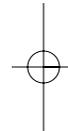
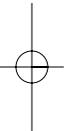
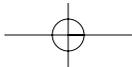


Capricorn Cell



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Chapter XI

Parsons

Since Johnny hauled a load at 5AM, he's in Markleysburg by 2:30 in the afternoon. There he awaits Garret Fogarty. Garret comes directly from work. As he drives by the Pizza Hut in Farmington, the powerful, soulful voice of Mary Black emanates from the Wrangler's speakers. It's one of his favorite tunes – "Song for Ireland" – the first song he ever loaded onto an iPod. The final piano keys fade away as Garret enters the driveway of his and Bowen's little place.

The sun shines through the scattered puffs of cumulus though the air is chilly. John Bowen greets Garret at the door and the two shake hands. It's been a rough day at work for both men and a Guinness goes down well. Difficult times at work are becoming more and more common for white men. For Bowen, it was an obnoxious cop who pulled him over on the Maryland side of the border and who kept him for an agonizing amount of time in spite of there not being any infractions on Bowen's part. On the West Virginia side, a middle-aged woman decided to tempt fate and cut him off while passing on a two-lane highway. The state road truck coming in the opposite direction nearly slammed head-on into her tiny Chevrolet Aveo.

Garret's troubles were more spiritual than mental or physical, but just as nerve-racking. Terradox lost a contract to a competitor that was willing to accept a loss; the goal being the destruction of the competition. Garret spent his lunch break watching his boss Gerry Fiorentino suffer in anguish. At this rate, Terradox won't last the year. Garret's compassion urges him to bolster Fiorentino and tell him of better days to come. But how can he? The heartbreaking scene is no stranger to Garret. Unless there is a fundamental change in the American system, the increasing taxation of productive and creative whites will continue to rise along with work hours. There's no other way to pay for the increasing number of non-whites who burden the social welfare system. Garret withholds his

thoughts. They would be no consolation to a family man crushed beneath the gears of the American corporate system.

"How are you, Johnny?" Garret asks after the beer and a little quiet introspection.

"Good," Johnny says, "Really."

"How's KJ?" Garret asks.

"As well as I'd expect," Bowen says, "Her progress is nothing short of amazing."

"Boyle says the same," Garret says, "Would you mind if Anna spends more time with KJ at Bill's place?"

Bowen shakes his head.

"Just let us have one day a week alone," Johnny says.

"How about two?" Garret says, "Tuesday and Thursday, unless something comes up. Anna will usually come by on Wednesday and Friday. If that changes, we'll let you know in advance."

"OK," Johnny says, "Thanks."

"You'll be there the other days," Garret says, "Work and life permitting. Anna won't be replacing you; anyway she has a lot to learn from you as well as John. I need to know how you work together. I'm counting on you to let me know how it works out. Don't hold back."

"OK," Bowen says.

"I'm refining the cell idea," Garret says, "We know we can do this for cheap. With the ammunition fund and regular contributions, we even bought property and places to stay. It's good to have a system worked out for others who will inherit the system when we're gone."

"If they eliminate us," Johnny says.

"Yes," Garret says, "Someone else can pursue the traitors. We may die but the war against white genocide will not end until we win."

"Good," Johnny says, "I wondered about that. The field cell has to go on fighting."

Garret looks at the empty bottle in his hands. He keeps looking at it as he begins speaking.

"You know, John," he says, "the lay of this huge country is perfect for partisan warfare. But we have no support. The fantasists and anonymous internet generals deny that reality. They say once it gets worse a guerrilla force will have support. They don't realize that once it gets that bad, there won't be enough whites left to make a difference. In a white nation like Ireland, if rebels have support they can move like a shadow through the population. It's kind of hard when you're white and the population is brown. I know you long to fight. So do I. You know, it was huge when you

gave your support to the cell idea. We're all wannabe fighters, but you're the real deal. Your support counts a great deal more than any of ours."

"What's important is that we have a formula for victory," Bowen says, "If enough people are spreading the Mantra, attacking anti-whites and crying out that we are facing genocide, then we have a chance. But we still have a fight. We can't wait any longer. How many white children do I watch die while I wait for someone else to fight?"

"We will win," Garret says, "But I agree that there will be blood in the end. There are good men who deny or abhor that we'll have to fight, but even a good man can be a fool."

"Do you have any idea who might go for the cell idea?" Bowen asks, mostly for conversation and out of curiosity.

Garret nods, and Bowen is a little surprised. He expected Garret to say that he's not sure.

"The final compositions will be Bill's decision," Garret says, "Are you OK with that?"

"Sure," Johnny says.

"Tell me," Garret says, "If the choice was yours, and everyone agreed to it, who would be active and who would be an auxiliary?"

He figures Bowen won't answer. He's interested in the nature of Johnny's response, not some list.

"I can't answer that," Johnny says.

"Why not?" Garret asks.

"They have to decide," Johnny says.

"You wouldn't choose to be with KJ?" Garret asks.

"That's enough," Johnny says.

"OK," Garret says, "Whatever cell you find yourself in, always remember, no response to their demands or threats unless it helps our race, and only our race. Otherwise, silence."

"I agree with that," Johnny says, "We're not fighting a fucking revolution."

Both men go silent for a short while.

"You know it too, don't you?" Johnny asks.

"What?" Garret says.

"If given the choice," Johnny says, "Anna and KJ will choose to be in an active cell."

"Yes," Garret says, "I know it. They're fighters. They have something to show the world. White women will stand with white men and won't be threatened or misled into being traitors. The idea is as dear to them as it is to us."

“Careful what you wish for, huh?” Johnny says, “Those two complete us. We’re not just ‘angry loners’ anymore. The fucking media can’t make that lie stick anymore, so I have no doubt the enemy will do anything to destroy Anna and KJ. It makes the fact that we need them even tougher to swallow. Anna and KJ are real and they’re so fucking important. Thank God they know it. The enemy will, too, and that’s why it’s so goddamned hard to take. They’ll go after them, your Anna and my angel.” Johnny looks away for a moment, but returns his eyes – and his concentration – to Garret. “Whoever their sentinels are, they better be willing to fucking die for those two.”

Garret stares into Bowen’s eyes. He waits for Johnny so say what he thinks is on his mind.

“The sentinels better be willing to kill, too,” Johnny says, confirming what Garret thought he’d say. “They have to accept it. If Anna and KJ go to battle, they have to be given a chance to escape. A sentinel will have to provide that for them, no matter what he has to do or how ugly it gets.”

“It’s war,” Garret says, “all around us, all the time.”

“There’s something else we need to discuss,” Johnny says, “Before anyone gets involved with this, we need to test our methods, that way only the leadership pays if we fuck up.”

“I agree,” Garret says, “What’s on your mind?”

Johnny takes a deep breath.

“Mark David Strader,” he says, “He owns a strip club in St. Albans called *A Touch of Class*.”

“You know him?” Garret asks.

“Not personally,” Johnny says.

“You didn’t do a direct search, did you?” Garret asks, “Remember, Google tracks that kind of thing. Establishment lackeys and anti-white Jews run Google.”

Bowen shakes his head.

“I know those fags sold out to Big Brotherfucker,” Johnny says, “Don’t worry. I did ping searches like you recommended. I checked Yahoo Maps for strip clubs in West Virginia. That was the most direct search. I checked Google Earth once I found an unrelated business on the same street. Get this, there’s one parking lot and he’ll have to come around to it, even if he uses the rear exit. Opposite is a hill. A ridge actually, with trees and undeveloped terrain. There’s even ruts and thick brush that grew up where they cut.”

“What’s the range?” Garret asks.

“About 280 meters,” Johnny says.

"Why Strader?" Garret asks.

"I got his picture," Johnny says, "Six hours of ping searches led me to an archived newspaper article. Picture, name, even had a picture of a vehicle that could be his. That narrowed my list from four to one, Mark motherfucker cocksucker Strader."

"Is he worse than the others?" Garret asks.

"He's a strip club owner," Johnny says, "I've hated those pricks all my life. They take a white woman's body and turn it into a cheap fucking thrill. Dana's cousin Carey became a stripper. Now she's antagonistic towards all men, especially white men, from the goddamned sheep who leered at her and gave their money to fucking pigs like Strader. If white men would quit going to those shitholes, they wouldn't see their daughters dancing like whores. Now I know a lot of those girls prey on lonely men with no pride, and I know that all of them have their part in this shit. They can't just walk away from the stain, it's on them and on the fucking patrons and the owners of course, but that doesn't make race traitor pigs like Strader any less guilty. He has no problem putting young white girls up there on the stage or making them objects of fucking lust. Would he refuse to let a nigger have a lap dance? You know he wouldn't. Fuck, he'd probably jerk off to it."

"Alright," Garret says, "Let me know who you prefer to drive and I'll see if he's in."

Garret knows that, in spite of Johnny Bowen's passions, he is sharp and relentless when the moment of truth arrives. They tested him before and he showed them up, even John Boyle, the last time they practiced close combat in the guise of paintball.

"Do you want a sentinel?" Garret asks.

"It wouldn't be a bad idea," Bowen says, "Might as well give the whole system a try."

"Alright," Garret says, "Work it out, every detail. Think of everything that can go wrong. Let me know who you want to drive – Rian, Boyle, O'Toole. Do you have an idea when you'll do it?"

"May," Bowen says, "After our trip."

"Fine," Garret says, "Kill Strader, and then for God's sake ask KJ out on a date."

"I already did, numbnuts!" Johnny says.

"Well, good," Garret says, "Do it again."

"I was planning on asking her again," Johnny says.

"Then what are you asking me for?" Garret says.

"I didn't fucking ask you!" Johnny says.

"Check this out," Garret says, having finished teasing his friend and brother-in-arms.

Garret gets up and walks over to his jacket on the coat rack. He returns with a small plastic box, perhaps a onetime drill bit box that's been modified. He hands it to Johnny Bowen.

"What's this?" Johnny asks.

Garret motions with his finger for Bowen to open the box. Inside are six .38 caliber handgun rounds. The tips are marked in yellow.

"Holy fucking shit!" Johnny says, "Nice! What's in it?"

"Autumn crocus," Garret says, "courtesy Mr. Ford."

Bowen examines each bullet.

".38's for a .357," he says, "Sweet."

"He wanted to start with something simple," Garret says.

"Nothing wrong with that," Bowen says, "KISS, you know."

Garret watches as Bowen examines the bullets.

"Don't you ever want to take KJ and leave all this behind you?" Garret asks, "Go someplace over 90% white, so you can give her a good life and have a family?"

"All the time," Johnny says.

He scrutinizes the last bullet.

"Why don't you?" Garret asks.

"Same reason you don't leave with Anna," Johnny says.

"Gary?" Garret says.

Johnny looks away from the bullet and into Garret's eyes. His face shows an unamused expression.

"Not funny, huh," Garret says.

"Actually, it is kind of funny," Johnny says, "But you know, Gary wouldn't stop you. As long as he could give her away, hell, even if he couldn't he'd trust her choice. By now he does. She's a good woman. You're a lucky fucker, you know."

"And you're not?" Garret asks.

"Not if they hurt her," Johnny says, "She's in their world where they have a lot of fucking power."

"I know," Garret says.

There is nothing else he can say that would both reassure his friend and be true.

"I'll tell you why those two are the best of us," Johnny says, "They're beautiful and young. If they surrendered to the system, they would have nothing but pleasures and favors and they'd end up in some rich mother-fucker's bed, or famous and wealthy beyond fucking dreams. Singer, mo-

del, whatever. But they refuse to be traitors to their skin. I know KJ hasn't been with us for long, but I know she wouldn't betray us. All it would have taken was for her to kiss ass or refuse to help that white man at school. A fake apology would do it. She never gave in, and she'll die before she will. Anna could walk away and take up diving at some goddamned college. Maybe she'd make it to the Olympics. She'd get offers, trust me. They'd see this fucking gorgeous redhead diver and they'd go ape-shit over her. The media zealots, the kikes and white race traitors know how powerful a statement it is for a beautiful young white girl to fucking stand up for her race and her kinsmen. Goddamn it, they'll try everything in their power to destroy that. They know the shockwave a woman like KJ would create."

Johnny closes his eyes and exhales. When his fiery green stare looks again toward Garret, he continues speaking.

"I can't help her while she's in their filthy fucking hands," Johnny says, "It's like watching her drown and I can't even touch her fingers."

"I can't imagine how hard that must be," Garret says, "At least Anna's with Gary. It's no consolation that KJ's staying there to protect our identity. It's no surprise, either. She's an extraordinary young woman."

"Yeah," Johnny says, his hands together between his knees.

Garret glances at the clock. He slaps his knees and rises. Johnny stands as well.

"I'll run the Strader thing by Rian and John Boyle," Garret says, "Cristi, too."

"OK," Johnny says.

He follows Garret to the door.

"Keep the shells," Garret says, "You have a .357 that can us them. I don't."

Garret puts on his jacket.

"Johnny," he says, "No matter what happens, we need you. We need fighters as well as speakers and writers. I'm hoping through better or worse, you can stay sharp."

"I will, Garret," Johnny says, "Some things are bigger than me."

"And us," Garret says. He steps out the door. "I'll drop a line by Tuesday. Take care, John."

"You too, man," Johnny says.

Garret's iPod, set to shuffle, begins playing Heidi Talbot's *I Dream of You* as he backs out of the driveway.

KJ takes a long shower before leaving home for her rendezvous with Jimmy Ford. She soaps up her back and allows the water to wash her pure white skin for an extra long time. Always diligent in matters of hy-

giene, today she exaggerates, though it gives her peace of mind. She wants the site of her tattoo to be as clean as possible.

KJ doesn't have to wait long for Jimmy Ford to appear. Less than ten minutes after she parks at the entrance of the Donnelly Homestead, Ford's black Ram Charger comes down the driveway. She's quite nervous and it's understandable as to why. This is a huge day for her. Ford drives up next to the white Chevy and he unlocks the passenger door. KJ's nerves get the best of her and the door handle slips from her gloved fingers. She shakes her hand when she enters.

"Sorry about the door," KJ says.

"Not a problem," Jimmy says, "You didn't hurt your hand, did you?"

"No," she says and flashes a brief, nervous smile.

KJ glances at Ford's face.

From a portrait picture, Ford could be a work colleague of Garret's. His wire-rim glasses give the mistaken impression of a college ideologue. One might think he's an anti-white professor and agitator, or a hopeless "professional student." His physical being tells a different tale. He has the powerful hands of a mechanic and the rock-hard body of a laborer. The old core calls him the "watchmaker" for a reason. If it can be repaired, James Owen Ford can fix it.

James Ford has two brothers, both older than him. All three entered the world in the same Connellsville hospital. James – "Jimmy" from an early age – pursued hard science even before his introduction to the mechanical world, and he excelled in chemistry and biology. During his early teen years, Jimmy learned to read electrical and mechanical diagrams for his chemistry and physics courses and that knowledge would serve him very well once he began tearing apart and rebuilding automobiles and appliances. The first engine that he tore apart belonged to a red 1977 Dodge Ram. He was sixteen at the time. It would be Jimmy's first vehicle.

Jimmy's older brothers became capable repairmen in their own right, though neither had the drive or talent of their younger sibling. Patrick – Paddy – fell in love with the arts. He worked long hours as a young man to afford art school. There, he became interested in the human canvas. Two years before KJ even thought about getting a tattoo, Paddy Ford was already one of the most respected tattoo artists in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. An intense dedication to precision and a work ethic to match places him among the very best in his field.

During his high school years, Howard Ford was a starting defensive tackle for Connellsville senior high. Two years after graduating, he was

involved in a terrible automobile accident. Now he sits in a wheelchair, clinging to an existence thanks to the help of his brothers and relatives, and the pitiful sum of money that disability and temp jobs can provide. Howard has not given up on life and his laughter is usually genuine, though the feeling of helplessness is brutal for a man who was once physically and mentally powerful.

The Fords were always proud of their heritage, in spite of such pride being dangerous for whites of every ancestry, from the English to the Ukrainian. If a white man's pride in his heritage ever hints at pride in his race, it suddenly becomes racism – even if the accusation is baseless. The Fords did not walk the fine line. They crossed it. Until Jimmy Ford was willing to put in the effort of being a man, he was the least racially-conscious of the family. His mother and father, as well as his brothers, were proud of both their Irish and their racial ancestry. They abhorred miscegenation and saw it not as the creation of a new race, but the genetic destruction of two races. Overall their attitude was live-and-let-live. They did not think of non-whites as different on a fundamental level. The media blackout of anti-white crime contributed to that misconception. The Christian Newsom murders in Knoxville, and the subsequent lack of outrage in the media and in the public in general, was the lightning bolt that struck down that belief. Encouraged to violence by anti-white whites and Jews, growing numbers of non-whites were no longer willing to “live and let live.”

Jimmy Ford's growth as a man made him less and less afraid to contemplate and discuss difficult subjects like race. He caught up with his relations in racial awareness, and eventually he surpassed them.

Around this time, Jimmy Ford was having a conversation with a client whose Sport Trac was in Ford's fledgling repair shop. The client, a big coal miner named Gary Murphy, invited Ford to an Irish pub in Charleroi. While the two enjoyed a draft and some pleasant conversation, news of the sentencing of one of the Newsom murderers came over the bar television. Jimmy's open and, considering the political climate, courageous expression of outrage over the case endeared the young man to Gary's heart. They would continue to meet, even after Jimmy finished repairing Gary's malfunctioning SUV. It didn't take long for Jimmy to invite Gary and his daughter Anna to the Celtic Society of Cumberland.

A year before the “Big Meeting” of the Society, James Owen Ford came to a fateful decision. He had already repaired firearms and wired less-than-legal fireworks. Now he would make weapons. He never had the intention of competing with Remington or Kimber. He would create

weapons and devices for emergency use. The rising aggression of non-whites against whites, together with an oppressive corporate and government bureaucracy that encouraged anti-white violence convinced Ford that his decision was a sound one.

Bob Whitaker's Mantra and simple, open-minded observation convinced Jimmy that his race faced eventual extinction unless the current system and establishment were to change in a profound manner. He knew that the powers-that-be, from the wealthy to the deluded, would resist such a change with violence. The dwindling numbers of those like him and the relentless anti-white propaganda of the establishment convinced him that his devices had better be reliable. It was a hard and expensive road.

Ford persevered. By this last Easter, he'd finished building two fully functional rifles, a 9mm submachine gun, and two high-quality silencers. One of those silencers – for a 9mm pistol – is in the possession of his dear friend and confidant, John Ashley Bowen.

KJ feels strange during the trip to Pittsburgh. The sky is clouding up and thick cumulus blocks the sun. KJ's sunglasses remain in her bag. That, at least, doesn't add to her anxiety since she hates wearing them. It's a matter of necessity, and she must wear them often. "Found Out About You" from *Nickleback* plays on Ford's iPod. It's not KJ's preferred genre of music, but it does not displease her. At least it's not the NPR of Gene Campbell or the stony silence of Erica.

Six tattoo artists and three piercing specialists co-own the parlor known as *Dynamic Ink*. Included among them is Paddy Ford, the best of a highly skilled group. The shop itself sits in the Mt. Olive – Carrick area on a sleepy, out-of-the-way street. Its reputation is what makes the shop profitable, and Paddy Ford is the best of a very talented lot.

When Jimmy and KJ arrive, only one other vehicle is parked in the lot. From the passenger seat of the Dodge, KJ can see a "Closed" sign on the door.

"Do you have money for the first session?" Jimmy asks.

"Yeah," she says.

"Good," Jimmy says, "He's taking a big risk, you know."

"I know," she says, "I won't tell a soul where I'm getting it done."

KJ would like to assure them there's no risk. She'd like to tell them that she'll never talk. Words are cheap, and she knows it.

Jimmy nods.

"It's a shame in a way," Jimmy says, "I've seen his work. His name should be renowned rather than anonymous. Anyway, you won't regret coming here."

"I've seen some of his work," KJ says, "I've looked at their website. You know, this is exactly where I was going to go when I turn 18, if I couldn't find a way before then. I'm so glad it worked out."

Jimmy leads her to the entrance. Paddy opens the door when he sees his brother. Patrick Ford is a big man, made of muscle and a little too much fat. His face resembles Jimmy's. His hair is very short, even shorter than his brother's and is a shade darker. His eyes are green. KJ notices they're more toward pure green than Johnny's, whose eyes are bright olive with just a hint of brown toward the center. Paddy's dexterity does not show in his bulky physique but looks are certainly deceiving. Based on the intricate and flawless nature of his work, his manual agility must be extraordinary.

"I'm going to guess that you're KJ," Paddy says, "Let's see what you've got."

KJ takes the money from her jeans pocket. Paddy counts every bill. KJ looks at him as he does. He has fewer tattoos than she'd imagined. There are two; one on each forearm. The left is a Komodo dragon; the right is a pack of wolves. Both tattoos are true art. Her nerves calm when she sees their quality. He wasn't blowing smoke when he said he was good.

"Good," Paddy says, "You're serious about it. Now, keep this in mind. If you tell anyone – parents, boyfriend, anyone – where you got your ink done, I'll deny meeting you. Is that clear?"

She wants to assure him she won't talk.

"Yes, sir," she says, "I understand."

Paddy leads her into the studio. She'll have to remove her t-shirt, bra and jeans in order for Paddy to begin work on the large tattoo. That's not all she'll have to remove.

"That particular tat's gonna go under your waistband on each side," he says as she stands at the threshold of Paddy's personal studio. "We could change it, make it shorter if you don't want to go that far, but if you want that pattern you'll have to at least drop your pants a little. If you were here with a husband or someone else I'd ask if you want them to accompany you, for your peace of mind."

"It's cool," she says, "May I have a sheet to cover my ass? Then you could move it just enough to finish the pattern, because I don't want you to shorten it."

"Sure," Paddy says.

Paddy moves past her and prepares the private studio. KJ looks over the room from the door. It looks even cleaner than she pictured, and she

told herself she'd walk out if there was any sign of unsanitary conditions. The place is truly immaculate.

KJ closes the door and Paddy waits for her to call him inside. She lies on her belly on the table, upon the sanitary cover with the sheet over her bottom. She keeps her thong on, but lowers it to just below the places where the final feathers will grace her milky white skin.

Paddy can see that she does not want just anyone to see her breasts or naked body. He doesn't tell her, but he always respects those who behave in this fashion. He wishes they all would; the mystique of a clothed woman is powerful, and the triumph when a man wins the right to see and conquer his naked woman is euphoric. KJ will only reveal that which is necessary for Paddy Ford to accomplish a job that means a great deal to her on a spiritual level. When he has a daughter, this is exactly how Paddy wants her to behave if she ever gets a tattoo.

The process is a long one and more than once he asks her if she's fine. KJ shows no visible discomfort, though it is no doubt quite painful, especially at first. She thinks about how the ink will look when it's finally complete. She imagines showing it to Johnny. Its meaning is sacred and very, very deep.

Once the first wing is finished, Paddy instructs her how to take care of her ink, and what to do should anything unexpected happen with the tattoo. He tells her to call his cell phone. Jimmy has offered to take her to a doctor if necessary. Of course, he mentions that she'll have to keep quiet no matter what the punishment. If not, he'll deny ever seeing her and she can forget ever completing the tattoo. Based on her willpower, Paddy is no longer worried that she'll talk.

Paddy's phone call brings Jimmy back from some local chore, and after a handshake and several words of gratitude, KJ departs from *Dynamic Ink*.

"You OK?" Jimmy asks as she exits the studio.

The lights of Pittsburgh make darkness a rarity and obliterate the few stars that manage to poke through the clouds.

"Hurts, doesn't it?" he asks.

"Yeah," she says, a sympathetic little smile briefly on her face, "It's so worth it, though."

Jimmy Ford is reticent as usual, though the two share some small talk on the way back to Uniontown. Bill asked Jimmy to take KJ straight home. It's illegal for a 17 year old to drive at night without an older driver being present, and they've been pushing their luck as of late. Bowen will pick her up at her home the next morning.

That night KJ sleeps on her stomach. The discomfort is no match for the joy she feels.

Johnny Bowen notices there's something amiss the instant KJ climbs into the Rubicon. She's not quite so energetic, or so it would seem, and she's careful not to rub her back against the seat.

"You OK, angel?" he asks.

She nods and smiles. Once the ink is complete and healed, she'll show him. She'll figure out a way that won't tempt him more than necessary, if that's even possible.

"Um, Johnny?" KJ says as they drive south on Township Drive. She closes her eyes and sighs, and then looks at him. "I wanted you to hold me, but my father was near the front door, so I just jumped in. That's not the only reason, but I wanted you to know it has nothing to do with you. I fucking adore it when you hold me." She smiles.

