of images go off in my head. They are blurry and chaotic but not random. I recognize them. Suddenly, I realize that the passing of the bullet through my body brought back my memories. I remember how I died. I remember who I am. “My name isn’t Daryll.”

## Purple

“Why are you not fro-” I knock the King out cold before he can finish.

“My name is Frederick.”

Purple rays of light shoot from my eyes, brightening the entire room. I look through a window and see that citizens have gathered before the capitol building. Smiles are spread across their faces, and above these smiles, I see purple eyes staring back at me. They have gotten their memories back too. I hear cheers from outside, a sign of victory and the end of segregation. The only one not celebrating is myself. I am still caught in my memories, still rushing back to me but clearer now. They have finally come to the final moments of my life.

I remember fighting with the soldiers, trying to explain to them what I have just explained to a whole world. I remember watching the love of my life enter the train heading to the concentration camp. I remember the shot. I remember failing. I remember trying to be a hero.