"KJ, angel," Johnny says, "What is it? What's wrong?"

He notices that she's leaning just a little off the back of her seat, more on her right side.

"When you hold me," she says, "Please put your arms lower for about a week, alright? Like, my lower back."

He laughs with his mouth closed.

"You're so fucking sweet, you know?" he says, "Of course I'll put my arms lower. I'm just glad you feel that way."

"Fuck yes I do!" she says, "I don't want you to stop! Just, take it easy with the left side of my back, alright?"

He nods and smiles. KJ looks out the window for a little while, and then back at Johnny.

"Aren't you going to ask me why?" she asks.

"You'll tell me when you're ready," he says.

She smiles. This time she looks at him for a long while.

They stop near Fairchance to eat breakfast. Due to time constraints, KJ prepared a simpler meal than usual. The quality and taste are excellent, although dining with KJ is the main reason that Johnny loves these meals. Today he's even more pleased. It's obvious that she's in good spirits.

"Did you like it?" KJ asks at the end of breakfast.

The meal, a cheese and spring onion omelet with sausage on the side is consistent and delicious.

"Hell yes," Johnny says. He looks at her before they resume their trip. "By the way, next week before we go on our trip, let Anna help you with your back. She knows all about taking care of one of those and she'll

let you know how she took care of hers. It's pretty big, and she did an excellent job taking care of it. You're skin's just like hers so it'd be good to talk to her."

"Johnny!" KJ says, "I didn't want you to know. I hope you don't know what I chose..."

"Shh," Johnny says, "When you're ready."

KJ worries that Boyle will have her perform some strenuous task. She'll have to grin and bear it. She used medical tape to secure a smooth, clean cloth to her red t-shirt in order to keep the normal leaking of her new tattoo from somehow drawing in fibers. She was also very careful in her choice of t-shirt. When Anna arrives and starts to throw her arms around KJ, KJ stops her. From the Jeep, Bowen sees her whisper in Anna's ear. The look of surprise on Anna's face makes him smile. He departs from the Coalsack Site wondering what work of art might adorn KJ's smooth, white back.

It is KJ's good fortune that most of the day is spent at the range. Boyle is tempted to introduce the .50 caliber, but decides against it. During one of the break periods, the ladies request the use of the cabin and Boyle raises no objections. Inside, KJ reveals her unfinished tattoo to Anna.

"That is going to be so fucking awesome!" Anna says.

"Can I ask you a favor?" KJ says, "Could you drop by Kimberly Drive on Monday, and give me a hand with his? They said I could put a little lotion on it after a day or two."

"Is it what he told you to use?" Anna asks, "No aloe or any of that shit, right?"

"No," KJ says, "They gave me all that I'll need for now and told me what to use and for how long."

"OK, good," Anna says, "I'd be glad to help you. I didn't think your parents would be willing."

Anna raises an eyebrow and smiles.

"No," KJ says, "Unless they're trying to find out the name of the artist. That's not going to happen, by the way."

"What'll you tell them if they see your tat?" Anna asks.

"I did it myself," KJ says.

Anna laughs.

"Actually," KJ says, "I'd say go fuck yourselves. They'd fuck me hard, but I'm not telling those assholes. Anyway, thanks for agreeing to help. I could put it on pretty good myself, but I'd like someone to help out at least once a day. We can meet down Kimberly since there's a secluded spot. If you're sure you don't mind."

"Not at all," Anna says, "You know, Johnny would help you."

Anna laughs before a stunned KJ can reply.

"That would spoil the surprise," KJ says once she recovers, "I want to blow his fucking mind with the whole thing, wings and feathers, no redness, just black ink on my white skin."

Anna puts her hand on KJ's shoulder.

"It will," Anna says, "I promise you that. It'll drive him fucking nuts. How many trips do you have?"

"Three more," KJ says, "Three more marathon sessions. It'll be worth every painful second."

"Can I ask you why you chose angel wings?" Anna, who has a very good idea, still asks, "I know it's personal, so please, KJ, tell me to mind my own damn business if I'm out of line asking."

"It's cool," KJ says, "But you already know. I'm his angel, and I always will be."

It's not the only reason, though it is a compelling enough reason for her. She flew from the intellectual darkness into the light and carried her identity with her. The angel did not fall. She did not become what others wanted her to be. She remained KJ.

"I love it," Anna says, "I can't wait to see the final result. Johnny's gonna go nuts."

Several hours later, KJ uses the shower facility in order to gently rinse her back. She turns on the camp shower and is surprised to find the water temperature is rather comfortable. Once she's finished the deed, she dresses and gets back to the range.

After the day's tasks are complete and John Boyle retires to the cabin to make his supper, Anna waits along with KJ for Johnny Bowen to arrive. When he does, Anna greets him with a huge hug and a kiss on the cheek. Once she turns back toward KJ, she winks and KJ smiles. Bowen then embraces KJ, mindful not to put his arms on her upper or middle back.

For supper, Bowen made pulled pork sandwiches and zucchini with cumin cream. After the meal, he and KJ begin the long drive north. There is much on KJ's mind but for the moment she is content to be near Johnny and listen to *Silent Civilian* playing on his iPod. Most of today's selections are from the metalcore and hardcore genres. At Cheat Lake Bridge, the first song from *Youth Defense League* tears through the speakers.

"That's live," KJ says, "How the fuck did you get that?"

"EBay," he says, "Believe it or not. The CD was just like new. Bring your iPod Touch tomorrow and I'll load it when I get back to Deer Park."

"Thank you, Johnny!" KJ says.

"You know, angel," Johnny says, "There's so much about you that just always, well, amazes me. What you like, what you think and do. How you defy; I'd ask you not to change, but the whole goddamn Obama fucking nation couldn't change you. Thank you, KJ. Thank *you*."

KJ shows her bashful side.

"Johnny..." she mutters.

"Hey," he says, "Do you have a little time?"

"Yeah," she says, wondering what he's up to and glad that he is.

Johnny pauses the iPod and exits I-68 toward Sunset Beach. Once they arrive at a lonely country road, he parks the jeep. Under a bright waxing moon that shines through the breaking clouds, they listen to the remaining songs from his new CD. Once the final beat fades, Johnny reaches over to start the Jeep. KJ stops him.

"Johnny," KJ says, "When you were in the army, how did you get through the brainwashing? It had to be fierce."

"It was," Johnny says. He looks at her for a minute and then opens his door. "Get that light out of the glove box. I'll show you something."

Holding the mag light, KJ exits the Jeep. The stars would be brilliant tonight if not for the remaining clouds and the bright waxing moon. Its glare almost makes the mag light unnecessary. In the pale glow, Bowen rolls up his right sleeve.

"When I felt beaten and alone," he says, "I'd look at this."

On his upper right arm, near his shoulder, is the tattoo of a stylized black rabbit. It is in mid-leap. KJ recognizes it without the harsh beam of the flashlight.

"That is so fucking cool," she says.

KJ steps forward and takes his arm into her gloved hands.

"I've seen that before," she says, "It's the black rabbit of death, isn't it? From *Watership Down*."

"So it is," he says, "I would have gotten a white rabbit with blue eyes, but so far away in Iraq...killing, shedding blood, the black rabbit of death seemed more appropriate. You white rabbits need a few more like him."

KJ steps forward and kisses his tattoo.

"You've devoted your life to saving our race," she says and she caresses it, "I can't imagine how much happiness you've sacrificed for us. I will never, ever forget you, no matter what happens to us."

KJ looks him over when she steps back.

"Would you take off your shirt?" she asks, "I'd kind of like to see what's underneath, if that's not too much."

"It's not," Johnny says, "But I'm not going to take it off right now." He takes his hand across his tattoo, now covered by the sleeve. "This is enough for tonight."

"More than enough," KJ says, "Thank you, Johnny."

She comes forward again, her tall army boots barely making a sound in spite of the soft earth. She embraces him and buries her head in his chest. He puts his hands low, at the very bottom of her back.

"I almost rubbed your back," he says.

KJ doesn't care. Her eyes are closed. She thinks all the while. If she can figure any way of leaving the Campbell House without jeopardizing her man, even if the chance is slim and the road difficult, she will do so.

Just before they arrive at Kimberly Drive, KJ realizes her iPod Touch is in the white Chevy.

"Shit!" she says, "I left my iPod in the truck! Fucking Erica, I can't even leave my shit in the house or she'll fucking destroy it."

"It's OK, angel," he says, "The files aren't going anywhere. I've got them on the hard drive and on an losafe. It's cool."

KJ smiles.

"Thanks, Johnny" she says. She touches his hand. "Good night, my fighter."

"Good night, angel," he says.

Johnny watches her until she's safe inside the house – as safe as she can be while out of his reach. When Johnny reaches the National Pike, he does not turn south toward Hopwood and eventually Deer Park. He drives to Bill's place. With his extra keys, he opens the truck and takes KJ's iPod.

In the days after her awakening, but before she came to know Anna, Bill and Johnny, KJ dreaded Sunday mornings. As bad as it was to spend a Saturday near Erica and Gene, Sunday meant an imminent return to the anti-white reeducation camp known as high school. Until they revoked her internet privileges and took away her fist iPod, KJ would cling to those last hours of relative freedom by reading and listening to the sounds of *Agnostic Front*, *Black Flag*, *Phinius Gage* and the like.

Once her parents deprived her of her music and reading materials, KJ's isolation became almost total. She could still take walks and hike, and even bike on occasion when clouds protected her skin and eyes. On some days she would disappear into the dark woods and not return until after nightfall, especially when her despair became acute and she felt lonelier than ever. It was not a child's need to be near someone. It was the feeling that others like her were rare and far away, and that if she didn't surrender, something she would never do, she'd face a lifetime of solitude

and crushing alienation. Until she met Anna, Bill and Johnny, KJ was right in that terrible assumption. She was facing a decision to surrender, which meant the extinction of her true self, or remaining KJ and suffering a lifetime of agonizing solitude. On those brutal and lonely days she would find some wilderness spot far away from those who neither knew nor cared about her struggle, and she would break down and weep.

Sundays are now days of joy and, quite often, pleasure. Instead of dreading the morrow, KJ is eager to live the day. She climbs out of bed and takes her usual shower. Once she's dressed, she makes breakfast for Johnny. She grabs her bag and keys and escapes the Campbell House unscathed.

The dawn is warm and the air fresh on this 21st of April. Johnny is parked down Kimberly Drive. KJ spits out the sertraline pill and a smile grows on her face. Johnny pulls up next to her, and she plunges into the Jeep Rubicon the second the wheels cease turning.

Johnny and KJ arrive on time at Coalsack. Once he's convinced that John Boyle is present and that KJ is not alone, Johnny Bowen departs. On the way out, he sees fiddlehead ferns and mayapples poking through the ground. The silent figures of deer watch him pass.

Johnny used to dread Sundays. On those days that he didn't have to work, he spent his time dreading the inevitable return to work early Monday morning. There always seemed to be a difficult load waiting at the Cumberland terminal, and Johnny always seemed to be the man for the job. In the drivers' room, there were the usual conversations; some boring, some interesting, none indicative of impending or recent racial awakening. Discussions of sports teams always ended with praise for some overrated black athlete. When the men talked of their private lives, they often described events of personal or sexual significance that they never should have shared. Though Bowen ignored or tried to ignore such conversations, he was not unsympathetic to the men. For the married men, the all-too-rare pleasures of sex were a release from the oppression, the fear and the bitterness of their lives. It was shameful for them to discuss in detail their relations with their wives. The rising cost for a white man to raise a family, together with the constant threat of layoffs, wore down these men and made them long for any meaningful sensation or experience. Any pleasurable experience would make a man the envy of the others, let alone sexual pleasures, the most powerful of them all.

For the unmarried, sexual conquests were more common, though in many cases the validity of the claim was dubious. Those willing to bare each sordid detail to the other men seemed less like "studs" and more like

damaged souls, always searching for but never finding completion. Some of the men became jealous of the conquerors; others became furious because a few of the conquests were their sisters or cousins.

Johnny Bowen ignored all of them. He was not jealous of those who abused and then became jaded with an act that should be the most beautiful expression of love between a man and a woman. One of Johnny's greatest desires was to find his own complimentary half, and to help his wife bring life into the world. Through their children they would renew their people; their white people.

It was extraordinary to know a girl like Anna. She confirmed what he hoped to be true. In his heart, however, there was some sadness. He had little hope that he'd find another such white woman. Once he got to know Jesse and Sinead, Johnny began to believe that he'd underestimated the white woman. Still, the likelihood that another conscious white woman would enter their lives was infinitesimal. The odds that she might be his were smaller still. Bowen's optimism over the fate of his race grew a little with each acquaintance, yet Sundays remained somber days of malaise bordering on despair.

Then his angel flew in from the dark, and with the beauty of her pale white wings she chased away the dread and despair. It's Sunday again. Johnny doesn't even think of work as he drives back to Deer Park. He thinks about supper and the upcoming trip. He thinks about the iPod, loaded and charged. He dares to hope that they'll have a future together, somehow. He shakes his head over that one. Still, it's nice to dream. At the very least, the angel drove away his sadness and brought his hope for the future back to life.

Johnny outdoes himself with today's supper. The meal is so good that Johnny tells KJ not to set her future expectations too high. The sight and smell of the spinach croquettes and lamb stuffed with oysters cannot prepare the palate for the food's ambrosial taste. Before KJ takes her first bite, she looks at him and shakes her head, her mouth agape. The effort he put into supper must have been intense. She looks down and moves her hair aside before trying the croquettes, and finding that the taste surpasses the sight.

On the way back to Uniontown, Johnny hands her a roll of bills, which she tries to refuse. After he delivers a gentle rebuke, he reminds her that the money's for the weekend trip and she grudgingly takes the roll. Before he arrived at Coalsack, Bowen created the playlist titled "KJ" and some of the best hardcore music ever recorded plays over the speakers during their return.

At the Long Hall, KJ kisses Johnny's cheek before jumping out of the Rubicon.

"Hey," he yells to her, "You forgot this!"

KJ returns to find her iPod Touch on the passenger seat.

"You loaded it?" she wonders out loud, "Thank you, sweetheart!"

"Remember, it's nighttime," he says, "Don't give the pigs a reason to arrest you. Be good, OK?"

It hardly seems like a Sunday night.

After school on Monday, KJ obeys Johnny's request and makes a few purchases for the upcoming trip. Until now she was too occupied with training and life in general to feel too excited over the excursion. While shopping for items on Johnny's list of recommendations, her enthusiasm rises. It's so great that she almost forgets to buy two unrelated but important items. These two, which come from the money Bill gives her, are a new black toboggan and a string bikini top. The top is for when the tattoo is complete. She already has several toboggans though she plans on modifying an older one, just in case she gets an opportunity for a little direct action. The new one will be its replacement.

KJ has no idea, but the opportunity will come in the blink of an eye.

There are times when enthusiasm and exuberance get the better of young KJ. On the way back from the grocery store, she allows her speed to climb to a velocity that would guarantee a hefty ticket. She realizes this after she passes a squad car parked along Derrick Avenue.

"Fuck!" she yells, and hits the steering wheel with the palm of her gloved hand.

KJ slows the truck and down-gears, but she has no doubt she's busted. She looks for a place to pull off. The police cruiser doesn't move. KJ turns around at Hatfield Elementary and returns down Derrick. The car is empty. Opportunities for direct action often present themselves on the most unexpected occasions.

Late Monday night, KJ slips out of bed. She won't be getting much sleep tonight. A pair of black army boots are on her feet and she's already wearing tight black exercise leggings and a dark t-shirt, in addition to an older pair of gloves. KJ is well-dressed for her mission. She takes the bag she prepared before going to bed and creeps out into the hallway. Putting her months of practice to good use, she creeps downstairs without making any appreciable noise. Her progress is slow, but neither Gene nor Erica wake from their slumber. Just outside the front door, KJ dons her older black toboggan, which now has two eyeholes and which she'll pull down to cover her face as she nears her target.

On her way to Derrick Avenue, KJ passes through copses of trees and little fields of grass and scrub. She walks down quiet streets and detours around a golf course that may have security patrols. When she arrives near the site of the parked cruiser, she sees that it has not moved. No police officers sit inside, nor is anyone nearby. She is cautious in the extreme, lying low in the nearby woods as she shakes the can of white paint from Gene's unused supplies. The starry night is bright but nothing stirs. KJ crosses the road when the moment is right.

The next morning, there is a message across the side of the police cruiser.

ANTI-RACIST = ANTI-WHITE

The excitement from a successful mission makes up for only two hours of sleep. Young KJ is energetic the entire day. Even school seems to fly by. She leaves for Bill's as soon as she can, though she is mindful to watch her speed since fate won't smile on her twice.

KJ arrives earlier than usual at Bill's and waits outside the hall for Johnny Bowen. Today is reserved for self-defense practice. She still feels terrible about striking Johnny, though her desire to see him overcomes the painful memory. Still, she shall not forget, and she resolves never to repeat the incident in spite of what's best for her. When Johnny arrives, she embraces him. He does not forget to put his arms lower on her back.

Johnny Bowen doesn't let on that he knows what she's done, not until they sit down for supper. Then he cannot help himself. A big grin joins the sly look on his face.

"What?" asks the observant KJ, who notices his facial expression.

"Let me see your hands," he says.

She shows him her hands, palms up. Since she was wearing training gloves while they practiced, she removed her normal pair and has yet to put them on again.

"You wore gloves," Johnny says, "I figured you did."

"I like to wear gloves," KJ says, "I always wear gloves."

"Did you stay out all night," he says, "or did you sneak out of the house?"

She feigns a look of annoyance.

"I don't know what you're talking about," she says.

She takes a bite from the salad in the middle of the table but keeps her eyes on him.

"The fuck you don't!" he says and starts to laugh.

"Alright," she says, "I did it. I crept out of the house, and I sprayed the car."

"Impressive," Johnny says.

"Did you see that they called it hate speech?" KJ asks.

"Yes, I did," he says. He laughs again. "You fucking rebel!"

KJ smiles. It lasts a while, until replaced by a serious look.

"They'd fuck me over pretty hard if they knew," KJ says, "Have you ever seen an anti-white get punished for that kind of shit? They know it's safe to write anti-white slogans or even commit violence against us, because there's never any fucking punishment."

Johnny looks into her eyes.

"I'm going to, like, rant a little, OK?" she says, "I don't have anyone to talk to about this shit."

"Please do," Johnny says, "It's nice to be able to talk about whatever you want, without having some faggot run to HR or call the police on you. So go ahead, angel, rant all you want."

She smiles and looks down for a moment, but then looks at him and smiles again. This one is smaller, but he loves it even more.

"I was just saying," she says, "You know, the fucking powers that be encourage anti-whites to be vocal and violent. A lot of them call themselves punks, but they're not. They're fucking posers. That's one thing that really pisses me off, you know? You're not a punk if you, like, obey the fucking establishment. How the fuck does that make you a punk? Real punks are rebels, not ass-kissing anti-whites. Any fucking pussy can get a contract singing about niggers in the hood, or hating on whitey, or making fun of how white people dance or talk, but real punks like David Hill don't get a contract or even a positive mention for their music. They don't get anything worthwhile, just threats and violence. Anti-whites know it's safe to be anti-white. They're such goddamn tools. If young whites stand up for their race in a group, they'll get beat, maybe even murdered, and the fucking pigs will arrest the survivors. Then they get fucked over for life. They won't ever find a good job, and the guys won't be able to get a woman, because no one will hire a white racist and no woman will want to be with a guy who has to struggle just to pay for food and a place to stay."

"What about you?" he asks.

KJ looks at him.

"I'd stay with you even if we lived in a tent," she says.

Now it's his turn to stare at her. She takes a final bite of the salad, leaving the last bite for him.

"How do the guys in *Chironex* survive, Johnny?" she asks after a little mutually preferred silence.

“Well, they don’t have a contract, as you know,” Johnny says, “We pay for the recordings. We all go together. It’s part of the funds we share.”

“Thank you,” KJ says, “I think it’s worth every dollar.”

“Absolutely,” he says, “It brought you in to us. That makes it the best thing I’ve ever done.”

She reaches over and touches his hand.

“I still can’t see how those guys survive,” she says.

“Hill and the men work whatever jobs they can find,” Johnny says, “That, and there are private and secret contributions. Hill’s proud, a real hard fucker to give a gift to, but he knows what he’s doing is important both for the music and the message. Diamond keeps the music and the spirit of rebellion alive. It gives a voice to the true spirit of rebellion, against evil and for our race. The goddamned anti-whites and antifa fags have radio stations, podcasts, fag clubs and TV; we have Diamond and a few men with courage.

He squeezes her hand.

“And women,” he says.

“I know you already know all that shit I was saying,” she says, “it just feels good to vent.”

“We’ve all been there, angel,” he says, “Go ahead and vent anytime you want.”

Johnny follows KJ back to Kimberly Drive. He’s becoming more worried the police will harass her. If they pull her over, they’ll find out she’s not 18. It would seem that the danger and pressure are rising in spite of the core’s relative inaction.

KJ’s Trac Phone is set to vibrate. A few minutes after she awakens on Wednesday morning, the phone begins to shake. She looks at the display and recognizes the caller’s number: it’s Bill Donnelly.

“Good morning, KJ,” he says, “Listen, dear, I understand you’ll be going on a trip this weekend? I’m happy to hear it. Concerning your parents, I’m going to call them later this afternoon. I’ll tell them I need you Friday and throughout the weekend to help with a business presentation. I’m going to tell them you’re off until Friday. Next Tuesday also, so we don’t encroach on the juvenile labor laws. Everything’s nice and on the level.”

“OK,” she says, “I understand.”

“Good,” he says, “You may not be able to slip away these next two days, or Tuesday for that matter. Don’t fight your mother. This weekend is much more important.”

“Bill, wait,” she says, “Johnny will think I flaked on him. I can’t...”

"Don't worry, hon," Bill says, "I'll tell him. So how's your back doing?"

"Good, actually," KJ says, "Even better than I expected. I've been taking the artist's advice, and I've been listening to Anna. I also read some of the more reputable websites."

"Glad to hear it," Bill says, "Remember, KJ, don't fight your parents. You'll find the trip worth ten days at my place."

When KJ arrives home from school, she doesn't ask Erica or Gene if she can leave. If she sacrifices today, she might succeed in escaping tomorrow. She bumps up her Sunday night exercise regimen as well as lifting free weights. As humble and shy as she is, she sees in the mirror a young woman of impeccable build and beauty. It's taken a lot of hard work. Like Bowen on Sunday, she lets herself dream. She can imagine how nice it would feel for her body to be next to his.

Though there will be no meeting at the Long Hall this Thursday, KJ still desires to spend the after school hours at the hall. She sacrificed yesterday to placate Erica. Today she'll try to escape. Gene drops her off at home and goes out for some errand. KJ decides not to ask until after supper. As always, when she eats at the Campbell House, she dines alone. It doesn't matter who's in the kitchen or the dining room with her. Once the dishes are in the washer, KJ looks for Erica. It's an unusual task for her. Erica is in the den. KJ figures it's a bad time. It always is. Since the clock shows a quarter to five, she has no choice but to ask right now.

"I'd like to go and study with Anna," KJ says, "Is that OK with you?"

Erica looks up from her laptop.

"Anna..." Erica says, "Is that the red-headed skank?"

KJ's anger soars and threatens to explode. She maintains her composure. Erica and her ilk cannot touch Anna's grace with their petty words. KJ comforts herself, though she longs to respond.

"Mom, please," KJ says, "Don't call her that. She's my friend."

Erica sips her coffee louder than necessary.

"Study here," she says.

KJ shakes her head in an impatient manner, but does not say a word as she leaves.

In her room, KJ sits near the door to block access. She listens to *Autumn Leaves* on her iPod. Her textbooks are in her locker at Uniontown High.

KJ wakes early on Friday the 26th. The predawn hours are cool and cloudy. Inside, the house is somewhat uncomfortable. Erica had the heat up all night. As quietly as possible, KJ assembles some of the items for the weekend trip. The rest are in the white Chevy or stored in the Long

Hall, away from prying eyes and destructive hands. She eats a light breakfast in anticipation of a heavy supper Any Friday would find her excited about two days away from school. Today she's much more eager than usual. She knows the hours will crawl. It doesn't help that Gene makes her wait beside the minivan.

Ever since the graffiti incident, Gene's been listening to local radio in the morning. If he or Erica suspect KJ, neither lets on, though this new behavior is evidence that they do. KJ doesn't care. There is one news story that evokes interest, even if mild. Between a story about new legislation to prevent gun violence that will do nothing but punish the innocent, and a filler piece about an all-minority orchestra, there is a news report out of Cortland, New York. Late Thursday night, arsonists torched a New York Department of Transportation motor pool. Damages are estimated to be around one million dollars. At this time, the motives and the identities of the perpetrators are unknown.

Instead of using his Spring Break for a drunken sex spree in Cancun or Florida, Bryon Kennedy spent his vacation time reconnoitering the NYSDOT site. On Thursday night, Kennedy kept watch as Tom Sweeney and Ryan Chandler set up the fuel munitions. All three are part of Michael Donnelly's little circle of racially-conscious men, most of Irish descent but several who are not. The common thread is their racial solidarity, and on Thursday, April 25th, the two white Americans of Irish extraction worked with the white American of English and German heritage to pull off a major act of retribution against the anti-white establishment.

Friday is another long day at Uniontown High. KJ is on her best behavior. Although she doesn't pay attention, she refrains from using her ear buds. Her thick hair hides them from any scrutiny, but she still decides not to run the risk. The weekend is too important. When the end of the school day finally arrives, she hurries down the hall. Someone bumps shoulders with her, and finds out she's much more solid than they expected. From the sound of the assailant's voice and the lack of comparable power, KJ's antagonist is female. KJ ignores her cursing and insults which fade as KJ exits the school. Gene is waiting in the parking lot. The two go straight home without a word, and KJ is thankful.

During the entire trip to the Donnelly Homestead, KJ tells herself not to exceed the speed limit. It's fortunate that she listens to her inner voice. Near Coolspring Ball Field sits a police cruiser. This one is occupied.

KJ arrives at the Long Hall to find two Jeeps and a blue Toyota FJ Cruiser parked in the lot. One of the Jeeps has a trailer attached. The first person she sees is Johnny Bowen. He comes from around his Rubicon

and waves to her. Garret and Anna are to his right. Exiting the Cruiser are Rian and Jesse. KJ parks to the right of Bowen's Jeep, in the last spot before the big Chevy dump truck.

Before she even closes the door, KJ hops over to Bowen and throws her arms around him.

"Can I touch your back yet?" Johnny asks as she squeezes hard.

"Yeah," KJ says, "It's getting back to normal. Please don't rub it yet, OK?"

"Sure, angel," he says. Johnny holds her across her lower back as he has done of late. "Can I see it soon?" he asks as he looks into her eyes.

"It'll be a little while," she says "But I promise, it'll be worth it."

"I'm sure it will," he says, "Go ahead and get ready."

"Is everyone here?" KJ asks.

"Yeah," he says.

"Just great," she says, "I made everyone fucking wait."

He puts his hands on her shoulders.

"C'mon," he says, "Get in there and shower before you put your foot in your mouth."

KJ smiles and walks toward the hall. She waves to the others as she goes. There will be time for greetings and conversation later. When KJ emerges from the hall, the others have already departed. Johnny locks the door and they too hit the road.

The drive from Lemont Furnace to Aurora, West Virginia, is a splendid trip. The scenery is rural and often wooded, and the views from the high hills are spectacular. Johnny and KJ share a conversation, but mostly enjoy the sights – and each other's proximity while they glance at the trees and the low clouds moving like great white serpents among the higher peaks. Near Cathedral the trees are dense and seem exotic, though in reality they are native fauna from a time long gone.

The only chance of rain is Friday night. It should clear out by dawn on Saturday, leaving cloudy skies. There may be thunder but it won't disrupt the group's plans. On Friday night, they'll stay at a small inn in Parsons, West Virginia. The first stop, however, is Cathedral State Park near Aurora, West Virginia. The wilds encroach closer and closer to the margins of the road as Bowen's Jeep goes further south. Not far from Aurora, a wild turkey takes off from a huge silver maple and crosses the road in front of the Rubicon.

"Fuck!" KJ says, "Did you see that turkey?"

"Yeah," Johnny says, "Nice one. You ever have wild turkey?"

Yeah, when I fucked up and got drunk, she thinks, *Wild Turkey 101...and vodka.*

"No," she says.

"I used to hunt turkey with my uncle and father," Johnny says, "The meat's a lot better than those tame birds."

They drive through little Aurora.

"I don't remember if I told you," KJ says, "but thank you for *Youth Defense League*, and all the other music that you gave me. Thank you, Johnny." She looks down for a moment, the subtle sincerity and fledgling happiness barely visible on her face. To a man falling in love with her, the signs are clear. "Thank you for the night beside Cheat Lake. It felt really good to be there with you."

"You're welcome, angel," he says.

Garret's Jeep and Rian's FJ Cruiser are parked at the entrance to Cathedral Park. It dawns on KJ that other than Rian, none of the Donnelly's is present.

"Sinead didn't come?" KJ asks.

"She's leaving for Ireland," Johnny says, "Hell, she may have left already. I doubt we'll be seeing her too often. She has her own plans, too. I wouldn't be surprised if she marries soon."

"Really?" KJ says.

"Yeah," Johnny says, "The guy she was talking to at Easter is her boyfriend."

"Wow," KJ says, "I didn't know."

The air at Cathedral is crisp but not unpleasant. KJ stuffs her toboggan in her pocket just in case, though she doubts she'll need it. The place is new to her. She's seen the huge pines and rainforests of the Pacific Northwest, yet this is unique and in its own way just as beautiful. Giant hemlocks blanket the forest floor with brown needles and cover the sky with younger green ones. KJ feels at peace as if she's millions of miles away or has crossed some threshold into another, less-troubled life.

The walk through the ancient forest seems to be more of a pleasant escape than a prelude to some monumental event. Every member of the little group senses and takes advantage of the brief respite. Together or as individuals, they represent a striking image, dressed as they are for a leisurely hike. Rian and Jesse are up front. They walk, hand in hand, among one of the last vestiges of the great forest that once covered the Mountain State. When a strong but short-lived breeze kicks up, the two trade coats, with Jesse taking Rian's warmer denim jacket just in case the cool wind returns. KJ and Anna are a little more resistant to the cold,

though KJ gets close to Bowen, who puts his arm around her. She doesn't feel a chill. The wind is a good excuse to get close to him, as if one were needed. Even stoic and reserved Garret Fogarty puts his arm around Anna. The two follow KJ and Bowen, and both observe the affection between the couples in front. For Anna it is a scene more beautiful than the forest she has loved all her life.

For Garret, the sight of the other couples is a bittersweet image. He, too, takes advantage of this little respite from the tribulations of life, yet he cannot ignore his main objective for the trip. He observes the interactions of the others so that he might inform Bill of his thoughts on compatibility. It is something Garret must do.

Garret has tried to impress upon Bill Donnelly his desire to keep the two pairs intact. He's more convinced than ever that it must be this way, should any of the four choose the perilous path of a warrior. If they do accept the offer to fight, there is still no guarantee they will be together. He pulls Anna close and kisses her head. She looks at him and smiles. Just then Bowen, who could not see those behind him, does the same to KJ.

At the end of the wide circular path through the forest, there is a copse of young hemlocks surrounding an old giant. Beside them is a stump covered with bracket fungi. The three lovely couples pause at this place. It offers a last look at the primordial woodland of Cathedral.

Garret walks over to the huge hemlock.

"Remember these trees," he says, "They may be gone soon. If the adelgid makes it here, we'll lose all of them."

Jesse gasps in surprise that turns to anger.

"Are you serious?" she asks.

She knows he is.

"Yeah," Garret says, nodding his head. "Another parasite that destroys something beautiful."

"We're a lot like these trees," Anna says, "or the American Chestnut. They bring in parasites, and we disappear."

She has a distant look. Garret is about to speak when KJ puts her hand on Anna's left arm.

"Yeah," KJ says, "But we can fight back."

Garret holds his tongue. KJ mirrored his thoughts and it is better that she says it.

Hills and thick woods flank the route from Aurora to Parsons. In the twilight, the little convoy passes the giant bat-killing wind turbines of Backbone Mountain.

Bowen turns down the iPod.

"What are you thinking about?" Johnny asks, since KJ's been quiet since they left Cathedral.

"I was wondering if there will even be forests like this once we're gone," she says, "When there are only non-whites on this Earth, they'll cut down all the trees to build their fucking slums and pot gardens."

"We'll have to stop them," he says, "There's so much worth fighting for, angel."

"It shouldn't be your burden alone," she says.

"It's not," he says, "But it doesn't excuse me just because someone else won't fight."

"Most people will hate me for loving my race and my white brothers," KJ says, "But that doesn't excuse me if I turn my back on you."

"My angel," he says.

"My warrior," she says.

The six travelers are ravenous when they arrive at the small inn where they'll be staying the night. Fortunately, there is an excellent little restaurant on the premises. Fresh crab linguini and locally-caught trout satisfy their hunger. After supper, it's off to the rooms, the men staying in one and the women in the other. Garret reminds them to be ready to leave at 5AM. Anna and Jesse share a bed, leaving KJ more room. It's been a full day, especially for KJ, and sleep is not hard to find.

There's almost an hour and a half to sunrise when Rian Donnelly leads the groups out of the parking lot. The order of travel continues until they come to a Jeep trail into the Monongahela National Forest. Bowen's relentless Rubicon surges over stones and creeks surrounded by thick laurel, oak and towering tulip-trees. After two hours of bouncing and rocking, the Jeep enters a section of the trail that is a little tamer. The forest is less dense and the ground is flat. Up ahead there is a wide spot with some grass and a patch of trilliums to the left. Bowen stops the Jeep. Here they will make camp.

John Bowen is removing the first dome tent as the others arrive. KJ is helping him set up the tent when Garret comes over. The cloudy skies above are brightening.

"Johnny," Garret says, "Do you mind if I take KJ for a little while? Do you mind, KJ?"

"Who's going to help Johnny?" KJ asks.

"Rian," Garret says.

The two walk over to Garret's Wrangler Sport. Up close, she can see it's been modified for better off-road performance.

Garret hands her a bag of kindling from his jeep. He muscles two bundles of firewood from the rear. When he finds a location to his liking he begins building a fire.

"I've heard you're good with food," Garret says, "Do you mind sharing your expertise?"

"No," KJ says, "Of course not. I'd enjoy it."

"Grab what you need from Rian's truck," he says, "Rian and Jesse will help and so will I. For now, just get the ingredients together."

While Garret tends to the fire, KJ collects the necessary utensils and the food elements from a huge cooler in Rian's FJ Cruiser. Once she's accomplished her task, KJ waits for Garret to finish with the fire. The air is pure and the sky gray-white with cracks of blue. Though the skies will not be clear, there is no rain predicted for the next three days. The temperature will be near-perfect and the budding trees will keep any incidental sunlight away from flawless white skin and sensitive blue eyes. KJ looks around the campsite. Johnny and Rian are putting up the tents, which are larger than necessary. It will be a comfortable night. Anna and Jesse are rigging up the shower. KJ assumed they'd have one. Still, she's glad to see it. For now, she and Garret are isolated from the others. Garret notices and makes use of the situation.

"KJ," Garret says to grab her attention, "How are you holding up?"

"I already love this," KJ says, "I'm so glad you invited me."

"We wouldn't have left without you," he says, "But that's not what I meant. I meant at school and home."

"I'll be alright," she says.

"I was going to say, you seem to be holding up pretty well," he says, "You don't back off when they pressure or abuse you. I know about the Epstein episode from a relative at Uniontown High. I know you're isolated when you're away from us, but you don't strike me as the type who needs a lot of people in her life."

"I do want my man," she says, "I'd like to have a few close friends, and I really want a family someday. I don't need any more than that, no."

"So you'd rather not be a martyr," he says.

"I'd rather live," she says, "but I won't be a traitor, and I'll never fucking crawl. If that costs me my life, then that's just how it has to be."

"Do you want a family with Johnny?" he asks.

The blatant question takes her by surprise.

"Can I be with him?" she asks.

"I don't know," he answers, "I don't think anyone does at this point. I don't even know who I'm going to share my life with, if anyone."

The flames metamorphose from the flash-fire of kindling to the steady burn of thick wood.

"You know," Garret says as he kneels by the fire, "When you practice at Coalsack, you're developing a talent that could serve you very well someday. Not just you, but a lot of others, too. How you use your talents with the rifle is your decision, yours and yours alone. I'd imagine you've read essays and blogs on the subject of white rights and survival. Many of the authors abhor violence. Many would just as soon see a violent white rebel punished as praised. You need to realize that not all of those who condemn a fighter are rabid anti-whites. Some may even agree with us."

"A lot of them say we have to be peaceful, no matter what happens to us," KJ says, "Most of them make anonymous posts or use aliases. That's fine. The establishment is evil enough to kill and we know it wants us to disappear. They're the ones pushing this fucking genocide so I can't blame someone for wanting to be anonymous. But what's our survival worth, seriously? Isn't it worth the risk? We're facing extinction as a race. It's fucking genocide, it's not just fucking politics as usual, and they don't even try to hide it. Anti-whites want a future without us and they even gloat about it! A future without us is a future without art and music, and the deepest, most creative imaginations that have ever lived. We drive everything; inventions, technology, art. We do everything to the fucking maximum. Fuck, even the expression of a white man's love through art, that's worth fighting for. What about a white woman who isn't a fool; who gives a good man all the affection in her soul? Isn't she worth fighting for? And what about their little white baby and the other white children who keep the life cycle going, all over again? They're more important than my survival, Garret, or yours."

She expects him to look up at her. Instead he tends to the fire.

"It's larger than us," KJ says, "Even the pacifists say that the future of our race is in jeopardy, and our children's lives are at stake. Aren't their lives worth fighting for?"

"It's your future, too," Garret says, "As a woman."

He says this to provoke a response; there is one response that he hopes she'll provide. Garret stands and looks at KJ.

"That's true," she says, "but there's a deeper reason for a white woman to make a stand. A long time ago, a few white-hating kikes helped create feminism. Not justice or decency for women, that wasn't their intent. Just look around you and you can see they didn't give a fuck about us. They want our race to go extinct and white women are nothing but whores to them. I mean, white men create art that glorifies us while fuck-

ing kikes make films where white girls are whores and race traitors. They lied when they said that white women are oppressed by white men, and that we should feel closer to non-whites than our own race. That's a pretty fucking obvious attempt at genocide, but we were stupid and selfish enough to believe it. We allowed them to pull us away from you, our men. We face the same fucking extinction as a race, but instead of standing with you when you fight, we tear you down. We helped create the division between us." She looks into his eyes. "I say no more; no fucking more. Even if I 'm alone I will stand with you and Johnny. We won't be ripped apart anymore. They'll have to kill me to pull me away."

The fire is blazing and Jesse and Rian approach the folding table with the food and utensils.

"Thank you, KJ," Garret says, "Your thoughts are always welcome and appreciated."

KJ smiles. Together with Rian and Jesse, she begins preparing breakfast for the little group. This is not the time for elaborate preparations or nuanced recipes, yet the talent and expertise of the three youngsters shows in the results. The eggs are not dry, the cheese is not burned and the bacon is neither too crisp nor rubbery. It helps that the ingredients all came from local farms.

After breakfast, Johnny extinguishes the fire. Rian removes his glasses and the two wrestle, with Bowen the winner, although Rian surprises KJ with his abilities. When the horseplay is over, Garret rises to his feet.

"Anna and I are going hiking," Garret says, "We'll all meet back here in two hours. Johnny, KJ, you two can go to Otter Creek if you want. Rian, Jesse, Anna and I will rotate being near the camp."

"You up for a good hike?" Johnny asks KJ. He reaches for her gloved hand and pulls her up from her folding chair. "Did you bring the stuff I asked you to buy?"

"Yeah," she says.

They take the essential items for the trip from Johnny's Jeep and set out in a southern direction. In the lush wilds of the National Forest, it does not take long for the two to lose sight of the camp.

"Can we find our way back?" KJ asks.

For the first time since leaving Bill's, KJ feels nervous.

"We will, angel," Johnny says, "Do you trust me?"

"Yeah," she says, feeling her nervousness subside, "I trust you."

A little later the nerves return. This time it's not from worry. Rather, it's because of a very painful episode of her life that lies buried, but whose

ghost rises once more. If there's any chance of her being with Johnny, he needs to know what happened with Justin Harris. His oath of fidelity and the sacrifices he's made to preserve it make him worthy of knowing her entire story.

"Johnny," KJ says, "I've wanted to tell you something."

He slows to be beside her. They stop at a huge stand of laurel. The thick wall of green, fleshy leaves hides them from view. KJ grips his hand and looks up into his eyes.

"What's wrong, KJ?" Johnny asks.

He can tell something's eating at her. She takes a deep breath. The forest smells fresh and the air is pure.

"You need to know this," she says, "I fucked up once, really bad. It could have destroyed me. I...I have to tell you, if there's any chance that we can be together, because you deserve to know."

She moves into his embrace and holds on tight.

"Go on, KJ," he says, "But you're still my angel. That won't change."

"Thank you," she whispers.

The embrace lasts a while. When he pulls her back to look into her eyes, she touches his face, beginning at the spot where she hit him. He runs his hand over her head and, consoled and encouraged by his affection, she tells him about the night with Justin Harris.

"All my life I knew that my brother died," she says, "They told me he died at birth. There were little things, whispers mostly, and then my fucking mom would change the subject. I suspected the worst even before I woke up, but I couldn't bring myself to believe it."

"Come here," Johnny says, "Tell me what you need to, angel."

She feels so much of the old pain, but she does not break down. Johnny is there with his arms around her. She is no longer alone.

"That night," she says, after taking a deep breath, "we had a big fight. My mother confirmed what I tried not to believe. She aborted my brother. She killed her white baby, and I grew in the place where he died."

Her voice is steady and grave. This time it's Johnny who nuzzles her. He kisses her head and holds her tight.

"Call me if you ever feel that way again," he says, "Call Bill or Anna, any of us. Just, call."

"I won't get that way again," she says, "Thanks to you, Johnny. They can't put me in that place again. You pulled me out of it."

He kisses her head again.

"Even if he'd taken you," he says, "You'd still be here with me."

She wipes her eyes and looks at him.

"No," KJ says, "I might have been lost. I wouldn't have something truly beautiful to give. I'd have thrown it away forever. I'd still fight for our race, but you deserve a woman who hasn't thrown away her virginity. You risked your life for us, and you kept your virginity in spite of being so fucking handsome and strong, and even though you know that assholes and fucking cunts will make fun of you, you still did it. Why? Because you're not a boy, you're a fucking man. Why should you settle for a woman who couldn't wait like you did? Why should you ever settle, Johnny Bowen?"

"KJ..." he says.

"I'm right," she says.

He kisses her head again and she squeezes him as tight as she ever has. She puts her gloved hand on his chest and takes a small step back, so that she can look at him again.

"I would have missed all the things that have made my life wonderful," she says, "But you know, Johnny, the pleasure would have been nothing in the end. It makes me so much stronger knowing that I'm whole. If you know a girl is yours, and only yours, how hard would you fight to protect her? If you knew your children were yours, and she loves and cherishes you? You'd be the only one to have her, your woman. How hard would you fight to protect her? How far would you go?"

He returns her stare. Neither falters.

"To the death," he says.

"I will be with you if the war doesn't pull you away from me," she says, "This time you won't be alone. At least one white woman will stand with her white man."

"If I don't have to leave," he says, "then be my woman. Be mine and only mine. Make all those words you said come true."

She touches his face, as always at the spot where her fist slammed into his jaw. He breathes heavily once through his nose.

"Nothing can rip away what you mean to me," she says. She looks down and shrugs. "By the way, I already am your woman."

He would kiss her right now. It would be full of wild passion and urgency, and she would do the same to him. He smells her hair and kisses her on the head. They're far too close to the line to dare go any further, and they both know it. The lines have begun to fade, and they both know that as well.

The sound of a swift stream reveals the proximity of Otter Creek. KJ lets Johnny take the lead, though she urges him to be careful. Ahead, the ever-present laurel and rhododendron block all but the smallest glimpse of the frothing creek. Bowen smiles at KJ and then charges through the

green wall. KJ follows, and they emerge on to a slab of rock that eventually plunges beneath Otter Creek. The stream itself is picturesque and untainted. Ancient stones distinguish its course, even in areas not presently touched by the waves. Green moss grows atop most of the stones and the rushing waters of the creek surround these little emerald islands.

Without trepidation, Johnny Bowen walks to the edge of a very large stone outcrop. He removes his backpack and kneels. He then washes his hands and face, making an audible interjection from the coldness of the water. KJ keeps her distance until Bowen returns to her. He figures she's afraid of falling into such cold water so far away from camp. He leads her, hand-in-hand, to the edge. While his hand is on the back of her head, she kneels and repeats his earlier actions.

"Feels good, doesn't it?" Johnny asks.

"Yeah," KJ says, "It's so nice and clean."

"We used to fish here," he says as he sits on the slab.

KJ plops down on his lap. It startles him, but of course he loves it.

"Me and Cristi used to cat around all over West Virginia," he says, "Even before I had a driver's license."

She rubs his hair.

"You've been here before," she says, "I figured you had. You seemed to know this place pretty well."

"I'm going to start showing you how to keep track of where you go," he says, "so you won't ever get lost. I know that you've read about it and practiced a little, but we'll get you to the point you can't get lost."

"That would be fucking sweet!" she says.

She's fascinated by the thought, but also sees more than one advantage to learning the skill. It means that she and Johnny will be together for each lesson.

Along the trail northwest of Otter Creek there are a few wider sections that permit Johnny and KJ to walk side-by-side. While passing through these places, he puts his arm around her waist. She holds on to him. He's wearing his .45 pistol. She can feel it on occasion.

"We need men like you," she says, "I know we can fight. Anna's really strong, too. Have you seen her arms and legs? But we're women. Only a fool thinks we can protect ourselves against every adversary. I know you'd protect Anna and me, so we really need men like you."

"We'll be there," he says.

"And so will we," she says, "Only fucking fools believe the feminist lies. The war isn't between white men and women, it's between our race and the traitors who don't give a fuck about our children." She hurries a

few steps ahead so she can turn toward him. "We'll be there, Johnny, right by your side. I'm going to be there when you need me and I'm going to treat you so fucking good for being my man."

A mischievous little smile comes to her face. When he gets to her, she throws her arms around him. It requires all her restraint not to jump into his arms and kiss him. She wishes for the day when they won't have to hold back.

The two young lovers arrive at camp to find Anna and Garret lounging about. There's a fire going and a kettle of soup hung over its flames. Garret says something to Anna and the redhead laughs. KJ notices that Anna's hand is on Garret's arm.

"I thought about sneaking up and scaring the shit out of you," Johnny says to Garret, "but I didn't want Red there to open fire on me."

"How'd it go?" Garret asks.

Johnny looks at KJ. He pulls her close to his body.

"Nice," KJ says.

"Where's Jesse and Rian?" Johnny asks.

"It's their turn to take a walk," Garret says.

KJ looks around the changed camp. The FJ Cruiser is parked to the right of one of the two tents. Beyond and to the left is the shower. It's ringed by a makeshift curtain. She smiles in appreciation of their efforts to preserve each person's privacy. There is a small basin near the shower and a large duffel bag to its left. KJ's about to inquire about its contents when the voice of Jesse Hanratty emanates from the woods beyond the trillium patch.

"Come on, you guys!" Jesse yells from some unseen location that must be nearby, "Bring a basket!"

Until the age of 16, Jessica Taylor Hanratty lived a life that most observers would have thought usual for a girl of her build and attractiveness. Born and raised in Cumberland, Maryland, she had her first modeling gig at thirteen and by fifteen was considered a rising star in that sometimes-fulfilling, often-destructive line of work. Her fascination with medicine and nursing was unusual, though not unique. It stemmed from an intellectual curiosity and a deep desire to heal. At the time, her mind was still sleeping, though she did not suppress her instincts to seek a white man to be her partner. She couldn't, or wouldn't admit it at the time, but to date anyone but a member of her race would have been unnatural.

Another unusual facet of Jessica's – Jesse's – personality was her fondness for the outdoors. She learned to swim at an early age and spent summers with relatives at Deep Creek Lake. She fished with her uncle

and even went hunting on occasion. Her family was conservative on certain issues like abortion, and liberal on others like labor and the environment. They were also racially aware to a degree. Her parents often failed to see the destructiveness of forced assimilation, though this was not out of malevolence or stupidity, but rather from a lack of experience. Among her immediate kinfolk, it was Jesse who was less racially aware than the others.

The first contradiction that led her to a racial awakening came when she was sixteen. Jesse had auditioned for a commercial scheduled to appear on a local television channel. It was small-time to be sure, but a definite move forward for her modeling career. Unfortunately for Jesse, one of the other aspiring models was jealous of her superior beauty. That individual also happened to be black. The fact that both models were to appear in the commercial did not matter to the black model.

The gutless advertising firm informed Jesse that they were going to recast her role. Shocked and upset, Jesse demanded an explanation, as did her parents, Gerald and Nicole. At first the representative refused to answer. When pressed, she became hostile. Jesse had insulted one of the other models, she said. Jesse had voiced a racial slur. Stillman-Meyer Communications does not tolerate discrimination based on race, the representative informed them. It was a bald-faced lie. In America, an accusation of racism against whites is always taken seriously by the powerful and the wealthy.

The firm would give the role to another girl, this one less attractive and therefore acceptable to the black model. Jesse, her emotions battered, went home.

The entire episode struck a nerve with Jesse. While she perused the internet looking for similar examples of anti-white persecution, Jesse came across a story from Chicago. Two black males had accosted a white female and, when she was unable to satisfy their desire for cigarettes or money, they beat and stomped her. Twice doctors had to resuscitate her and, although she survived, she faced a long and incomplete recovery. The courts released one of the perpetrators after only 18 days of jail time. He would soon end up behind bars for another violent crime.

When Jesse read the length of the perpetrator's sentence, she shook her head and spoke the words "eighteen days." She then invested the necessary time to find pictures of the battered woman, and when she succeeded the images horrified her. Had the races been reversed, the sickening imagery would have been easy to find, and the story would have went nationwide.

This act of savagery, repeated over and over each month, was not the final step in Jesse's awakening. Like some, Jesse agonized over these thoughts. Many would call such thoughts racist. "Anti-racists" would say that black-on-white crime was the result of unfair treatment of blacks by whites. At the same time, they insisted that the white race did not in fact exist. The hypocrisy and mendacity were obvious to Jesse. She was beginning to see the word anti-racist for what it was, a code word for anti-white.

A few days after reading about the Chicago case, Jesse spoke to her parents. She sought consolation. The parts of her mind still under the influence of endless Hollywood and establishment propaganda yearned for an answer; any answer other than the obvious. Her father told her that those in power could sell their lies to fools and liars. They had no intention of enforcing equality and justice, for that would leave the less-capable in the shadows. He showed her a list he'd once saved on his hard drive. The list, composed by an anonymous power on a pro-white forum, asked whether the government or any other powerful, moneyed interests had ever done anything to promote the growth and well-being of the white population of the United States. The answer was silence.

Jesse wasn't the only one seeing through eyes once shut.

While in the pursuit of knowledge, Jesse encountered Bob Whitaker's Mantra. It opened her eyes to the nature of the struggle her race was facing, a struggle most couldn't even conceive let alone recognize. She realized that white nations, and only white nations, are expected if not forced to accept massive non-white immigration. Her father believed this to be a ploy for votes and cheap labor. Jesse came to a different conclusion. Whether intentional or not, the results of massive non-white immigration and assimilation would, through miscegenation, result in the extinction of white physical and intellectual characteristics. In short, this was race-replacement genocide. When this final domino fell, Jesse's mind was open, and she became the most racially aware of her entire family.

A strong desire to acknowledge and embrace her French and Irish heritage led Jesse to the Celtic Society of Cumberland, Maryland. In time she came to understand and embrace the pro-white nature of the society. Increased awareness wasn't all that the society gave to her. A week after her seventeenth birthday, during a meeting of the society, Rian Donnelly asked young Jessica Taylor Hanratty out on a date. She accepted.

When Jesse calls out for someone to bring a basket, Anna and Garret jump into action. KJ wonders what's happening. She doesn't be-

lieve there's any danger – what danger requires a basket? But she is at a loss to explain the excitement. Johnny Bowen grabs her hand.

“Come on, angel,” he says.

They charge past the trillium patch, careful not to step on the beautiful flowers. Rian and Jesse are beyond the flower patch. They are hunched over, creeping through the fiddleheads and mayapples. KJ watches Jesse for a moment. In her jeans and oversized t-shirt, she is worlds away from the typical appearance of a model. She is wearing no makeup and her hair is in a long ponytail. She's never been more beautiful.

About the time Anna appears from the right, KJ realizes what they're doing. The word she says in her mind is the same one that Anna yells out at the exact same instant.

“Morels!” Anna says.

“Do you know anything about morels?” Johnny asks KJ.

KJ nods, looking at Anna who bends down to collect a largish specimen.

“Yeah,” KJ says when she looks up at Johnny, “I mean, I read a lot about them.”

“You know to pinch them off, right?” he asks.

“Right,” she says, “Don't, like, pull them up.”

“Let's see if we can beat these fuckers,” Johnny whispers and winks.

They do rather well. KJ's observational talents enable her to spot morels from some distance in spite of their notorious ability to hide among forest growth and clutter. She collects 12, some smallish, some large. Anna's hunted for morels all her life. She finds 26 and is the individual and team champion. Bowen's 20 puts them six shy of Rian and Jesse's total. Anna and Garret win with 50, a bountiful total for one hour's work.

Back at camp, Garret occupies himself with the jeep trailer. It's 3:30 or so in the afternoon. There's one final task for the day, and then they can get to making and eating supper and lounging about the campfire.

Garret rises from his chore, a large duffel bag in his hands.

“Whoever has business in the brush, there are tissues and supplies in the bag by the shower. There's soap and hand wash, too.” He lays down the bag. “I'm going to leave the trailer open. Rian, Jesse, could one of you fill the basin over there? It'll be for hands, the last jerry can is water for washing your face. Once you're done, would you be so kind as to begin setting up for supper, and start drying the morels, too. We'd be in your debt. KJ, Johnny, Anna, when you're done, come over to the trailer. There are suits in the trailer for each of you, with post-it notes so you know which is which. Get dressed as soon as you can.”

KJ raises her brow. Johnny gets that smile again.

"You're going to like this," he says.

Before attending to necessary business, they watch Garret dress. He puts on a charcoal gray jumpsuit and hangs a mask on his belt.

"Garret!" Johnny says, "One rule. No shooting in the back, OK? Ass shots are fine, but no back shots."

Garret opens his mouth to protest but must realize the reason for the interdiction. KJ's tattoo is healing faster than expected, but she doesn't need any unnecessary blows to her back.

"OK, fine," Garret says. He pulls out his weapon, a semi-automatic paintball gun. "Back shots don't count, so don't try it."

"I'm not shooting you," KJ says to Johnny.

"I hope not, angel," Johnny says, "We're on the same team."

She smiles and moves her shoulders back and forth.

For the contest, Bowen and KJ will depart into the woods. Johnny grabs a hand-held radio from Garret's Wrangler. After half an hour, Anna and Garret will attempt to track them.

"Any hit other than a back shot is considered a kill," Garret says.

Once they've dressed and armed themselves with similar paintball guns, KJ and Johnny enter the deep woods. For most of the initial half-hour they walk together, Johnny in the lead. He knows there's a shallow creek to their left and a rise in the terrain to the southwest. They make for the creek, but just before they can see its stony body they take a sharp turn toward the rise. Bowen halts on its east end. Thanks to the fortuitous growth of trees, there is a spot that offers a decent view in three directions.

"Here's your spot," Johnny says.

KJ gets down and takes a shooter's position. Johnny and Irish John have taught her well.

"I'll be nearby," he says, "I'm guessing they'll come close and then try something cute. If I'm right, you'll see Garret while he's out of range. He'll hope you take a shot and reveal yourself. He's dangerous, but Anna's the killer. I've taught him a hell of a lot, and so has John. But Anna has years of experience in the woods. Now, when you see Garret, try to creep forward. John showed you how, right?"

KJ nods.

"Good," Johnny says, "Go slow, OK? Get to maximum range and let him think you're still a little too far away for a shot. You remember your range exercises? Well, it's time to put them to good use."

"Johnny," she says, "If I fuck up, save yourself."

"Not without you," he says.

Johnny dashes off before she can respond.

There is an ancient white oak at the 40-50 meter range. KJ is sure of her mental calculations. One of the marked slopes on the Donnelly property resembles this place. She scans the area over and over. She does not fix her concentration solely on the oak, lest someone creep up on her while she stares. She wonders if an actual battle can feel half as bad as the anticipation that precedes it. Another half hour passes. It seems like three hours. She hears a crow down the slope, somewhere out of sight. A second crow joins him; whoever's moving must find the cacophony frustrating. The culprit for the hubbub appears between the trees. It's Garret. She can tell that he's not sure where she is located.

Garret does not remain in one spot for long. He's over 300 feet away. He comes forward and stops. He may have seen KJ, or feel her presence. Suddenly he ducks behind a tree, but she can see him peeking in her direction. KJ hasn't heard a sound from Johnny, or Anna for that manner. She hopes for the best but she cannot worry about it right now. She begins creeping forward. From the shelf mushroom on a dead locust tree, it's 200 feet to Garret's hiding place. The dilemma is great, since he'll change his plans if she gets that close. KJ decides to move to a point half-way between her nest and the old artist's conk.

Any time that Garret looks in her direction, KJ freezes. She can tell by his increasing tendency to look to his rear that he's concerned about Johnny Bowen. Eventually, she reaches the place she selected. While he's not looking, she moves in a lateral direction. If he were a little closer she'd try a long shot. She has three paintballs.

Garret derails her hopes. He backs away from the tree and enters the taller woods. KJ rises to a kneeling position and returns to her original spot. She looks to each side. About 150 feet to the right is an old locust, this one still living. To the left there's a lone pine at 300 or so feet, but nothing closer that might help her determine the range in that direction. The little scope on the paintball gun does not have mil-dots. To KJ's rear is a stand of laurel. It's about 100 feet away. There is a short kill zone of empty space and old leaf litter. KJ sits upright and lets her ears see for her. Something's moving to her left. It's too small to be Garret. It's not a nut or a stick he's thrown, either. It's definitely animate. She glances and sees a gray squirrel.

KJ hears something that sounds like someone kicking leaf litter and brush. Then she hears a muffled thump. The little squirrel ceases his motion. KJ freezes and glances around. She wants to take off the mask, but

knows better than remove any protection. She expects a full-blown battle to erupt. Instead, nothing further happens.

Silence returns to the forest. A little later, KJ's keen eyes sense movement to her left. The source is too far away for a shot, and who knows? It might be Johnny. In a short time she can see it's a person. He's angled toward her position, but if he takes a straight course he'll end up in the laurel. He may or may not approach to maximum range. KJ watches. Johnny's suit is gray with darker camouflage patches. This one's solid gray. It's Garret again. He won't pass any closer than a thick patch of greenbrier, which is just within range. If he moves around her nest, he may pass on the near side of a young oak tree that she's chosen as a range marker. If he does, he will be at maximum range for her weapon. She cannot creep forward without exposing herself. If he moves just in front of that particular oak, she'll risk a shot.

Garret knows that his route could put him in someone's line of fire. He stops, hidden for the moment by another oak. Ahead of him are three young red oaks and a large stone to the left. The stone is flanked on its own left by laurel. Bowen could be out there. Anna could be in jeopardy. He looks to his left. The little nest he's worried about seems just out of range. It's dangerous, but Johnny is nowhere between him and the nest. It's safer to skirt around and make an approach through the laurel. Johnny or KJ might be inside that place; most likely the latter. He stops and thinks for a moment. The risk doesn't matter anymore; he hasn't seen any sign of Anna or Johnny Bowen. Anna may need him and he is her sentinel. Garret looks around again, and then runs for the huge patch of laurel on the far end

KJ sees him take off. Perhaps he's seen Johnny.

No, you don't, she thinks.

Garret comes around the closer side of the oaks. KJ aims just ahead and pulls the trigger.

Garret stops in his tracks. A patch of yellow mars his left shoulder. He removes his mask and shoulders his gun. KJ watches as he turns on his radio and taps a signal. To his surprise he receives a reply. KJ sees him begin to speak. Then he waves in her direction.

"KJ!" Garret says, "Come on in!"

She stands and emerges from the nest. She's too concerned with Johnny's fate to feel the excitement of her triumph.

"Nice shot," Garret says as she walks over to him.

"It was luck," KJ says. She gets to what's on her mind. "Where are Johnny and Anna?"

"They're waiting for us down the hill," Garret says.

"Is everything OK?" KJ asks.

"Oh yeah," he says.

After a short walk, they can see Anna and Johnny up ahead, talking. Neither is wearing their masks or little helmets. Bowen's suit is mostly unzipped. Once she's closer, KJ sees the reason.

Johnny has a pink spot on his stomach.

Anna has a yellow spot on the upper middle of her protective suit.

"You didn't even fire a shot," Johnny says to Garret.

He shakes his head to rub it in.

"That's not a gold medal on your stomach," Garret says.

Johnny laughs.

"What happened?" KJ asks.

"We got each other," Johnny says.

"How?" KJ asks.

"Come on," Johnny says, "We have to clean up before supper."

KJ looks at Anna, who motions for KJ to follow. Once they get going, Bowen falls back to be alongside KJ. Arm-in-arm, they arrive at the camp.

Through the trees, KJ can see the morels strung from two separate branches. She knows from her reading about flora that this is one of the best methods of drying mushrooms.

"Have you ever had morels?" Johnny asks.

"Yeah," KJ says, "It was a while ago. Actually, I've had them a few times back in Seattle. I've never had ones that I picked myself, just at restaurants."

"These will be much better," he says, "You'll see."

The kettle of soup is steaming above one of two fires. Jesse has a sheet spread on the hood of the FJ Cruiser. She's showing her fiancée a selection of plants she collected during their walk.

"See how rough these are?" Jesse asks, "Feel that. These are cleavers. You can cook those in spite of the little hooks that make them rough."

"Johnny," Garret says, "You and KJ take turns with the shower. We'll get the food on."

While Garret and Anna wash their hands and faces at the basin, KJ and Johnny remove a change of clothes from his Rubicon. Bowen shows her how to work the shower, which turns out to be a little different than the one at Coalsack. She's happy they don't have the shower rigged up where she'd have to worry about someone stumbling onto her while she's naked. She has no shame in her body. Quite the contrary; she's proud of its

extraordinary beauty and the work she's put into making it a work of art. Shame is not the reason; intimacy is. Aside from medical personnel, she'd only want her lover to see her most intimate places. It's another little gift she can give to him alone.

The water is warm and soothing. Thanks to the shower, the clean forest air and the kinsmen who surround her, KJ feels an inner peace she's rarely felt in her life. When she's finished she calls to Johnny, who shuts off the shower and hands a large towel through the break in the curtain.

"I didn't look," Johnny says.

"Thank you, Johnny," KJ says, "I don't want you to see my ink until it's done."

The soup is simple camp fare; canned broth with noodles. The homemade pickled hot peppers that complete the course are the real charm, that and the brown bread baked by Megan Donnelly.

Anna uses the shower, followed by Garret, while KJ and Johnny finish the soup. The main course is anything but ordinary. Jesse and Rian have put together a vegetable lasagna dish that would be delicious under any circumstance. As always, the open flame and hickory wood augment the taste. Slices of deer sausage serve as a delicious side. They came from Anna's second deer of last fall, a doe she hunted during antlerless season. The food, in particular the lasagna, takes KJ back to camping trips in eastern Washington. Her uncle excelled at food preparation, just like her mother, and dinner time at the camp was always a pleasure. There is at least one major difference: Here she's surrounded by people who cherish her. She looks at Johnny, who notices and smiles. She returns the gesture.

While Anna and Garret eat their supper, Johnny Bowen brings a brown paper bag from Garret's Jeep trailer. He sits and tells KJ to come closer. She does him one better. She gets up and sits on his lap. From the bag he takes a narrow strip of dark chocolate.

"Is that what I think it is?" Anna asks, her eyes growing wide.

Johnny nods.

"You made orange peels?!!" Anna exclaims, "Are there enough for the rest of us?"

"Shush!" Johnny says to the redhead. "Open wide, KJ," he says.

He puts the candy to her lips. She tastes the little delight; the texture of the orange peel is ideal, and the taste is far from bitter.

"Fuck, that's good!" KJ says.

She squeezes him tight and puts her forehead against his head.

"Here," he says, "There's more."

Johnny feeds her another piece. He takes a few more into his hand and tosses the bag to Rian.

"Yes," Johnny says, "There's enough for everyone."

The evening fades into night. In the far distance, a great horned owl hoots. Anna and the men have a beer. Jesse and KJ drink Blue Sky organic soda, though KJ is tempted to have a Guinness.

The little group sits near the remaining fire and converses now and then, while at other times they just watch the dancing flames. KJ and Johnny play around as much as they dare. Anna and Garret hold hands. Jesse and Rian talk until it's nearly time for bed. That's when he takes off his glasses and kisses her.

The dome tents are much larger than necessary, which pleases the occupants. The men will stay in the left-hand tent. The women will stay in the tent that's sheltered by the men's tent and the FJ Cruiser. After brushing their teeth and attending to other little tasks that make for a pleasant night's sleep, most of the men and all of the women retire to their respective shelters. A few minutes later, Johnny comes to the ladies' door.

"Anna," Johnny says, "Do you have your .45?"

"Yeah," Anna says, "I put it above my pillow."

He turns away from the entrance and then returns with a larger firearm. When he opens the flaps, he checks out his woman. She's not in anything racy, yet the sleeveless shirt and soft striped pants she wears do nothing whatsoever to diminish her sexuality.

"KJ," Johnny says, "lay this behind you, between your sleeping bag and the tent wall."

She slides over to him and takes the gun – a Mossberg 12-gauge pump shotgun. It is colored in a camouflage pattern and she loves how it looks.

"You've got six rounds," he says, "Hopefully you'll still have six in the morning. Be careful if you do have to fire."

"OK, Johnny," KJ says, "Thanks for thinking of us."

"Good night, angel," he says.

KJ and Jesse will be lying on either side of Anna. It just happened that way. It's still rather early and each young woman is too energetic to sleep. They sit on their sleeping bags, with KJ at the bottom of hers.

"May I ask you something, Jesse?" KJ asks.

"Sure, KJ," Jesse says.

Jesse is lovely, even in a loose-fitting purple nightgown.

"You met Rian at the Celtic Society, right?" KJ asks, "Anyway, how did you find out about the society?"

"I wanted to learn Irish step dancing," Jesse says, "It wasn't some Celtic pride thing. I did want a part of my past to survive for my future children. But mostly I thought it was beautiful. So, I Googled dance studios and Celtic societies in the Maryland-Pennsylvania area. The society looked authentic and it didn't cost a penny to attend, plus it was really close. When I saw the guy running it was from Ireland, it convinced me to give it a try."

"That's cool," KJ says, "Did you learn step dancing?"

"Some," Jesse says. She looks at Anna. "OK, a little. I learned a lot more than dancing, though. And I found my man." She glances at Anna again. "I'm not the only one whose love life began at the Celtic Society."

Anna smiles.

"We're lucky to find so many good men," Anna says, "It was easy, too. God, what they go through to find a good woman."

"Yeah," KJ says.

"So, KJ," Jesse says, "What's up with you and Johnny?"

Jesse knows it's serious. She's curious how serious.

KJ looks down and gets a little smile. The shyness she has will never go away. It's part of her potent charm.

"You don't have to..." Jesse begins to say.

"No, it's good," KJ says, "I'm his woman, that's how it is. If...If we..." She bites her lip and goes silent.

Anna slides over and takes KJ's hand. Since it's near bedtime, KJ's not wearing gloves.

"It's so hard not knowing, isn't it?" Anna says.

KJ nods, her eyes looking upon a dream. Jesse watches the two sisters. Both wear sleeveless tops that show the startling size of their strong arms. Spectacular ivy tattoos shroud Anna's large and powerful biceps and forearms. If anything, KJ's arms are slightly larger than her sister's, though it can be hard to tell sometimes. Though fit and by no means weak, Jesse isn't in the same league with these two as far as physical strength goes.

"We're so lucky, you know?" Jesse says, "Most guys won't fight what's coming. We found men who are warriors. They'll fight for us and our children."

"We're one of the reasons most guys won't fight anymore," KJ says. She looks at Jesse. "I'm talking about white women. The system crushes a strong white man who loves his race, and who's willing to sacrifice his life if necessary. He gets shunned, and he can't find employment if he's fearless. The more fearless, the less chance he'll be able to earn a living."

Instead of raising hell about shit like that, just what the fuck do we women do? We hang on the arm of some loser and we fucking smile when he fist-pumps with his nigger friends.”

It is a great consolation for KJ to be able to share these thoughts with her two sisters-in-race and not have to take a combative attitude while doing so. It is almost a unique experience.

“We let the enemy define ‘Alpha,’ don’t we?” Anna says, “I shouldn’t say we. That’s a problem right there. We’re conditioned to think of ourselves as a separate group. Mexican women are Mexican, nigger women are niggers, and white women are...women. Just women. Only white men are considered white.” Anna puts her arm around KJ. “Not us,” Anna says, “We’re white women. Our men are white men.”

KJ smiles. As nice as it feels, she’d rather be in someone else’s arms. As nice as it feels for Anna, she’d rather have her arms around Garret.

“You’re so right,” Jesse says, “All that Alpha crap gets on my nerves. I see white nationalists fall for it all the time. The media defines ‘Alpha’, and calls a man Omega or some other derogatory name if he doesn’t conform, and even conscious people give the media the power to tell us as who’s an Alpha and who’s not. Well, I don’t give them that right. Their Alpha doesn’t care about his race or white children; all he cares about is sex. We don’t need ‘Alphas’ who are always looking for a score, or cowards and nerds and those types who won’t fight when our children need them. A man’s supposed to want sex. No kidding, huh? But I don’t want a man ‘playing’ me. Jesus, everyone listens to the media and we all end up acting like blacks.”

“Those on our side who accept the ‘game’ bullshit,” KJ says, “don’t realize that anti-whites created the ‘game’ idea, and the ‘Alpha-Beta’ labels. Now that we’ve been indoctrinated into their fucking system, even our allies say it’s natural for men and women to act according to the rules of ‘game.’ Yeah, after you alienate men from women for decades you call the resulting fucked-up behavior ‘normal.’ It’s not, though. It’s not natural for a white woman to hate a white man, and it’s not natural for whites to hate their own race. If we, as racially-conscious women started defining what we mean by Alpha, we could stop the cycle that leads to men and women dying alone and angry at each other. The first thing we need to make very fucking clear is that we will shun anti-whites, no matter how much the establishment promotes them. If a man on the fence sees a beautiful white woman with a strong, racially-conscious white man, it sends a powerful message. If you’re anti-white, you won’t get any from a

white woman. Go fuck your slants and your niggers, but you won't be getting any pussy from the most beautiful women in the world."

Anna laughs and puts her arm around KJ's shoulder again.

"It's sad how little the other girls understand," Anna says after she settles down, "We have so much power, it's awesome. It would scare the shit out of the anti-whites if we started doing what you just said, wouldn't it, KJ? Shit, it would scare the hell out of the entire world!"

KJ looks down and smiles. It's more wicked than gentle. The feral angel's rebellious streak is irrepressible.

"Maybe you've noticed this too," Jesse says, "But anytime I think about us, as a race, it really hurts, you know? We let the media and big companies divide us, we're so guilty of that. We let them divide us, and convince us that every decent act by a white man should be treated with scorn and hateful condescension. The males they portray as ideal treat us like sexual conquests rather than lovers and partners for life. The whole feminist lie is aimed at us, just at us white women. We've been conditioned for so long that most of us can't express our love anymore. If you can do that, if you can love, you're so free. With Rian I don't keep score or wonder what I can get from him. It just feels so good to love, to give love. When you know he's a good man, and he has courage and won't treat you bad, why not just...love? Why not love him?"

"Why the fuck do any of us listen to the establishment feminists anymore?" KJ says, "They're a big part of the enemy and they're nothing but fucking followers, anyway. It doesn't even matter anymore that many of them are kikes who hate white men and women, or that they serve the interests of huge corporations that want to flood the workplace and keep white working men from having any power. There was a time when unions could force companies to treat workers with dignity and respect. When's the last time a union successfully had a strike? When's the last time unions did anything but support pieces of shit like Obama and the other fucking anti-white candidates? Back when white working men had power and stuck together as brothers, the capitalists couldn't fuck over white workers. They hate our men for their defiance. Guess who else hates our white brothers? Feminists. Feminists hate our men, but the truth is, we keep the hate alive. We don't have to listen to them. Instead of siding with some fucking nigger who'd rape any one of us if he had the chance, we can stand by our men and encourage the warriors among them. It's not that hard. Just, like, be nice to him. I mean, why the fuck not? When I'm affectionate with Johnny, I can see how it lights him up, and you know what? It feels good. Yeah, it feels good. I know he'll fight for us whether

I'm with him or not, because he's a real man and he has courage. Knowing I'm part of this makes him even stronger. It makes me stronger, too."

KJ looks at Anna. She takes her redheaded sister's hand and Anna puts her left arm around KJ again.

"He'd give his life to protect me," KJ says, "I don't want him to, because my life is not more important than his. But Johnny's a man and he'd do it." She shrugs. "Why not be affectionate with a man like that?"

The smallest smile, almost invisible, comes to KJ's unforgettable face.

"Why not reject all the fucking lies and just let yourself love him?" KJ says. She looks at Jesse and echoes her words. "Why not just, love? They'd say that I'm not being strong if I love with everything inside of me. How fucking strong is it to follow some anti-white feminist? How strong is it to be a fucking tool and follow some bitch who will lead you to a life of bitterness and misery? Fuck that. I'm going to love."

KJ does not know what happened during the paintball exercise, though Anna does. Anna would like to tell her but she wants KJ to continue talking. It's incredible to hear her own thoughts mirrored by someone who came from circumstances alien to her own upbringing, and who never had a helping hand like Gary or Hannah. Anna tells herself that the experience is beneficial for KJ as well, and she is right.

Jesse nods in agreement with KJ. KJ smiles a little and for a moment she has a distant look in her eyes, as if she's looking through both tent's walls and into the fiery eyes of John Ashley Bowen.

"Johnny's so strong," she says, "He takes care of himself and he won't back down from a challenge. He's full of passion, but he's not, like, violent or anything, although he can be if it's necessary. He thinks of us and our comfort and safety." KJ looks down toward the shotgun and motions with her head. "I'd laugh in a feminist's face when she tells me he's the enemy. Then I'll give myself to him, to do as he pleases. Fuck it, right there in front of the bitch. I'll kiss him and put my legs around him, so the fucking bitch can see what she'll never, ever have."

KJ gets that wicked smile again. It feels good to defy those who would leave her lonely and bitter, even if her defiance comes from the inside of a tent.

"Love is so fucking beautiful," KJ says, "It's so beautiful when it's reciprocal, and fuck them for trying to deny us our love. Fuck them for hurting all of us. We're the ones who suffer when it's so easy to just ignore them. Just quit obeying anti-whites and the feminists who hate our men.

Just quit obeying. They make the rules: white is evil, white men are oppressors, white women should die childless and bitter, never give your love to a good white man. We follow the rules and white men and women deny themselves everything that's good in life. You know what, fuck them and fuck their rules!"

Each of the three extraordinary young women is thinking of a different man, though what they do in their little daydream is the same.

"Have you ever noticed," Anna says, "how we're supposed to screw around, even with other women? Yeah, nice try with the perverted fantasies, by the way. Anyway, we're supposed to screw around, but not touch. We aren't supposed to be close, or intimate, or show your man that you love him and you belong to him. It takes one minute to do that. You just touch him and act like a woman, what you're supposed to be. I'm happy to be who I am. Why would I want to be a man? I'm not a man. We have a lot of power as women, and when we accept who we are, and don't try to be who we're not, we can end up pretty damn happy. We have a lot of gifts as women, if we choose to cherish and respect them. You know, KJ, what you just said should be our motto. Fuck the anti-white system and fuck their rules."

KJ smiles for a moment.

"It's, like, so fucking nice in his arms," KJ says, "It's the nicest I've ever felt. I'll never deny that. It's so strong and there wouldn't be any strength in it if it's meaningless. Someday, when I take the final step with the right person, it's going to be like breathing again, you know? It'll be more, actually. I can't imagine it, but I know it'll be wonderful."

KJ looks at Anna again. The faint smile fades but not out of pain or sadness, but rather out of seriousness.

"I really respect the fidelity oath that you made," KJ says, "I mean, there's nothing wrong with sex after you belong to each other. Actually, it's the strongest way to show what you mean to one another. It's how you show the depth of your love. If you belong to one another, all your strength is, like, multiplied. I think any woman can see that if she tries. I almost fucked up really bad, but somehow I got through it and I remained whole. It's cold-hearted if you give yourself away without belonging to each other, just like it's cold-hearted if you're with your man and you deny him what you both need. I'll wait, and then we'll give ourselves to each other when it's right. And from then on, there's no denying either of us."

"Exactly," Anna says, "When you're willing to wait for the right man, you're honoring him and you. It's really an extension of your worth, you know? You're worth waiting for and so is he. It's respect for you and him,

and your bodies and your souls. It takes discipline but it strengthens your soul. Waiting is voluntary. That's one reason it's so important. You choose to save your body for a man who deserves you. That's real choice. You choose to honor your body and your soul. So of course, Hollywood and the media mock it."

"Fuck them," KJ says.

Jesse giggles and Anna laughs. Then a silence falls, broken by Anna.

"We all know how bad it would be to..." Anna says, and hesitates, looking down at the open sleeping bags and the tent floor, "...to get raped." She looks up. "But it's not the end of your oath. When you choose to fuck around, that's the end of the oath, but not if you fought and some monster overpowers you. None of our men would deny you if you were raped. They might kill the rapist, but they'll never throw you away for something that wasn't your fault. I know it's true."

Anna looks into KJ's eyes. She's heard whispers about Johnny's past, and about a knife fight he once had. She knows that someone raped his cousin, but she knows nothing beyond the speculation.

"I know they wouldn't," KJ says, "Our guys are principled and they deserve women who are willing to wait for them. That's one reason I'm so thankful that I didn't fuck up that night. Truthfully, I had given myself to Justin, and my body was right there for him to take. But he didn't, and for that I'll always be thankful to him." KJ gets a distant look again. "I know Johnny would kill a rapist. I wouldn't want him to risk his life. I'd rather him stay with me. But he'd do it, because he's a man."

"You know," Jesse says, "Guys ought to be left alone to take care of these problems. It could be like a council. It shouldn't be up to some minority or some traitor in a DA's office, it should be local."

She remembers something unrelated she saw on the news and forgot to mention to Rian a little earlier.

"Not to change the subject, but I might forget," Jesse says, "Did you see there's another fund raiser for Haiti?"

"What the fuck for?" KJ says, "Last week there was a fucking tornado in Beloit and they're having fund raisers for a nigger nation that murdered every white person who lived there? I won't even say what they did to pregnant white women, but they fucking deserve all the suffering they can get. What the fuck..."

She shakes her head.

"Thank Hollywood for harping on their precious darkies," Anna says, "Don't you know that niggers are smarter and better looking than us?"

They're the scientists and the best lovers; they're gentler and even have bigger dicks. We all know it's true, movies told us so! Just ask the Wichita Massacre victims how nice they are."

"It's actually worse when they are model citizens," Jesse says, "They could all be decent, and we'd go extinct even faster if we don't stop miscegenation."

"They say it's already too late for whites like me," says Anna, the red-haired, blued eyed beauty.

"Fuck what they say," KJ says, "If they're right, we'll go out with a bang and they'll inherit a world in fucking flames."

The tent becomes quiet again. This time KJ breaks the silence.

"They're not right about you, Anna," KJ says, "I lost my hope once, but thanks to all of you, I found hope again. I think we'll have to fight with force. They won't let us live without a fight. We have to show them that we'll punish the traitors and non-whites who hurt us. They'll fight and they'll fucking kill to prevent any real change or opposition to our genocide." She sighs. "I know it's easy to talk like this." KJ says, "It's easy to say we have to fight and then expect someone else to fucking do it."

KJ is about to pledge herself to the fight when Jesse speaks.

"We can do more than talk," Jesse says. KJ expected Anna to say something like this. Jesse beat her to it. "There are a lot of ways to fight. I've been posting the Mantra to forums and websites for at least two years now. But I have to agree with you, KJ. We're running out of time and they're making it harder for us to use our voices."

"If I couldn't fight them with my body I'd fight them with my voice," KJ says, "Whether they try to shut me up or not. I'd spread the Mantra. I'd be doing that now, but my parents blocked my internet access and when I do have access I don't have time to fight them with words. I'll still post it, but it's hit-and-run, because I can't back it up or keep hammering it into their skulls. If I could, I'd let them know who I was. If an attractive girl spreads the Mantra and everybody knows it, can you believe the effect that it would have? An attractive white girl who rejects the fucking lies?"

"We could be champions if one of us was a celebrity, you know?" Anna says, "We could call them out and take a stand for our people. Especially if you didn't do something degrading or disgusting to get your fame. Or even if you did, if you do what's right in the end, people will forgive you. If I were forced or fooled into denigrating myself while I'm young, I'd talk about that too. I'd call them out on it. But I don't think that's as common as people think. Anyway, there are probably a lot of celebrities who didn't sleep around. I guess it doesn't matter, tough, because all of the

white celebrities are cowards in the end. They'll sit there and clap when a Jew praises another Jew for being a Zionist or giving money to the ADL or some other anti-white hate group. They'll support any heeb acting in the interest of the Jewish people, but they'll call a white man racist if he acts in the interest of his race. They'll act in roles that insult and denigrate our race, which is their race, too. That's fucking cowardice right there."

"They're conditioned to be good little lap dogs," KJ says, "Any one of the young white females could be a champion. A hero for fuck's sake! It can't be Mel fucking Gibson, either, or some other dude. They'll just call him an angry white man and get some traitor woman to attack him. If the attractive young women stood up, just one, what could the enemy do? They'd try to destroy her career, but it would be obvious and she'd get a great deal of sympathy from most whites. Anyway, we're talking about saving our people from fucking extinction. Fuck your career! I'm going to fail twelfth grade and I don't fucking care. When I'm 18, I'm never going back. Those girls have millions of dollars already, so fuck your career. They have to stand up for our people."

"They'd be real rebels if they talked like you," Jesse says, "Can you imagine a famous face saying that whites are beautiful, that we have a right to exist, and that she's proud of being white? She'd be a real rebel and a hero. You're right, KJ, to hell with careers if you can be part of something much more important. There are bigger things than our careers; even bigger than us."

If Rian is to leave America for Ireland, Jesse will abandon her medical and modeling career and leave with him, to be part of his life and his struggle for their people; to be part of something much more important than wealth and prestige.

"Don't the self-professed rebels see what fucking tools they really are?" KJ says, "If they hate their own people, they're called rebels, but that's what the anti-white elites want them to do. Those whites who are famous will get their fame and their fucking money, but if they defy their masters, that is, if they actually are rebels, then they'll suffer. Of course a real rebel wouldn't sell out no matter how much he or she suffered. He'd say fuck off and fight them. Those motherfuckers aren't rebels. They're cowards. If any one of them accidentally says the most harmless fucking thing and it gets taken out of context, their masters will snap their fingers and the offender will drop to his knees and start kissing their fat Jew asses. Or worse; yeah, they'll do more than kiss ass. If I were famous, you better believe I'd talk, and no fucking Jew or traitor would shut me up unless they killed me. Even if they threatened my life, no way I'll kiss their

asses. Fuck them. They want us dead anyway, why give them the satisfaction of kissing their asses?”

“They moralize to us all the time,” Jesse says, “but that’s just lies, ‘cause their words are poison. If we listen to them, we’ll disappear from the Earth. If we refuse to obey, we’ll suffer. Famous white people would say that they love their children. How can they say that when they’re leaving their own children a future of suffering and death?”

“They don’t love their children,” Anna says, “But they don’t hate themselves, either. When whites – think about that – when their own people suffer, they feel satisfaction. They feel better when their people suffer. Not them, no sir; they live in their huge mansions and gated communities, surrounded by steezers, while they live in comfort. To them, racism is the greatest evil that ever existed, and only whites can be racist. That’s why they feel satisfaction when other whites suffer. That’s not self-hate. It’s just evil.”

“That’s why I don’t think any of them will ever speak out,” KJ says, “They won’t risk their acting or singing careers. They won’t lift a god-damned finger to help their race. They’d whine about how racist I am and how much better they are than me. They’ll act in the latest anti-white propaganda shit film, and with the money they’ll buy some custom-built Dodge Viper and another fucking boat. What do they care about the next generation, or the one after that? Whitey’s evil and has to die anyway. Not them, of course; just other white people.”

“It seems that way, doesn’t it?” Anna says, “But someday, one of them might surprise us. Maybe I’m just being stupid.”

“Optimistic,” Jesse says, “Too optimistic, I think, but it could happen. We’re here, aren’t we?”

“It won’t happen as long as they’re cowards,” KJ says, “Let’s see one of them show courage for our people. Let’s see them say that they love our race. Just say ‘I love my white people and I want them to be around forever.’ That’s weak, but it’s a big start. Let’s see one of them quit being a fucking coward.”

“I think that’s part of the problem everywhere, you know?” Anna says, “There’s so much cowardice. We live according to the establishment’s rules. Both work and play have to fit their plans for us. You can take a vacation and then return and pay your bills. Your taxes bring in more non-whites and pay the ones already here to have more children. Eighty pregnant black teens at one high school, and what does Fox News show? A picture of a pregnant white girl. That’s what they chose to symbolize a terrible problem. They won’t say that about non-whites, though. They

won't dare hint that pregnant niggers are a problem. They'll show the white girl, though, like it's a crime for a white girl to have a baby. People know if they keep quiet and don't offend non-whites or queers, they'll have a chance at a comfortable life. They can get fat and drunk and might even retire to Florida. Rock the boat, and you suffer. We've been conditioned to be soft. We fear difficulty and above all else, pain and death."

"I'd rather die than live a hundred years as a fucking traitor," KJ says, "There is no way I'm going back to that dark fucking hell. I don't care what happens to me; there are some things more important than happy endings."

Jesse smiles and touches KJ's hair and cheek.

"You're an extraordinary person, KJ," she says, "I'm so grateful you came to us."

"Thank Anna for bringing me," KJ says, "I don't thank her nearly enough."

Anna lies down on her sleeping bag. She sighs.

"Yeah," Anna says, "I'm pretty awesome."

In the men's tent, Garret is writing in a small journal no one else is allowed to see. Rian lies on his side, his back toward the others. Johnny's on his back, lying on his open sleeping bag. The ladies must not be aware that the two tents are close to touching. The men can hear much of what the ladies are saying.

"I used to talk to Cristi about the six," Johnny says in a voice soft enough that the women cannot hear, "We used to say there are six good women left in the world. I know it's bullshit; it's just despair speaking, but it's kind of funny to think about it now. The odds you'll find one of the six are so small, you might as well forget about it. So how the fuck did we find three of them?"

"I got Jesse with my looks," Rian says, "I don't know how you knob-jockeys got the other two."

Garret laughs as he continues writing. Johnny begins laughing as well. He can't stop for a little while and it feels wonderful.

Late that night Johnny awakens. He lies on his side, facing the wall of the tent. In the distance a screech owl calls. Its trilled whistle is soft and eerie in the stillness of night.

Goddamn those who brought this war on them, Johnny thinks, *On her.*

KJ wakes before the other women. The sun hasn't risen enough to chase away the blue hue of early morning. KJ changes into her jeans and puts on her jacket, her toboggan and a pair of gloves. She dons her old

sneakers without waking the others and slips out of the tent. It's a cool Appalachian morning. KJ stretches and breathes deep, filling her lungs with the clean air. She feels magnificent. Her young body is more than gorgeous; it is in impeccable shape. The wind brings a pleasant smell from around the FJ Cruiser. Someone has a small fire going, and he's brewing coffee.

Johnny's looking in her direction as she approaches. In spite of her best efforts, which are actually quite good, a faint sound and hint of motion attract his attention.

"Good morning, angel," Johnny says, "Did you sleep well?"

Johnny rises from his crouching position beside the blue coffee pot. KJ nods and smiles. He pours a cup of coffee, adds a little milk and hands it to her. She cradles it in her gloved hands and takes a sip.

Jesus Christ, you're beautiful, he thinks.

He does not say it. It just seems out of place right now. She's content and that's what he hoped for. There will be another time to stir those waters.

"Let's have some breakfast," he says, "Don't expect it to be as good as you make."

"I'm sure I'll like it," she says.

Breakfast is simple yet satisfying fare: slab bacon, homemade hard cheese and one of Anna's contributions, barmbrack. Johnny adds some dried fruit and chocolate covered orange peels on the side. One by one the others come to the fire for a cup of coffee and a bite to eat. KJ and Johnny are finishing by then, but they remain with the others.

Anna is dressed similar to KJ, except her hair's in a ponytail and she's not wearing a toboggan or gloves. Jesse, too, wears a t-shirt this morning, though she must feel the cool air more than the other two women. She's wearing Rian's coat rather than a jacket.

"Last night I was thinking," Anna says, "If everything was good and we didn't have all these troubles, what would you most like to do?"

Johnny looks at KJ. She opens her mouth a little and then looks at him.

"Sweetheart," Garret says to Anna, "I don't think we ought to discuss that right now. We'll talk about it some other time."

"Oh," Anna says, "I'm sorry, Garret!"

"It's fine, Anna," he says, "There's no need to apologize. There's nothing wrong with the question and you weren't wrong when you asked it." He lifts her chin. "I think we should enjoy these last hours as they are."

Anna looks into his eyes and smiles.

The rationing of water allows each person to wash away the drowsiness of night and maintain the high level of cleanliness that is so important to each of them. Once she's dried off and dressed in a t-shirt and one of her camouflaged pants, KJ wanders over by the trilliums. Johnny leaves her to herself. He knows the importance of a little solitude. Once Anna's finished, she heads over to KJ, who's crouching down and looking at the flowers. Johnny figured that she would refrain from picking any of them; removing the flower would kill the trillium plant, and she must know that.

"We're going to take a walk, OK?" Anna yells to the men.

"Sure," Garret says, "Take your time."

"Wait!" Johnny yells. He runs to the Rubicon, returning with something held behind his back. When he gets to KJ, he reveals the item: it's her black pistol.

"It misses its master," he says, "I don't see any harm in taking it on your walk."

"Thank you," she says as she takes the pistol from him.

Her striking blue eyes are full of untamed life. Johnny touches her cheek, pressing the hair that spills from her toboggan against her face.

Anna and KJ head in a direction neither have travelled before. Though their path will take them north toward the town of Parsons, the woods are even thicker here, owing to the relative youth of many of the trees. Poplars tower above maples and redbud that grow like weeds. Not far from the trilliums is a bed of baby sassafra that sprawls beneath its larger ancestors.

"I would have made tea if we had more time," Anna says.

A little later, the two encounter a massive network of grapevines. Here they pause while Anna, the more experienced woodland traveler, contemplates a detour. They follow a short gully to the west and then resume their slow walk north.

"KJ," Anna says, "How are you holding up when you're away from us? Are you OK?"

"Yeah," KJ says, "I'll be OK." She doesn't mention that she expects her mother to punish her for being honest with Officer Felton. "I'll be OK," she repeats, "What I go through isn't anything. Sometimes I think about our children's future. That's when I dare to even think that we'll have children. God, we have to! I don't want to go through life without having a baby. But what will he have to face? What about other white children? They'll be bullied by professors and other anti-whites until they believe the lies, and hate other white people just like the system wants. They'll be just like

Winston Smith. What I go through doesn't matter, as long as I see with open eyes."

"You do see," Anna says, "But you're also wrong. It does matter what you go through. It matters to me and it sure as hell matters to Johnny."

"I'm sorry, Anna, I didn't think," KJ says, "That was stupid. I'm sorry."

Anna puts her arm around KJ. They walk that way for a while. Anna feels KJ take a deep breath. She finds herself wishing that KJ would just stay away from her old life; leave today with Johnny and never go back to Uniontown.

"I know my life means something to you and the others," KJ says. She's been mulling over what Anna said a little earlier. "I can imagine what I mean to Johnny. I hope he knows how much he means to me. They think they're lucky to have us, and I know there are so few women like us. I know there have to be more, but who the fuck knows where? We're lucky, too, you know. Maybe more than the men. How many guys are awake and strong? How many take care of themselves and are willing to fight? And how many of those aren't afraid to be close to a woman? I can understand why there are so few. For fuck's sake, we believe the enemy's lies and make it easy for them to separate us from our men. It's like you said, Mexican women are Mexican, nigger women are niggers, kike women are kikes, but white women are women. When a white girl fucks over a good white man, not some asshole but a white man who loves our people and would fight for us and our children, it's an attack on all white guys who love us and our people and who would fight for our future. You know what I mean? I'm not talking about a pussy, either. I'm talking about strong fighters. If a girl betrays him, he probably won't trust another white woman. Then he sees one of us with an abusive ape and he thinks all his love is for shit. If he does trust her, odds are she'll ass rape him out of his money and then he'll have to pay child support for her little fucking half-nigger."

"I thank God for these men," Anna says, "I feel what you're saying. I've seen it, too."

"If I can ever marry," KJ says, "I'll tell him that we'll find one decent priest, and that's it. No sell-out church or fucking anti-white state. No papers or pre-nup, just us at the altar. My man will know I'm not going to fuck him over."

"So will mine," Anna says and smiles, "Thank God there will always be strong and courageous men, but you know, we're the ones who encourage those traits in a man. If we choose men with courage and racial solidarity, it will grow, and that's what you and I are doing. It'll grow, KJ, especially if we reward them for it."

Anna looks up and gets a wicked smile. KJ laughs. It's not loud, but then it never is. The smallest laugh from her is most often a sign of great internal amusement or joy.

The two young warriors find a few dry stones and an old tree that must have fallen years ago. It, too, is dry, and offers an excellent place to sit. Anna takes a seat on one of the larger stones and KJ finds her place on the log. Above, a blue jay takes interest in the two ladies. He calls out, making his presence known by his telltale mew.

"Maybe someday," Anna says, "women like us can marry men like Garret and Johnny and have families, and not have to fear her husband losing his livelihood for telling the truth and loving his race. It burns me up, you know? It really, really burns me that a white woman or especially a white man can't just say he loves his race and wants white people to survive. Not a word about hate or violence. But he might as well grow a Hitler moustache and say 'kill the Jews', because they'll treat him the same. We can't deal in a humane way with an enemy like that."

"Most white women are whining little sheep," KJ says, "and most white men are too fucking weak to take a stand. We really are lucky to know these men. It's up to us to never give in to the lies. Our guys let us know who they are, and I know they won't betray us. We have to let them know we won't turn away or betray them, either. There's never been a more urgent need for us to show our loyalty."

Anna rises and comes over to KJ. She sits beside her sister.

"They'll protect us, Anna," KJ says. The jay quiets himself as if straining to hear KJ's words. "But we may have to use our skills. We have to be the shooters. We can't just be anonymous cheerleaders. That shit's not enough anymore. We profited from our race's pain. We have. We're considered non-white and receive preferential treatment while our men suffer for the color of their skin. We can't let that happen anymore. We have to make our own stand."

"I know, KJ, I know," Anna says, "If we were famous, we could use our voices. It might be short as a flash of lightning, I mean, they'd try to silence us and they might succeed. But I'd be like a nova. A hot white girl who's well known could be a champion if she took a stand. We're not famous, but we can do just as much. I know that no one will listen to our voices, so I guess we'll have to speak with our actions."

"Our bodies can't fight like theirs can," KJ says, "I know we can't change big fucking tires or tank treads but we can aim and fire. You and I can carry a .30-06. Right now, there are so few of us. But even if there were thousands we'd still have to be there."

Anna nods and hugs KJ again. She leaves her arms around her.

"We need to show our men that we're going to be there," KJ says, "all the way to the end, win or lose. We need to show them that we won't be standing with the fucking enemy if our men fall. We can't run from this. It's easy to tell someone he has to fight for us, but its cowardice. I won't be like that."

KJ looks down. Anna watches her, her arm still around KJ. Then in a flash KJ looks back into Anna's blue eyes.

"Fuck it," KJ says, "I'll do it. I won't tell anyone to fight for me. I'll do it."

"You won't be alone," Anna says, "You and Johnny won't be alone."

Anna puts her hand on the back of KJ's head and they touch foreheads. They'd stay longer in this little sanctum, but it's a ways back, and tomorrow is a school day. For Anna it's irrelevant. Gary would cover for her. For KJ, truancy would be a disaster.

Anna speeds the march on the way back. KJ stays with her. It's not strenuous for either, but they make excellent time. Anna wants one more chance to talk to KJ. She allows KJ to go ahead of her. Then she creates the opportunity to open the discussion.

"Do you know why Johnny got hit by a paintball?" Anna asks.

"Yeah," KJ says, "You shot him. Thanks a lot."

Anna stops and tries not to laugh. She didn't expect KJ to be jovial. She's happy to play along.

"He shot me, too!" Anna says, "Oh and don't forget, you shot my man."

"I love you, Anna," KJ says, "but you're not my man. So I'm kind of not feelin' any sympathy right now."

Anna laughs.

"Shut up a minute!" Anna says, "I need to be serious for this."

"OK, shoot," KJ says, "Oh, wait, you did."

Anna shakes her head.

"I'm glad you're feeling good," Anna says.

"You know," KJ says, "I actually am. I'm here with you and Johnny, and it's really nice."

Anna cuts to the chase.

"Johnny stopped me from shooting you," Anna says.

KJ turns and looks at her redheaded sister. It's a hammer's blow and Anna can see it in when the little smile flies away from KJ's face. The forest seems to pause. For a moment, Anna regrets bringing it up, but it is very important for KJ to know and Johnny will never tell her.

"What happened?" KJ asks.

"Garret was a decoy," Anna says, "I was coming up to your nest. I was doing really well, too. I could make out your body. You were creeping forward. I was going to get in range and take a shot through the laurel. There was a very small opening, big enough for a shot right at your ass or legs, so I wouldn't break the rule about not shooting your back."

KJ looks in the direction of camp, and then back at Anna.

"I was concerned with Johnny," Anna says, "I thought he might find me. I was hoping I'd get a shot off at you and then maybe get lucky. I got a little spooked and decided to take a long shot. He saw me getting ready to fire. Instead of firing or getting a better position, he disrupted my aim. He was wide open. But he's so fast; I'm convinced he fired first. Since the most important goal of a shooter is to come back alive, I didn't sacrifice myself to get you. A sentinel does that, and in a split second I felt his shit hit me. Mine couldn't miss. He was wide open. He's a sentinel and he did his job. You got back alive."

KJ stares at Anna. She doesn't speak for a little while.

"It wasn't a game, was it?" KJ asks.

Anna shakes her head.

"I didn't think so," KJ says, "I don't want to lose him."

"I know," Anna says, "But it might not be up to you. He's a man. Just be sure to let him know what he means to you. Then no matter what happens, at least he'll know you were always with him."

"Garret was running toward the laurel when I shot him," KJ says, "If he'd stayed put, I'd have had to expose myself to get a shot. But he didn't stay. Anna, he was moving for a very important reason."

Anna takes KJ's hand and smiles.

"Thank you, KJ," Anna says.

They embrace for a moment.

When the two begin walking again, KJ notices a few morels among the fiddleheads and leaf litter. Anna sees them as well. Both young women kick the leaves up with their boots, and expose several more mushrooms. They must have popped this morning. Neither Anna nor KJ picks a single morel. They have enough, and it's good to leave a few to propagate the valuable species.

The conversation continues.

"You know," Anna says, "The enemy tells us what Alpha is, and we're supposed to believe it. Our men look like super-fucking-Alpha, but that word doesn't begin to describe them. Alpha will fuck us and everyone else he gets horny for. No Alpha, Beta or Omega will take a bullet while run-

ning over to help you. He won't make a shooter target him instead of you. He won't give up a life of ease and all the pussy he could want, just to fight for his race. Our men are beautiful in so many ways. Handsome, tough, Garret can fight and Johnny's just straight-up fierce. No one could mess with him and get away with it. Rian's a fighter, too." Anna gets a little smile. "And they're really hot," she says, and sighs. "Our men keep their bodies powerful and trim. That's a lot of hard work, you know what I mean. Shit, just look at you! Well, I know it too. We're pretty hot. But that's not the point. What matters is, none of them would look twice at us if we were traitors or sheep. I know it's true, and I think you do, too. Just think, KJ, our men will take shots for us. They're not Alpha or Beta, they're men. They're so beyond what the heebs and traitors say that men should be, it's not even funny. It's just...beautiful."

"I'll give him everything I have to offer if I can be with him," KJ says, "He'll never regret taking that shot for me. I guaran-fuckin-tee that."

Neither Anna nor KJ could speak of such things with others, not often. For Anna, it wasn't something she was very comfortable doing, even with Gary and Hannah, and she could talk to them about almost anything. For KJ the reasons are obvious. Any mention of the masculine sex and her thoughts on relationships would have resulted in an instant fight, and certain punishment.

"This has been some trip," Anna says, "If we can find a few more women like us, we'll win easy."

KJ runs her hand around the back of her belt. She feels the .45 under her t-shirt.

"We'll try with just us," KJ says.

The two women warriors approach camp. The excursion, which has been a great enjoyment for both of them and a spiritual balm for KJ, is coming to a close.

They arrive at the trillium patch a short time later. Garret's packing a tent and Rian and Jesse are taking down the shower. KJ stops in the midst of the beautiful white flowers.

"Anna," she says as her redheaded sister draws near, "I don't want our story to end like this. We have to fight. We don't have to just accept the way things are and watch traitors set our children up to die. We could make them pay for what they're doing to us."

Garret glances at the two young women who kneel among the sea of white flowers. He sees them speaking and he sees Anna touch KJ's head and thick mane of hair. He sees Anna nod and hug her sister when she rises. KJ seems a little awkward with the embrace, and then closes

her eyes and holds on for a moment. Then the two come in to what's left of camp.

It doesn't take long for the gang to pack their belongings and hit the Jeep trail. Before leaving, Johnny puts a long-stemmed violet in the front of KJ's knit cap. Johnny and KJ are the last two to depart.

"Did you have a nice time?" Johnny asks.

The jeep bounces down the trail toward US 219.

"It was wonderful, Johnny," KJ says, "Thank you so much."

"Next time we'll stay a week or so," he says, "Would you like that?"

"Will you be there?" she asks.

"Of course," he says, "That is, if you want to come. Otherwise, what's the point?"

"OK," she says and smiles, "I'll make sure and be there, then."

Rather than wait for a very late supper, Johnny and KJ grab a meal at a small place in Thomas, West Virginia. It's a family-owned restaurant that uses as much local produce and meat as possible. Bowen stops for another reason. If, on a whim, Erica punishes KJ for being herself, she'll likely bar her daughter from making supper. Johnny won't have his woman going to bed hungry. Once they leave the tiny little restaurant, his concern wanes.

"I'm so glad you find places like this," KJ says once they arrive at the Rubicon. The parking lot is more crowded than she would have expected. It's a good sign.

"Don't worry, angel," he says as he opens the passenger-side door, "I'm not going to poison you with that fast food shit." As Johnny rounds the front of the Rubicon, KJ unlocks his door.

The return route takes them along Deep Creek Lake, where they arrive at 4:30 in the afternoon. In the light of day, the lake reminds her less of her days along Puget Sound than it did the other night.

"I know why they call us Nazis," KJ says, "It's just to shut us up and prevent anyone from thinking about what we say. Seriously, though, what do you think about the real Nazis?"

"Neo or the ones from the 1930's?" he asks.

"What about the Nazis that exist today?" she asks, "All six of them."

She smiles for a moment.

"There are six?" he asks, joking. "Well, some of them actually are rebels, and they're looking for an identity that the system doesn't force upon whites. They're sick of seeing nigger behavior glorified, and they're desperate to express what they see as white identity. But most of the others are anti-white infiltrators, or fags playing dress-up."

"What about the 1930's?" KJ asks.

"I don't want a big fucking government telling us what to do or believe," Johnny says, "not the way things are now, that's for goddamn sure. We thrive when we're left the fuck alone. As for America forcing itself into World War 2, that was a travesty. It made the world safe for anti-white communists. Our European kin died by the millions, the kikes got a homeland and fucking immunity from criticism, and the anti-whites got the world. Those who disagree better explain why every white nation is an anti-white tyranny, and why all white and only white nations have to open their borders to non-white immigration, this goddamned nation included."

KJ smiles again. She always loves his passion. As she feels the same urgency, she loves it more and more.

"I've read some white nationalists who praise Islam," she says, "What do you think about that?"

"It's a dirty, nasty religion," Johnny says, "I sympathize with the Palestinians because the kikes fucked them over, but the religion is fucking backward. I mean, it's good for Arabs and niggers who live far away from us, but that's it. If they kept it to themselves in their desert, then fine. If they try to spread it to white nations, then we should fuck them up. As for the cult, it's another mud religion that's beneath us. Once we send the ones home who came to Europe and America, you know, the ones who came when the traitors let them in, as long as they stay the fuck in their desert then I don't give a damn what they do to each other."

"Most of the time when a woman criticizes Islam, she sounds like an anti-white feminist," KJ says, "A white man has to be a man. He has to be strong and dominant, but a white woman isn't a piece of shit. I know many women act like it, but I'm not. Neither is Anna."

"Fuck no, you're not!" he says, "And those pigs aren't men, either. Any goddamned raghead who tried to touch you or silence you for being a woman, he'd go see his fucking Allah real fast if I got my hands on him."

"I believe you," she says.

He reaches over and squeezes her leg.

"Fucking Islam," he says, "Fuck them. And fuck Israel, too. If we didn't prop up that goddamned travesty of a nation, we'd have less trouble with the sand niggers. And if we dealt with the white traitors and their kike buddies, there wouldn't be Muslims around here to fuck with us."

The lake is behind them now, and forests and fields replace water in the side windows of the Jeep.

"What I did in Iraq," he says, "I did for my race. Not goddamned Israel or that anti-white prick Bush, or the fucking nigger Obama. Now I'm back,

now that I learned what I could learn from the US fucking Army, as far as Muslims go, just go the fuck back home already. Leave us whites in fucking peace. Honest to God, I say live and let live, but they better stay the fuck away from my kinfolk and their countries. If they can't leave us alone then they can join the traitors in hell."

KJ touches his shoulder, where the rabbit tattoo graces his skin.

"You never forgot us," she says, "and I won't forget that." She looks down for a moment. "Am I asking too many questions? Do you want me to leave you alone? Because I get that, if you just want to chill..."

"No," Johnny says, "Fuck no, angel. Don't say that. I want you to talk to me. Hell, it's giving me a chance to let some shit off my chest. Which, by the way, is a good thing, so anytime you want to rant, go for it. I'm glad to hear you, trust me. Don't be nervous or think I've heard it all. You don't have anyone to talk to, so go for it."

There is a brief silence.

"I love the sound of your voice, anyway," he says.

"Thank you, Johnny," she says.

"I don't think it'll ever cease to amaze to me," he says, "Rian has Bill and Megan, I had Bob, Garret had his grandfather and Jesse had her father and her family. You had the darkness. You felt around in the darkness and when you suffered you didn't run from the truth or turn your back on your race. You rose on your wings, and you left behind their lies. If you could have woken the white world I have no doubt you'd have done it, regardless of the cost. We helped you, angel, but we didn't save you. When you fucked up with that dude, you chose never to take that risk again. I wasn't your man then. You chose to keep yourself pure, and you know why? Because you're strong. Because you're a fighter. You don't need us to be strong."

"I need you to be happy," she says.

"You'd still be a champion," he says, "If you never met any of us, I'm convinced you'd still be a champion. You'll need a man in the end, there's no denying that. It's not a weakness, it's how things are, and it's how they should be. But you'll be a champion no matter what."

"It's not weakness," she says, "I know. It's strength. That's what makes a man even stronger, and a woman, too, in her own way. It's completion, that's what it is, a white man and a white woman in love. It's fucking life! It's necessary for spiritual fulfillment. You can't have that totality all by yourself."

South of Friendsville a sea of trees surrounds the little farms. When the leaves adorn the trees in the lazy days of summer, this will be beauti-

ful country. It is peaceful and unpolluted. KJ wonders how long either will last. She looks back at Johnny.

“Ever since I woke up from my darkness,” she says, “most other white people have called me a hater. That couldn’t be further from the truth. This isn’t about hate, and it’s not about hate with you, either. Hate doesn’t drive a man to fight for his people, or to love a woman with all that he is inside. Hate won’t drive a woman to be loyal and give her fierce love to her man. That’s love, not hate. Love drives them to defy any danger. It drives a man to go to Iraq and risk his life so that he can learn how to fight for his race. No one loves like you do, Johnny Bowen, and it’s pretty amazing.”

“Someone does,” Johnny says.

KJ looks down. There are words that she wants to say, but she can’t right now.

“Tell me, angel,” he says, “When Anna asked what we’d most like to do, if life could be peaceful and we’d have whatever we wanted, what would you do? Would you tell me?”

She looks at him and hesitates to speak. This is sacred to her and she’s dying to share it with him. They cannot be together at the moment; perhaps she’ll never be able to give herself to him. She overcomes her inhibitions and throws caution to the winds of passion.

“I’d wake up with my head on your chest,” she says, “You’d already be awake, and I’d ask if I could shower first. That way I could start breakfast while you’re in the shower.”

“Oh, fuck,” he says, for want of something more poetic but less spontaneous.

Neither says a word for a while.

“You could lift a dying man to his feet,” he finally says.

The scenery around the National Pike from Farmington to Chalk Hill is a joy to behold. To KJ it is pleasure and pain.

This world, built with the hands of her white brothers and sisters, is in jeopardy of vanishing forever. The non-whites who are replacing her kin shall not erect the little farms or Christmas stores or tiny parks, nor will they preserve the old wooden forts or the wild places that are so dear to her wild, unbroken soul.

“Thank you for putting up with me when I vent,” she says.

“Any time, sweetheart,” he says, “It’s energizing to hear you talk. You’re so far above their fucking rules. I hear you rage against those cock-suckers who try to make you hate your race, and that’s something I could never get tired of.”

"Fuck their rules," KJ says, "I try to live like a white woman should. White women are white above all else, just like white men. That's how everyone else sees us and it's about fucking time we see it that way."

Johnny reaches over and squeezes her hand. He smiles.

"We do," he says.

KJ and Johnny arrive at the Long Hall in the late afternoon. Big queen bumblebees are milling about the hall and the dandelions in the yard.

Bowen insists on unloading her stuff, and KJ lets him be chivalrous. It pleases the both of them. She watches the bees as Johnny works. Bill doesn't put toxic herbicides on his property. KJ always liked dandelion flowers, anyway.

"Hey, angel," Johnny says, "Jump in and check the lights. I don't want any cops fucking with you if we can help it."

Johnny comes around the front of the white Chevy. When KJ tries the headlights, he nods. The brake and signal lights are fine as well. Then Johnny goes around back. When KJ taps the break, he says for her to do it again. She taps and holds them a few times.

Johnny curses. KJ hears him. She opens the door and hops out.

"The right break light's out," he says, "I don't have time to fuck with it." He reaches into his pocket. "Here," he says, "Take the Jeep."

"I can't," she says.

"You drive stick," he says, "The Jeep's a stick, just like the Chevy. I got you on the insurance. C'mon, it'll be fun."

"What if I wreck it?" she asks.

"As long as you're OK," he says, "Who gives a fuck? Shit happens."

She steps up to him and wraps her arms around his body.

"Just be careful until you're used to it," he says, "I don't want you to get hurt."

"I'll bring it tomorrow," she says, looking up from his chest.

"Friday," he says, "I'll use the Chevy until then."

When the embrace ends, they walk to the Jeep. Johnny removes the guns, which amount to a mini-arsenal of four pistols, two pump shotguns and an AR15 with folding stock. Meanwhile, KJ gets her things from the white Chevy.

"Johnny," KJ says "Please remove the Smith & Wesson. Please. Thank you so much." She presses his hand against her cheek and looks into his eyes. "I can't keep it right now," she says, "If someone searches the Jeep you'd be in deep shit, and I can't live with that."

She lets go of his hand and caresses his face where she struck him.

“OK,” he says, “Lock the doors and don’t let anyone creep up on you.”

“I won’t,” she says.

Johnny takes the black .45 out of the glove box.

“I think that’s it,” he says. KJ hugs him and he kisses her head. “My angel,” he says.

KJ steps back, a mischievous smile on her face. She knows he forgot something behind the back seat. She saw it earlier on the way home.

“My fighter,” she says, “I’ll see you on Tuesday.”

“OK, babe,” he says.

KJ hops into the Jeep and closes the driver’s door. Then she locks both doors and rolls down the window.

Bowen remembers. He didn’t remove the clothes he wore during the trip.

“KJ! Wait!” he yells.

She pulls out and waves from the window, and Johnny stops and shakes his head.

Chapter XII

Body and Soul

On the short trip back to the Campbell House, KJ is not depressed at the prospect of returning to her unhappy old life. She thinks of how she'll be able to wash and iron Johnny's clothes by the end of the week. She figures she'll wash them at the hall and iron them there as well. She can't risk doing it with her parents present, though she muses over their reaction to finding a real man's clothing in the dryer.

It turns out she won't have to wait or risk. A note on the kitchen table informs her that Erica and Gene won't be home until late Monday night. KJ wastes no time celebrating. She sorts and washes Johnny's clothes, and by the time she's in bed they're ironed and wrapped.

As much as she'd like to drive to school, KJ does not have authorization to park at Uniontown High, nor would she risk any of Johnny's vehicles by leaving them in downtown Uniontown. So she pinches her nose and rides the bus. It's the first time since she moved to Pennsylvania. Most of the students pay her no heed, though a few go silent when she enters. In spite of the crowded nature of the bus and the fact that several male students check out her body, she sits alone.

When KJ finally arrives home, she takes a quick but thorough shower and hurries out the door. She doesn't want to keep Jimmy Ford waiting at the hall. Worse, he may think she forgot or blew off the meeting. When she arrives, she's relieved to see he's not there yet. She does not have long to wait. In fifteen minutes he arrives.

Early on in the trip, KJ turns on her cell phone. Bill's left a message. She returns the call.

"KJ, nice to hear from you," Bill says, "How was your trip?"

"It was really nice," KJ says, "How have you been, Bill? And your family?"

"Well, thank you," he says, "Your mother called on Saturday. My Megan told her you'd be back Sunday – yesterday, of course. Apparently,

you were helping me with a Power Point presentation at the Glade Springs resort. If she calls, she'll find me on the register, and an additional room rented. Thirty-three, KJ. That was your room."

"Thank you, Bill," KJ says.

"You're headed to the parlor, is that right?" Bill asks.

"Yeah," she says, "Thanks so much for setting it up for me."

"Take care, KJ," he says, "I'll drop by the hall on Wednesday."

Jimmy Ford waits until she closes the call to speak.

"What kind of music do we put on?" he says, "I'm fine with whatever you like, just not country. Nothing wrong with it, it's just not my preference."

"Or hip-hop," KJ says.

"I knew better than that," he says, "I figured you'd rather listen to Lady Gaga."

"Close call," she says, "but yeah. By the way, I heard you at the Christmas Party. You were really good. I'm not shitting you, you really were."

"I play a little," Jimmy says, "Do you play?"

"Some," KJ says, "I had classes at school. I can sing, though. I'm actually pretty good at that."

"Find me an acoustic song," Jimmy says, "and we'll surprise Johnny Bowen at the next party."

"I'd like..." she says, and looks down. She shakes her head once. "I'd like to give him something sweet like that."

"Find a song and we'll do it," he says, "He'll love it, I'm sure."

"I will," she says.

Jimmy hands her the iPod.

"Lady's choice," he says.

KJ scrolls the artists and chooses the *Stone Temple Pilots*.

There are two vehicles at *Dynamic Ink*. Jimmy and KJ wait for a resolution to this unexpected inconvenience. After a few minutes, one of the other artists emerges from the studio. He leaves soon thereafter. The "closed" sign in the door will keep away other interruptions. Jimmy leads KJ to the entrance and Paddy lets her inside.

The start of the process is a repeat of her last visit. Paddy enters the adjacent room when KJ calls for him. He looks at her unfinished left wing.

"It looks like it's healed," Paddy says, "That's great. Are you ready for the second one?"

"Yes, please," KJ says. Once he begins, she continues. "I don't want to insult you, Mr. Ford."

"Paddy," he says without stopping.

"Paddy," KJ says, "This means so much." She stops. She realizes that if she tells him to "make it nice" or something similar, it's a stupid and condescending thing to say.

"I'm sure it does," he says, "Can I ask what it means to you, knowing it's private and none of my damn business?"

His question works to diffuse her nervousness.

"It will remind me of everything I love," she says, "And when things get bad, it will remind me of who I am. My wings will keep me from falling."

"You're counting on them turning out beautiful," he says, "Just wait until you see them. Wait until whoever you love sees them. You will not be disappointed, I can guarantee that."

"I'm sorry I started to ask something really stupid," she says.

"Don't be," he says, "I'd be surprised if you didn't tell me to get it right. I can handle that, KJ. Another thing, so we're on the level. I may not always see eye-to-eye with my brother, but I am not anti-white. I wear my Celtic Cross for a number of reasons."

"I bet it's nice," she says, "By the way, I never assumed that you were anti-white."

"Good," he says, "How are you holding up?"

He never ceased his work.

"Fine," she says.

Once the day's work is done, Paddy leaves so that KJ can cover herself. Upon returning, he asks her again if she's fine.

"It's good," she says, "The desire kills the pain."

"Cool," he says, "We've got two more sessions. I'll finish your feathers and after the second one, we'll be done. You're going to love it."

"Thank you so much, Paddy," she says.

With a wink and a smile, he leads her back into the front of the studio. Jimmy Ford is waiting outside. It's a warm night with a red moon. KJ begins to get apprehensive on the return trip to the hall. If Erica and Gene are home, she'll catch all kinds of hell for being late. It's her good fortune that they are not. Before going upstairs, she leaves a note on the kitchen table. She admits to not having time to go grocery shopping. She'll get up two hours early in order to accomplish the chore.

On Tuesday morning, KJ makes good on her promise and rises well before dawn. She's back from the grocery before Erica or Gene is awake. KJ makes a quick breakfast and waits for the male who fathered her to sulk down the stairs. When he does come, KJ pretends to take her sertraline, which she's already destroyed, and the two beat a hasty departure

before Erica can appear. They both have reasons for avoiding her, though aside from his obvious timidity, Gene's reasons are unknown to KJ.

KJ is observant. In spite of five hours' sleep, she is alert. Nothing is out of the ordinary. It looks like the start of another brutal but non-violent school day. As she approaches her locker, KJ goes over her combination in her mind: 24-17-2. She checks to be sure no one is approaching during the moment of vulnerability when she opens the locker. No one is nearby. She grabs the dial with her gloved right hand. It won't budge. The shock wears off in a few seconds. KJ puts her left hand on her forehead. She looks up and shakes her head. Now in a grim mood, she looks for Mr. Andrews. He sees her shaking her head. He can tell.

"I'm glad you beat the little fucker," Mr. Andrews whispers to KJ as he opens the locker, "There you go. Be careful, KJ."

Andrews looks tired. He was never heavy, and now he's lost more weight. His hair is a little thinner.

"You, too," she says, and watches him walk away.

After the school day, KJ runs upstairs to get her things. She almost forgets that Erica thinks she's off from work today. KJ mouths an exaggerated "Fuck" when she realizes. Instead of hurrying off to the Donnelly Homestead, she showers and makes supper.

At 4:30 PM, KJ looks for Erica. Again she's in the den, working on her laptop. There's no coffee this time, just the empty mug with its *Well Behaved Women Rarely Make History* slogan. Erica receives a box from CafePress about once a month.

"Mom," KJ says from the threshold.

She expects immediate rejection.

"What?" Erica says without looking up.

"I'd like to study calculus with Anna," KJ says.

"Don't you have to repeat the class?" Erica asks.

"Not calculus," KJ says.

"That slutty ginger studies calculus?" Erica asks.

"Mom, I said..." an irate KJ says.

Erica interrupts her.

"Be back by eight," Erica says.

KJ is shocked, though her fury does not abate. She heads upstairs and throws some things into her backpack. It will sell the ruse. She hurries past the den and out to Bowen's Rubicon. Before she leaves, she calls Bill.

"I'm glad to hear it, KJ," Bill says, "Anna's right here, in fact."

"Can Johnny come?" KJ asks.

Bill stifles a snort.

"He'll be here by six," Bill says, "I was going to have him do some work on the truck, but that can wait."

"I can help him," KJ says, "I know a thing or two, and if not I can get him a beer and applaud when he's done. I'll be, like, so supportive; it'll be great for his morale."

"You're a sweet lassie," Bill says, "But you've got practice. I wouldn't keep Johnny from helping you with something that important."

KJ, Anna and Johnny Bowen spend most of KJ's visit at the range. KJ doesn't tell either of them about her locker. After target practice, KJ declines the offer to take dinner home with her. Bowen relents only after she assures him she's eaten. While Anna's having supper, Johnny accompanies KJ out to the parking lot. The air is thick with the coming rain. It holds off for the two lovers.

"So, how was the Jeep?" Johnny asks.

"I like it," KJ says, "It was cool driving it for a change."

"Do you want to keep it for a while?" he asks.

"No," she says, "I like seeing you behind the wheel."

"OK, angel," he says, "Here's your keys."

He tosses them to her. KJ removes her iPod, Kindle and the shank from the Rubicon and puts them in the Chevy, and then Johnny hugs her. He's careful not to touch her upper or middle back. His hands are very close to her rear. She's not at all uncomfortable.

"I left you a little surprise," she says.

"You washed my clothes," he says.

"Yeah," she says. She nuzzles his chest. "I better..."

"Get back," he says, finishing her sentence. "OK, angel, thank you. I'll see you tomorrow."

KJ smiles and blows a kiss as she backs toward the truck. Johnny watches the white Chevy pickup until the tail lights disappear down Old Braddock Road.

The rainy trend continues on Wednesday. Dawn rises among the drizzle. When KJ goes downstairs, she finds Erica already at the breakfast table. Erica is not yet dressed for work. To KJ that's an ominous sign.

"Call off today," Erica says. She motions toward her cell phone on the table. "Tell Mr. Donnelly you'll work next Monday if necessary."

KJ looks at her. She doesn't move.

"Go on!" Erica says.

KJ picks up the phone. She opens it but does not dial.

"Why?" KJ asks.

"I told you to," Erica says.

"I work there," KJ says, "I want to know why."

"You're not feeling well," Erica says.

"I'm not going to lie," KJ says.

"I don't care what you tell him," Erica says, "As long as you call off. Now."

KJ ceases resisting. Erica could cause a great deal more difficulty for KJ should she escalate.

"Hi, Bill," KJ says, "Yeah, this is KJ. I hope I'm not bothering you."

"KJ?" Erica says.

KJ ignores her.

"I can't come in tonight," she says, "I'm so sorry. Thank you, Bill. I'll be there Thursday. Thanks."

KJ closes the phone and tosses it on the table.

"We're going to have a little talk when you get home," Erica says.

KJ starts making her breakfast. The forests south of Parsons seem a million light years away.

Gene doesn't say a word until they arrive at Uniontown High. Before KJ can escape, he tells her to keep out of trouble. She watches him drive away. A familiar but dormant pain rises from the depths of her soul. It crashes against her willpower and shatters. Her father is gone. He was never really there.

She moves on.

For several days, KJ anticipated the arrival of this day. She knew Erica would deal with her after Felton's interrogations. In Dagostino's class, KJ's last of the day, she closes her eyes and sees the blue cup of coffee she held that morning in the forest, alone with Johnny Bowen. She can see him standing by the fire, looking at her with longing and desire. She can see the little yellow morels among the mayapples. She sees his big, strong arms and his irresistible masculine face.

"Miss Campbell!" Dagostino says, "If you paid attention, you might not be doing so poorly in my class."

KJ opens her eyes and looks at Dagostino. Her head is still resting on her hand.

The drive home is typical. Gene says nothing. His thick hair is a little more disheveled than usual. Otherwise, he's the same he's been for as long as KJ cares to remember.

If Erica Campbell *née* Chapman comported herself with half the grace as Megan Donnelly, Erica would be a beautiful middle-aged woman. She maintains her looks as best she can in spite of the feminist

dogma that frames every facet of her worldview. She exercises at a private gym and would consider cosmetic surgery should the whim strike her. Her lack of humanity puts off the more perceptive men. Others lust for her, and she makes good use of their often-foolish, usually-futile attempts at winning her favor. From a photograph she is lovely. Get to know her, and she is repulsive.

Kaylee Jane Campbell surpasses her mother's beauty, even from the days of Erica's youth, when the most handsome and aggressive males competed for her attention. More surprising, KJ resembles her father far more than her mother. KJ's rebellion against Erica's feminist authority and her mother's rising jealousy toward her beautiful daughter has made Erica notice this interesting characteristic. In KJ's absence, Erica has blamed Gene for their daughter's shocking beliefs and behaviors. As usual, Gene offers little resistance. He didn't end up as Erica's comfortable subordinate by challenging her.

Erica is still dressed for work when KJ arrives. Her skirt is short and black and her white blouse is too tight to be tasteful. By dressing in this manner, she hopes to exercise her sexual powers should a desirable "Alpha" or influential superior come within range.

"Get done upstairs, and then meet us in the den," Erica says before KJ can remove her boots. "Don't take too long."

KJ doesn't say a word. She goes upstairs and showers, careful not to disturb her new wing. She changes into a loose "Sick Of It All" t-shirt and the tight black leggings that her aunt in Seattle sent as part of a birthday gift.

Erica hates most of KJ's pairs of leggings, especially the shiny ones that hug her young body and show its perfect shape. KJ rubs her hair with a towel but as usual does not scorch it with the blow drier. Before descending she looks into the mirror at the woman she's become. She is strong and awake, no thanks to the parents who will now attack her. KJ takes a deep breath and begins the march downstairs.

When KJ enters the den, Erica is sitting at the big wooden table. Her laptop is closed in front of her. Gene sits to her right. An empty chair is in front of the table. KJ walks in and sits beside Gene.

"Sit in front of me, please," Erica says.

KJ obeys if only because she wants to end this as quickly as possible. It was entertaining to irritate Erica a little before they begin.

"Sertraline cannot change who you are, we all knew that," Erica says, "A pill can't change you from a racist into a sane person. I spoke with Commander Felton. She wasn't happy that I wasted her time." Erica stops

speaking. She tries to look surprised. "Or did you realize she'd blame me? Your childish tantrums come back on all of us. When you lash out like a spoiled brat it reflects on us as your parents. I've had more than one person question how we're raising you."

Erica reaches out to Gene, who takes her by the hand. She acts like she's about to lose her composure but then recovers. KJ is used to seeing this act.

"I think I've figured out why you're trying to hurt us," Erica says, "Twenty years ago your father and I were trying to make ends meet in an expensive location. We already had a child in our home and your father didn't quite have the job he thought he would. At the time I was being underpaid as usual, and when I found out I was pregnant it was a major blow. We couldn't just get up and move, and give up all of our hopes and dreams, not to mention the difficulty of raising Stephanie on our meager salaries. Life happens, Kaylee, and you have to deal with it. I made my choice. If it's any consolation, I'm not proud of what happened. I'm not happy that I was forced to end my pregnancy, but it had to be done. I am not evil, Kaylee. I struggled with this for years but I'm over it now. It's time for you to get over it, too. It was a necessary decision and to be blunt, it wasn't your choice to make and it's not your place or anyone else's place to judge me for it."

KJ says nothing. She stares at Erica, who is a little unnerved by her silence. Erica stands and begins to walk around Gene.

"We'll never know what your lashing out has cost this family," Erica says, "but in spite of it all we really do care about you. We're ready to welcome you back. If you're wondering, this is the last chance you have for a decent life."

Erica stops in front of KJ and looks down at her daughter.

"Tell me," Erica says, "do you have any friends at school?"

"No," says KJ, who wouldn't betray their identity if she did.

Erica continues, "You said that redhead..."

"Girl," KJ says, "Say girl or don't say anything."

"...Is your friend," Erica says.

KJ now wishes she hadn't told Erica that Anna is her friend. In her mind she scolds herself.

"What's this girl like?" asks Erica, who exaggerates the word "girl".

"She treats me well," KJ says.

Erica looks into her daughter's eyes. KJ has a look of defiance.

"Is she racist?" asks Erica.

"Not to my knowledge," KJ says.

She lies to protect Anna.

"How about your coworkers?" asks Erica.

"This is a waste of time," KJ says.

She rises from the chair.

"Fine," says Erica, who backs up a few steps.

Gene watches.

"We're prepared to meet you if you're willing to come back to us," Erica says, "Your life doesn't have to be over."

KJ is still standing. Returning to her parents, and her old life, will mean some form of self-betrayal, either partial or complete. KJ says nothing.

"I'm not sure you can salvage your academic career," Erica says, "at least not at this point. You and your sister were never traditional girls. I'm proud of that, really I am. I see a lot of myself in you.

It's a bald-faced lie. Erica is a diametrical opposite of her daughter in temperament. She's also never been as attractive as KJ. KJ's gorgeous face reminds Erica that her daughter's unforgettable beauty comes from the Campbell side, not from the Chapman's.

KJ says nothing. She'd like to laugh and insult Erica. She knows her mother is her opposite.

"You're into nature and both of you pursue non-traditional roles," Erica says, "with one major difference."

"Stephanie obeys the rules," KJ says.

The interruption makes Erica scowl for a few seconds.

"You mock me," Erica says, "but for once you're correct. In other words, your sister knows how to use her rage against oppression and sexual discrimination. She's constructive. You..." Erica pauses. KJ's sure she'd like to say something ugly. "How did you end up like this?" Erica says, "If we were too tough on you, it's only because we love you. Do you think we wanted you to self-destruct?"

"I haven't raised my voice," KJ says, "I don't think you need to."

Erica has a brief look of outrage. Her expression soon returns to its normal condescension.

"Back to my point," she says, "Your father and I have discussed this." KJ has to fight hard not to laugh. "We think it best if you consider military service."

"Are you fucking joking?" says KJ, who cannot resist the temptation to respond.

"I'll ignore your foul language," Erica says, "The army would give you the discipline you need. Since you've rejected this family and as a result

you've been nothing but trouble, I think the military would give you the structure you need."

"I thought they were fascists," KJ says.

Both Erica and Gene have said so in the past. Erica glares at KJ.

"Things have changed," she says.

"Yeah," KJ says, "They have affirmative action for fags and minorities. But they still fight for Israel."

Erica shakes her head.

"How did we let it get this far?" she says.

Erica looks at Gene who feigns a concerned look but says nothing.

"Tell me, Kaylee," Erica says, "What do you want out of life?"

"Are you going to help me if I tell you?" KJ says.

"We're trying to help you, but all you do is fight us," Erica says, "You might not believe it, but your father and I know what's best for you."

"Spoken like a good fascist," KJ says.

"I won't blow up at you," says Erica who came very close to doing just that.

"Are we done?" asks KJ.

"You haven't answered," Erica says, "Tell me what you want, Miss Racist. What's your life worth to you?"

"I care about the survival of my race," she says, "I want people with white skin to survive and to live in peace." She takes a deep breath. "I want peace for white children."

"That's obscene," Erica says, "Do you hear yourself? You sound like a nut job."

"Tell me why the solution to the 'race problem' is for white nations to accept and assimilate millions of non-whites, and for us to intermarry and interbreed?" KJ says, "If we do that we will go extinct. Why are only white countries forced to accept massive non-white immigration? Why only white countries? Why are we being forced to destroy our unique genetic legacy?"

"Another paranoid fantasy," says Erica, who waves her hand. She glances at Gene and then back at KJ. A smug little smile is on Erica's face. "Gee, Kaylee, are aliens to blame?"

"Name one non-white country that is forced or cajoled into accepting foreign immigration," KJ says, "You can't, all you can do is call me racist or imply that I'm crazy".

Erica rolls her eyes.

"We've been here before," she says.

"Then don't ask me what I want," KJ says.

"You're failing all your classes," Erica says.

The change in subject is abrupt but not surprising.

"Not calculus," KJ says.

"All except one!" Erica says.

She takes a few seconds to compose herself.

"Do you explode like that when you're around minorities?" KJ asks, "Because they might consider it racist."

"In spite of your efforts to argue," Erica says, "I'm prepared to offer you a second solution to your problem. You'll have to repeat your senior year. As shameful as that is, there's a light at the end of the tunnel. We're willing to send you back to Seattle. You can finish high school there. You won't miss your friends since you don't have any. You won't miss any activities or social clubs since all you do is shovel shit on a farm."

Erica sees the effects of her words on KJ's face and speaks over her daughter's impending challenge.

"We know that you love music," Erica says, "You're interested in botany and nature too. You could be a songwriter, or who knows? Mr. Batchelder said you have a voice that's one in a million. Perfect for what's popular in the alternative scene. You could also go to university and study biology..."

"Yeah, how race matters to every animal except Whitey, who can't even say his race exists," KJ says, "But please, go on."

"Tell me, Kaylee," Erica says, "When did your race become more important than what's right?"

"Tell me, mother," KJ says, "When did the right to kill your own baby become more important than the survival of your people?"

Gene looks horrified. His mouth is agape but no sound escapes. He defers to Erica.

"I'll take the high road and ignore that," Erica says. She looks up and shakes her head. "Still, this new, über-Christian mentality that you now have, don't you realize that if you got what you want we'd be back in the kitchen?"

"Cooking is an art and I enjoy it," KJ says, "There are worse places to be you know, like a coal mine."

Erica ignores her response.

"Do you want to spend your life serving people and washing dishes?" Erica says, "instead of being an engineer or a lawyer?"

"Lawyers are liars and parasites," KJ says, "men are especially equipped to be engineers, and if it saves my race I'll wash dishes to the day I die."

"You must hate who you are," Erica says.

"I'm the only one who loves who I am!" KJ says, "Men are men, women are women. I have gifts I'd never trade. So do they. We share these gifts. I love being a white woman in spite of what you think. I'm not going to deny who I am by trying to be a man and I'm not going to hate them for who they are."

"Uh-huh," Erica says.

She attempts to be as belittling as she possibly can with her vocalization and gestures.

"Look at my arm!" KJ says.

She points to her flawless white skin.

Erica rubs her chin. She takes a step closer to KJ.

"I've been meaning to ask you," Erica says, "Why are you doing that to your arms? You're as big as a man."

"My skin!" snaps KJ.

"I should have left you back in Kirkland," Erica says.

"Or killed me, huh?" KJ says. "That wasn't far from your mind, was it?"

"More paranoia," Erica says. "And there aren't any African-Americans waiting to rape you, either. That's just another sick fantasy."

She chooses words that she hopes will wound KJ.

"Walk around Newark or Nashville at night," KJ says, "find out how your black gods treat Whitey's woman when she's surrounded by those horny fucking bastards."

"It'd only be because your white gods oppressed them that they'd lash out at anything white," Erica says.

"You believe that shit?" KJ says, "I always thought you were smarter than that. Most race-traitors gave up on that one a long time ago."

"Let's stop this stupidity and get back to your future," Erica says, "I don't have time for paranoia. Neither do you. I'll mention our second offer one last time. It's your call Kaylee, so don't vilify us for trying to save you."

Erica pauses for a moment, staring at her daughter, wondering if she should even continue. Yesterday she convinced herself that this would work. She's not so sure today. Erica decides to go through the motions.

"Repudiate what you think you believe," Erica says, "If you're not convinced, at least say so with that dirty mouth of yours. You can be sincere later, when you're older and finally see the terrible error of your ways. Reject your racist, sexist beliefs, apologize if necessary, it's not a bad idea. No one will hold it against you. The past can remain in the past. If you want to go to school or study music, you can return to Seattle. We'll

pay your expenses. You can stay with Nicole until you're 18, and...just so you know that we do care, we're willing to pay for one year's rent in a studio apartment until you find honest productive work. Think about it. You'll have your freedom and autonomy. All it takes is for you to quit expressing opinions that would embarrass a Neanderthal. If you don't want to go to school, you can join the army or navy or whatever branch you want. Either way, you are going to need some PR, but I've made it easy for you. I've spoken to friends and colleagues. I've even rekindled old friendships in order to provide you an opportunity to clean up your image. I've asked Zachary Holt if he'll take you to the Holocaust Museum and he said that he'd be happy to. You can attend an anti-racist rally at Penn State. They're having a 'Stop the Hate' round table at the end of May. Don't think it's a waste of time, either; I'm going to make sure it gets noticed. You can contribute to the SPLC, I'll give you the money. That's so easy it's absurd. You could even post an apology and explanation with your father's Kos account." KJ raises an eyebrow. "We'll have to read it first," Erica says, "We're being generous, Kaylee, so we won't tolerate any games."

"You have this all covered, don't you?" KJ says. "PR. P fucking R. Approval of those who view me as a tool or a hot piece of fucking gentile ass."

Erica glares at Gene. He must have missed his cue, allowing KJ to respond. He straightens up in his seat.

"Look, honey," Gene says, "I know you've got the rebel thing going." He rolls his hands and tries to act as if they have a rapport. "I've been there, too. I used to listen to some of the bands that you like," he says, and then he adds with rapidity: "The non-racist ones. You can still be a rebel, you know. If you think the Democrats have sold out to corporate America, you're not alone. You can create your own blog."

"So I'd have complete control to write what I want?" KJ says.

"We'd have to approve what you write," Erica says, "at least until we're sure you won't take advantage of our generosity."

"I know you're confused and upset," Gene says, "I was young once, you know. There's all kind of evil in the world that you could fight against: oppression, global warming, women's rights in the third world..."

Erica closes her eyes and shakes her head. She knows that KJ will catch his gaffe. KJ does; she doesn't stifle her laughter. It's not boisterous but it is visible to both her parents.

"That's too good!" KJ says.

"I meant you could fight for women's rights!" he yells.

Erica waits until they both settle down before she continues.

"Your father is a progressive and he did fight the power back when we were younger," Erica says, "I've always admired that. It's one thing that attracted me to your father."

This time KJ resists laughing. It would not have been the spontaneous laughter inspired by Gene's verbal blunder. It would have been a cover for the pain of having a worthless lackey of a father. Gene was one of the rebels created by the anti-white establishment and protected by their might.

"Who says you have to be a bleach blonde or miss popularity?" Erica says, "You can hold on to your personality. Just lose the hate."

"My personality is white," KJ says.

"The future is unavoidable, Kaylee," Erica says, "There will be one humanity."

"So no more white people, right?" KJ says.

"Most," Erica says in a loud voice, "Most white people from Appalachia and Pennsylvania aren't like us. They're ignorant rednecks. We're from an enlightened area and so are you. You're better than them, Kaylee. But you let them drag you into the mud. You're starting to be just like all the other white trash."

"What's that supposed to mean?" KJ says, "They don't hate their race enough?"

"They don't recognize the evil whites have done," Erica says, "and even if they did, they refuse to recognize the injustices that white men have inflicted. You, Kaylee Campbell, are a young woman. Women like you have suffered just like African-Americans and women of all races."

"I'm a white woman," KJ says.

"Woman!" Erica says. "You know about the terrible treatment of women and minorities at the hands of white men! Don't lie to me!"

KJ looks at Gene. When his eyes meet hers he looks away.

"Useless," mutters KJ. She looks back at Erica. "So this is about getting even with white men?"

"I never said all white men are bad," Erica says, "They've just profited from an oppressive system created by other white men."

"That's why the rest of us live in caves," KJ says, "and niggers have it worse here than in their own countries. Yeah, right. You know, mother," KJ takes a mocking tone when she says that last word, "I resent that you think I'd be your tool. You must have thought I'd listen to your lies and follow you and the other anti-white feminists just because you call me sister and say it's good for women. Well, mother, I decide what's good for me, not you. I reject your anti-white lies and your fucking feminist shit that sep-

arates white men and women and only white men and women. Tell me again it's not anti-white. Go on, tell me it's not, when you know fucking well who the target is! Young white women like me! But you fucked up, mother. I learned to think for myself."

Erica moves toward KJ. Her body language is aggressive and angry. Erica is escalating the situation from the verbal to the physical. KJ can guess what Erica has in mind. She stares into the eyes of the female who gave birth to her three years after killing her white brother.

It's KJ who speaks first.

"Why do you live this comfortable life in the suburbs?" she says, "You obviously hate most white people, why not show solidarity with your nigger brothers and live among them? Why do you live in an area that's 90% or more white? Truth is, you don't hate yourself or other cowards like you. You hate whites who won't obey your fucking anti-white rules."

"You might as well join the army," Erica says, "Assuming they'll take a Nazi bitch like you."

"They take fags and dikes," KJ says.

It has the desired effect. The smirk on Erica's face thins and disappears.

"You're dead to me, Kaylee," Erica says, then in a mocking tone: "KJ."

KJ continues to stare into Erica's eyes. For a brief moment Erica looks away.

"I'm not the only one dead to you," KJ says, "You just didn't kill me in that rotten body of yours."

KJ knows what's coming. She sees Erica's facial reaction and her body's initial motion. She could avoid or block Erica's hand. She could step into the swing. KJ does not move.

Gene, still horrified at KJ's words, jumps to his feet when his wife slaps his daughter. He has no intention of defending KJ. He's terrified of his daughter's response. KJ's head turns out of reflex rather than force. Once the deed is done, KJ looks at the female who allowed her to live but did not spare her brother. KJ's face is not red with anger. It's as pale white as ever.

For the first time in her life, Erica fears her daughter. She's seen her grow both beautiful and powerful and she's noticed how physically strong KJ has become. She was always wild and is now downright combative. If KJ decided to, she could destroy Erica with ease. Erica taps her foot and clenches her teeth. Gene should come closer. Erica wonders if he would stop his enraged daughter should KJ attack her.

To Erica's relief, KJ stares at her but does not attack.

"You'll have to leave when you're 18," Erica says, "If I were you I'd seriously consider the armed forces. It looks like that will be your only chance."

"Give me your word you won't fuck with me and I'll leave tonight," KJ says, "Don't send your fucking pig friend after me and I'll leave right now."

"How would you live?" asks Erica, as if she cared.

"That's my problem," KJ says.

"If you got caught selling drugs or whoring yourself out, we'd end up paying the price," Erica says. She folds her arms. The smirk returns. "Nice try, KJ. Not until you're 18."

KJ looks at Gene. He looks at her this time but he says nothing, neither to KJ nor to the female who just implied that his daughter is a whore.

"Leave him out of this!" Erica says, "This isn't between you and him."

"Don't I know it," KJ says.

Gene stands on the riverbank and watches as his daughter disappears beneath the surface. He will do nothing to save her. He didn't even try.

KJ turns and leaves. Neither Erica nor Gene makes a move to stop her.

On Thursday, the Second of May, a process begun by a Zionist Jew and promoted by America's first non-white president comes to fruition. A hastily-assembled hate speech bill passes the House and Senate, and is certain to become law. Its immediate effect is minor. Only a few websites disappear, most of these pulled by their frightened creators. Much more significant is the now-codified ability for the US government to shut down websites for what it calls hate speech. As always with such laws, the application will be insidious and selective. As time passes, the willingness to use this new official power will grow. In a state where the fear of rare, even non-existent terrorism results in a massive increase in the state's power at the expense of individual rights, any unapproved opposition will find themselves included on the list of recognized terrorists and terrorist groups. In a state where the hatred of so-called hate results in a massive increase in government and corporate power over the individual, the unapproved opposition will find themselves included among the haters, and the powers-that-be will treat them like criminals.

KJ wakes that morning resolved to leave should Erica interfere with her life away from Uniontown High and the Campbell House. She wanted to leave anyway. Erica's threats confirm KJ's suspicions that her parents will not allow her to escape until she turns 18. There are lines, however,

and if Erica crosses them, KJ will take the risk and bolt. She's not sure where she'll go first. She knows where she will not go: the Donnelly Homestead. The authorities would assume that she's gone there. She cannot put her brothers and sisters in danger.

Erica doesn't say a word to KJ. Her daughter isn't foolish enough to think the war is over. She will profit from the uneasy peace of the day. On the way to school, Gene is silent and KJ is thankful. The clock is sloth-like until a quarter to three, and KJ can feel alive again. Gene says nothing to her on the trip home. Ten minutes after arriving at the Campbell House, KJ is in the white Chevy. The day could not have gone better.

When she sees Johnny Bowen, KJ embraces him as usual, except this time she holds on for far longer than usual.

"You OK, angel?" Johnny asks.

He's solid and warm and it feels so nice to be immersed in him. No living soul would call her a whore or slap her in front of him. He would destroy them.

"Yeah, sweetheart," KJ says while still grasping his body, "It just feels so nice."

He lets her decide when she's finished.

"Anna will be here tomorrow," Johnny says, "I can't, though. God, I'd like to be, but that's how shit is right now. I still have to drive."

She steps back and touches his face.

"It's fine," she says, "We'll miss you, though."

KJ and Johnny practice unarmed self-defense before spending an hour at the range. Today's supper came from his able hands, a fact revealed after KJ asks the identity of the chef. She suspected it was him.

Before leaving, the two embrace and KJ hops up and kisses his cheek.

"Bring your camo pants tomorrow," Johnny says, "and the boots I bought you. You'll be marching again with Anna. It's supposed to be cloudy, just like you like it."

KJ is excited at the prospect. The only drawback will be Johnny's absence. She'll wear the one pair of camouflage pants that are a tad looser than the rest.

On Friday afternoon, KJ arrives before Anna at the Long Hall. When she enters the hall she sees a rifle on the foyer table, and a box of shells to the side. She's already in the shower when Anna pulls into the parking lot. She can hear Anna call out to her as she towels off the water. After a little preparation and tender loving care with her second wing, she's ready for the excursion. She's so excited she forgets her toboggan and has to

return to the bathroom. Her hair isn't wet and it's pleasant outside. Still, she prefers to be prepared. The leaves will drip from the recent precipitation, and May has begun cooler than usual.

KJ finds Anna in the entrance room. The two young women embrace and exchange pleasantries and ordinary news. Bryce and Gary are well. KJ doesn't mention recent events. She asks if Anna's heard the new release from *All That Remains*. Anna says that *Chironex* will be coming back in June. When the small talk is over, Anna gives KJ a backpack she's prepared for her sister in race and now in arms. KJ loads the items from Anna's backpack into the largish shoulder bag she brought from home. At first Anna wonders why, but it dawns on her that KJ doesn't want to put a backpack over her new tattoo work. She'll carry her Remington for most of today's excursion. Fortunately for KJ, she's strong enough to do so without difficulty. Her gloves will also make carrying the gun a little easier.

Outside, the clouds block the sun, much to the relief of both fair-skinned young ladies. Anna retrieves her rifle from her Subaru. She's already wearing her pistol on her hip. Once armed, the two disappear into the surrounding forest.

The weather is dry in spite of the thick clouds, and the air temperature is pleasant. The undergrowth and forest litter are still wet, however. The two women warriors do not repeat their easterly journey to Dunbar Creek. Instead, they opt for a southerly route. This time they'll go to the upper waters of the creek, and with caution they will approach the shore. The return will be a circuitous north-east and then west-south-west trek. Anna brings a compass and a printed map, though she hopes her years of wilderness roving and pathfinding will make them unnecessary.

April has been kind to the flora of Fayette County, Pennsylvania. The pink dame's rocket and false Solomon's seal are in bloom, adding their colors to the sea of other awakening plants. Leaves are bursting forth and trees that looked dead two months ago are awake again.

A little over half way to the headwaters of Dunbar Creek, Anna and KJ notice a strong sugar maple with branches well-spaced for climbing. Anna pays it little heed. KJ asks her to stop for a little while. Anna becomes intrigued when KJ removes her shoulder bag and requests that Anna hold her rifle. KJ hangs her bag on one of the branches and then, with startling speed, she flies up the tree.

Wide-eyed, Anna approaches the base of the maple.

"Jesus!" Anna says, "How?"

"I used to climb trees all the time," KJ says from her perch on an upper branch, "I just felt like doing it again, you know?"

"That was fast!" Anna says.

"I was taking it easy on my back," KJ says, "You should see me when my tat's healed."

"Yeah," Anna says, "Is it done yet?"

"No," KJ says, "I still need the detail on my feathers."

"Johnny's gonna love it," Anna says, "I mean, freakin' go-nuts love it!"

KJ climbs down. She brushes off her pants and then her gloves.

"I'm better at climbing now that I'm buff," she says, "I have the arm strength to fly."

They walk for a while longer.

"You really think he will?" KJ asks.

"Will what?" Anna asks.

"You think he'll like my ink?" KJ asks.

"Johnny? I'm sure he will," Anna says.

"Yours is like fucking incredible," KJ says, "When you showed me at the range, I really looked at the ivy leaves. The detail is amazing, Anna."

"It wasn't easy to go through," Anna says, "but it means so much to me, spiritually."

"I'm surprised that your father trusted you enough to have the work done," KJ says. She touches Anna's arm. "I don't mean that you're not trustworthy, just that mine would basically tell me to fuck off if I asked, no matter what it meant to me."

"It's cool," Anna says, "I had to earn that trust. That made it a hard decision, actually. I didn't want to light a match to all the trust that he had in me."

Anna stops. Dunbar Creek isn't far now. This will be a good spot for supper. It's not so muddy and the scattered mayapples give it a beauty that both Anna and KJ admire.

"I didn't want to disappoint him, either," Anna says, "I listened to myself when I told him the reasons why. They didn't sound stupid or childish. They weren't stupid to him, either. He let me know it's a step you can't erase. Even with lasers there will be signs that you had one. So I did it. I love it, though it would probably bar me from competing at dive meets. Who knows? Not like I could compete without a team at Laurel Highlands. Not anymore."

"I'm sorry, Anna," KJ says.

"It's fine," Anna says, "I still love practicing, though. I'd ask you to come to the aquatic center next Monday, to screw around in the pool, but I guess you shouldn't."

"No," KJ says, "That wouldn't be a good idea, with my tat and all."

That's not the only reason, of course.

Supper is filling and nutritious if rather bland. The bacon and cheddar sandwiches come from a package yet they are actually tasty, and Anna made the salad before she left. It is fresh and rich in variety, with cheese and dandelion included. They wash it down with bottled water.

"We'll make some flower lemonade once the elderberries are in bloom," Anna says, "Trust me, you'll love it."

Before they resume their hike, KJ broaches a subject that's she's thought about from time to time. It hasn't been pressing or even important, though to her it merits a brief conversation.

"Hey," she says as Anna packs the empty bottles and containers, "I was wondering, did Johnny have a girlfriend before I came?"

Anna stops mid-motion and looks at her. KJ regrets asking the utterly innocent yet probably poorly-worded question. It's one of those "oh shit" moments, when something of interest but not importance comes up, and a second person misinterprets its importance.

"He took an oath to remain whole until marriage," Anna says, "Isn't that enough for you?"

"Yes!" KJ says, "Fuck yes! God, I didn't mean anything by it. I was just curious. Shit, I'm sorry Anna. I wasn't implying anything about him. Goddamn it, I wouldn't fucking do that!"

Anna shakes her head and exhales hard.

"It's OK, KJ," she says, "God, I'm the one who should be sorry. I got a little touchy, I guess. It's been a tough couple of days at school."

"Don't be sorry, please," KJ says, "I'm glad you look out for him when he can't be here, but, fuck, he'd be the last person I'd fuck with like that." KJ breathes deep and settles her nerves – a little. "I'm glad you got defensive. Any woman who gives a shit should look out for her white brothers. I was just, like, thinking about him." KJ gets a tiny little smile. "Of course I was. He's so nice and decent, but he's powerful, too, and strong. He'll fight to protect his woman and his family. I have absolutely no doubt that he will. I'll never forget the pink spot on his stomach, where the paintball hit him. He'd give everything for us, for real. He'd give it all up forever, all the coffees in the morning, and the hikes in the woods, or hanging out with Cristi and Bill."

"Or holding you in his arms," Anna says.

KJ is silent for a moment.

"Yeah," she says, "He'd give it all up for us. He'd go forward even if he knew he'd lose everything. You don't need to tell me that he'd die for us, because I already know. Fuck, it's not hard to see. Our men are any-

thing but weak. White women don't realize the power that a man like Johnny or Garret can have. We don't even realize the power that we can have, or the beautiful things we can accomplish with that power. Really..."

KJ looks down and then back at Anna. She rises to her feet, as does her redheaded sister.

KJ glances toward Dunbar Creek.

"I would give so much just to know that we could be together," KJ says, "When I asked about another girl, I was wondering if he had someone, and why she didn't hold on to a man like him? Like, what girl would give that up? That's why I asked. There wasn't any other reason."

KJ touches Anna's arm with her gloved hand.

"She failed the test," Anna says, "It was before he went to Iraq. He knew he was leaving and so did she. He needed to know if she'd be loyal and if the relationship could move forward. It was a good first step. Garret did it with me and I passed. Johnny's ex failed."

"I won't fail him," KJ says.

Anna laughs.

"Shit, KJ," she says, "You passed before I even knew you!"

It wasn't what KJ meant, but it is nice to hear.

Anna packs her backpack and rises from her place on the big mossy stone. She runs her hand over her head and her fingers through her long red ponytail. Before they set off, Anna stops and turns back toward KJ.

"I'm glad the other girl failed," Anna says, "But I'm not as glad as Johnny is."

KJ is speechless.

Anna is first to observe the banks of the creek. There's not a soul in sight. Anna is reassured when she sees a doe near the opposite shore. Unaware of Anna's presence, it continues browsing on the sweet springtime vegetation.

Anna signals for KJ to approach and puts her finger to her lips so that KJ knows to come in silence. KJ's movement is so quiet that the doe does not even look up from its leafy feast. Finally the doe feels the weight of four eyes staring at her. She looks up, turns and flees. Luck is on her side. Had Anna been hunting, the redheaded she-wolf would have taken her down ten minutes ago.

In the thick woodlands of Pennsylvania, the month of May buries winter's memory in an ocean of flowers and green leaves. In time, many folks come to fear the inherent darkness of that haven. KJ and Anna do not feel unease from the towering trees or the shadows of the canopy. They feel sheltered in the verdant embrace of the forest. They laugh and

joke and seem to take turns finding some beautiful or fascinating sight, be it a flowering saxifrage or a huge Luna moth.

KJ finds herself thinking of the oath taken by Anna, Garret and her Johnny. What that must have meant to the three of them; especially to Garret when he heard Anna's promise to remain pure until marriage. If he can be with her, he will know that she is his alone. KJ says something which to Anna seems to come out of the blue.

"It is a nobler thing that only one man be alive who has been intimate with me," KJ says. She looks at Anna. "Do you know that quote?"

Anna stops in her tracks.

"You know that?!" Anna exclaims, "It's Chiomara. I didn't think anyone outside of...." Anna stops. "But you're not outside of our little group. I'm sorry I even thought that."

Anna puts her arm around KJ's shoulder.

At the Long Hall, KJ washes and changes while Anna waits outside in the cool and peaceful evening.

"Your turn," KJ says when she emerges.

Anna shakes her head.

"I'll take care of that at home," she says, "Have a seat before you have to go."

Her hair damp, KJ puts on her toboggan. It's a little too early for KJ to leave and she was thinking about staying a little longer anyway. Anna's rifle is still on her shoulder.

It's another cool night with Virgo and Coma Berenices peeking through a break in the clouds. Anna notices the clearing heavens and turns off the light by the main door. She walks out into the parking lot while KJ sits on the front step.

"I always liked Ursa Minor," KJ says, "It's our constellation. We came from the north and Ursa Minor includes the North Star."

"Garret tells me Cygnus is mine," Anna says, "It's like he knew it was my favorite. It was one of the few I could recognize, actually. Anyway, I never told him and one evening in the summer, he came with Mason and some of the others to watch me train at the aquatic center. When he dropped me off at home, he looks up and points to Cygnus. That was a year ago."

KJ looks down and smiles. Anna kicks a little stone in the opposite direction and looks down at her boot.

"Did you see they passed a hate speech law?" Anna asks.

"Yeah," KJ says, "I saw that they passed the fucking thing."

"Was it in the papers?" Anna asks, "I only saw it on the internet."

"I don't know," KJ says, "I stopped at Panera Bread for a coffee. They have Wi-Fi, so I used my iPod Touch to Google shit and that's when I saw it. At least most of the pro-white sites are still up in spite of it."

"Yeah," Anna says, "Except the ones on Blogger. Google took them down. Big fucking surprise, I know."

"Yeah," KJ says, "Anyway, I was checking some of the other sites that I hadn't been to in a long while, and it's, like, so fucking depressing sometimes to read those sites. There is story after story about attacks on whites and big conspiracies that are usually bullshit. They don't need a fucking conspiracy. It's all out in the open. Big companies outsource to fucking Mexico and Asia and replace white workers with non-whites, and rich fucks live in gated communities with private police forces while their niggers and steezers live in slums and work at their sweatshops. No white man would put up with that. There'd be revolution. Anti-whites don't try to hide the fact that they want us to go extinct. They say it out loud; there's no white race, race is a social construct, so who cares if blue eyes and white skin disappear forever? It's not a fucking conspiracy, it's open for every goddamn white person to see, but everyone's afraid of a fucking word, or poisoned by lies, and no one does shit to stop it."

Anna sits down beside KJ.

"Not too long ago I got into a fight," Anna says, "A girl at school was talking about how redheads – gingers, she said, and honest-to-God I hate that fucking word, but she was talking about how gingers are going to disappear. I looked at her and she looked at me and she had this fucking grin on her face, you know? I could have walked away, but I didn't. I walked up to her and asked if she'd like to repeat what she said about us. She started running her mouth, so I slapped her so hard it drew blood. When she tried to get into my space I beat her ass. I know dad told me to stick up for myself, but for some reason I thought he'd really be pissed at me, because I did kinda go for the kill. Well, once he found out exactly what happened, he was cool with it." Anna smiles. "They're not so strong. They have numbers and the media and the army, but we're stronger as people, and a hell of a lot stronger as women."

KJ rubs Anna's back.

"Nice," she says, "Very nice, Anna, thank you."

"I bet that little Jew looked pretty bad when you were done with him," Anna says. KJ smiles and nods.

"Yeah," KJ says, "He was pretty fucked up."

"You know," Anna says, "for a while now I've known it's not some big conspiracy. It's just a lot of assholes and haters who happen to make

money off our death. Since there's no pain for them, they keep pushing us toward the edge."

"The enemy isn't some unified front," KJ says, "Pro-whites who believe that shit are doing much more harm than good. When you read how powerful and intelligent the enemy is, and how nothing's ever going to change, it's easy to feel like giving up, and that's exactly what the establishment wants. We get demoralized and give up. But you know, our enemies are not a solid front. A lot of them are really stupid and can't win an argument with a person versed in the Mantra. I don't mean to imply that they're weak. They're dangerous, actually, and I've seen how they try to silence you if you challenge them. I've fucking lived it. But our despair is their greatest ally. They know we can't be effective if we're mired in despair. Anti-whites want our side to preach hopelessness, and that's why this new law won't affect Stormfront. They want our side to be depressed. The men and women who are actually fighting the genocide are the ones who are going to suffer. If I created a blog and told everyone that we're going extinct no matter what we do, I bet you a million fucking dollars they'd never shut down my blog. But if I stand up with our men and demand that the genocide stop, then they'll come down on us with everything they have."

"I know they will," Anna says, "It tears me apart to think what they'll do to the real rebels. I think a lot of our guys don't realize how cruel the enemy can be. Anti-whites may be stupid, but they're dangerous and usually pretty violent. Some of them will torture and kill, or they'll use their non-white servants to do the dirty work."

KJ looks at her and nods, the movement exaggerated.

"Don't I know about that," she says, barely audible.

"The heroes won't give up, thank God," Anna continues, "but some of our enemies will try to kill them, you know? I think you're right about the solid front, though. They're not that unified. It's an alliance of convenience. Niggers, Jews, homos, and anti-white assholes, and big business, they all profit from our decline as a race. It's not always the same reason and a lot of times those groups hate each other, but no one takes advantage of that, and no one punishes those who profit from our decline. If it was a conspiracy, they'd be a lot slicker about it. They'd hide their hatred for us and condescension rather than rubbing our noses in it all the time and risking waking us up. None of it is kept secret, it's right there in your face. But even though they're not unified, they're still really dangerous. Some of them won't hesitate to use open violence if they can't get their way through intimidation, and I can see it's getting worse."

"I live that intimidation," KJ says, "Fuck, I can tell you it's gotten a lot worse since I started high school, and it was always bad." KJ sighs from frustration and stomps her right boot. "We can't keep taking this all the time, Anna!" she says, "I don't want my children living in a world where they can't be proud of who they are, and that includes their race. I don't want them to live in a world like this one, or even worse, because it is getting worse. The enemy is not a solid front, and not all of our enemies are zealots, but there are so many fucking white traitors who know the PC religion is bullshit but they still force it on all of us. They don't hate whites like themselves, but they do hate whites like us; like you and Johnny, because we love and care about all white children. They have everything invested in the status quo which, if we don't change it, will be the death of our race and everything that we are."

Anna looks down for a moment. She thanks God for her father and the others she's known, who are more or less of like mind. She tries not to think of how lonely and bruised KJ must have felt over the past five years, when she was surrounded solely by haters, and many of the worst were in her own family.

"My skin is white," KJ says, emphasizing her words with her arms and gloved hands, "I don't want that to go away. Why would I want it to go away? It's beautiful! Yours is, too. Everyone says a girl like me is beautiful but most of them don't give a fuck if their actions mean that there won't be any more girls like me. All they care about is their own fucking wealth and pleasure. They push our genocide because they make money off of flooding our countries with non-whites and dividing men and women, so they can sell some shitty fucking product or movie or push fucking steezers into the workplace to drive down wages for white men. They don't give a fuck what that's doing to white families or the love between a man and a woman, and they sure as fuck don't care what happens to our race once they're gone. If some nigger in motherfucking Africa fights against other niggers who want to genocide his people, the media calls him a freedom fighter. They call us terrorists and we haven't even fucking done anything. If we even mention the genocide against us, they call us racists and criminals and they want us to fucking die."

"You're right, KJ, they do," Anna says, "You remember that Loughner faggot? Even if an assassin is just a fucking lunatic and even if he's anti-white, we'll still get blamed and conservatives and nonviolent racialists will blame us, too. They're so fucking useless."

"Fuck them, too," KJ says, "Back when conservatives had power, they sent white miners into unsafe mines where thousands died every

year. Those miners were as white as the wealthy owners. It costs money to make a mine safer, and the companies would rather a white miner die than cost them a fucking dollar more for safety.”

Anna looks into KJ's blue eyes. Her analogy strikes Anna deep in her soul. Gary is one of those white miners.

“Conservatives have always sold us out for money and popularity,” KJ says, “And they're usually shills for big fucking polluters. They won't do a fucking thing to stop white genocide, and neither will the weak racialists. Just think about that. Most racialists admit that anti-whites want our race to fucking die, yet we're the bad guys because we want to fight the anti-white assholes, rather than just talking all the fucking time. You know what? Fuck them, too.”

KJ shakes her head and Anna looks at her.

“We won't just sit and watch,” Anna says.

“I know,” KJ says, “Our men won't, either.” KJ motions with her head toward Anna's rifle. “Someday you'll get to use that. And so will I.”

“Could you live that kind of life?” Anna asks.

“I don't need a lot of people,” KJ says, “To be honest, I don't want a lot of people in my life. I don't want a lot of people close to me, because friendship and love are, like, so intense to me. I couldn't give that kind of intensity to a large number of people. Actually, if I have my one lover and a few close friends, I can live that life, yeah.”

Anna smiles and rubs KJ's shoulder. She squeezes KJ's left bicep and shakes her head, smiling. For a long time Anna thought she was the “biggest” in that area.

Saturday morning promises to usher in a pleasant spring day, and the trip to Coalsack with Johnny Bowen completes a peaceful and enjoyable morning for KJ. At Coalsack, it's apparent that someone has done more construction work during the previous week. There's an addition to the little garage. Through the open doors KJ sees a second, smaller ATV. Parked to the right of the garage, near the cistern, is a black Ford Ranger. It is an older model, similar to the one KJ's cousin had the last time the Campbell's were in Seattle.

“That's John's truck,” Bowen says to answer the expected question, “If you ever ride with him, make sure he drives on the right side of the road.”

KJ laughs.

Once he's been hugged and his cheeks kissed, Johnny Bowen departs in an excellent mood. About that time, Anna drives up the trail. Her Subaru bounces over the last few bumps before entering the level park-

ing area. KJ approaches the vehicle once Anna parks and she and her sister share an embrace.

“Aren’t we supposed to be in bed?” Anna asks. “Or talking about boys or some shitty movie?”

“How’s Garret?” KJ asks.

“See? That’s what I mean,” Anna says.

John Boyle sees from his hidden spot. He was going to test them again, but today he’ll ease up. The emotional testing is necessary for the both young ladies. Some levity is good for them, too. That in its own right is a test. Will they return to the deadly seriousness that they both have shown while looking through the scope?

Boyle is exact in his observations during the first two hours of shooting practice. Neither shooter shows a decline in ability. Anna is as precise as ever. KJ’s accuracy is growing. It’s already impressive to a man like John Boyle. To those afraid of firearms or strong, racially-aware white women, her capabilities would be terrifying.

The next exercise will involve targeting over uneven terrain. This time the two ladies will shoot at targets that Boyle arranged during the week. As the women prepare to move out, KJ’s ears catch a faint sound. She looks at Anna, who is already listening. Boyle steps over and gestures for them to be quiet. The noise grows a little. It becomes clear that some kind of vehicle is approaching. It must drive all the way up to the gate based on the noise. Then the motor cuts off.

“Hide,” Boyle says.

Anna and KJ obey. KJ watches him creep toward the entrance, his .45 pistol in his hands. The tension grows as he peeks around the corner of the cabin. But then he holsters his gun and walks out into the open. The unease begins to fade. Boyle begins walking toward the gate, disappearing behind the cabin front. Anna and KJ remain in their hiding places. They both have their rifles in their hands.

Minutes later, the motor starts and Boyle comes back around the cabin as if nothing’s happened.

“Who was that?” Anna asks from her hiding place.

“One of the men,” Boyle says, “Get on the hill. Go on, time’s short.”

Irish John watches them move out.

“KJ,” says Irish John, “It wasn’t Johnny, so don’t get your panties wet over a whole lot of nothin’.”

KJ turns to face him. She takes several steps backward.

“That’s too bad,” KJ says, “He’s the only John who can get me going like that. No other John can come close.”

Anna laughs.

"You're a cheeky one, aren't you?" says Irish John, "Ol' Johnny boy's in for some fun."

KJ ignores him and continues walking.

Garret drives his Wrangler toward the entrance of the county road that leads to Clay. He asked Boyle one question, if the ladies were doing well. Boyle nodded in response.

Garret wasn't testing the ladies, and Boyle knew it.

Sunday is warm. The fog lifts and fair-weather cumulus move in, adding features to an otherwise blue sky. Lately, KJ has been making delicious but commonplace breakfasts, so to-day she shakes things up a little. She serves Johnny Bowen some cheese and berry French toast with a blueberry-maple sauce, and he remarks – truthfully – that the meal is extraordinary. At Coalsack, KJ hugs and nuzzles him before he returns to the Jeep. Just then, Boyle comes loping out of the cabin.

Johnny Bowen turns the Rubicon around and stops beside KJ. From the open window, he hands her the black .45.

"Carry this while you're here, angel," he says.

KJ takes the pistol, and then looks at Johnny with a smile on her face. Her eyes tell him what her mouth does not.

Fortunately for Anna and KJ, the range is sheltered, and the forest provides ample blockage to protect their skin from what could be a fierce sun. The young women visit the range first. It is routine for KJ and Anna to spend at least an hour shooting there, but their target practice now includes varying types of terrain. This does not faze Anna, who has years of experience. It throws off KJ's accuracy, though not nearly as much as Boyle expected. Her progress is measured in hours rather than days or weeks. Boyle does not say what is on his mind. If he did, he would tell KJ that she is a prodigy. No one he's ever seen has this much talent.

Before Bowen arrives, John Boyle calls KJ into the cabin. Anna takes her leave, and soon the two are alone at Coalsack. Boyle takes a seat at the opposite side of the table while KJ remains standing.

"This thing you've got with Johnny seems to be rather serious," says Irish John, "I've gathered that much."

"Of course it is," KJ says, "But I don't want to talk about it with you. That's between me and Johnny."

"The particulars are between the two of you," Boyle says, "But your relationship affects all of us. We need Johnny. The cause needs him."

"I know we do," she says, "and I think I know what's on your mind."

"Do you now?" Boyle says.

"You don't want some flake or schizo bitch fucking everything up," KJ says, "I can understand that."

"I don't see you doin' that," Boyle says.

"I'm surprised you're not," she says, "I'm young. Most people would say too young, and they'd assume I'll change my mind about everything."

"They'd be full of shite, then," he says, "You wouldn't go through this if you were so foolish."

"Yeah, they're wrong if they think I'll change," she says, "White people used to go to war at my age. Men went to war even younger. I'm 17 and I'm a woman, just like the strong white women who used to give a fuck for our race and our children."

"That you are," he says, "Johnny's a good man and he's a fighter. He'll be there for you when you need him, through shite that would scare off all the pretty boys. A lass such as yourself couldn't hope to do better, and you could do a lot worse. There's not many of us and we need your Johnny. Our white people need him."

"So do I," she says, "But it's not like this is a contest. I mean, we're all going to the same place."

Boyle nods.

"You could be something else, KJ," he says, "I've never seen anyone with your talent. Now don't let it go to your head."

"I won't," she says, "I still have a lot to learn."

"That you do," he says, "but you're learning. I don't doubt that you'll be very, very dangerous with a rifle. Whether you use it or not will be your decision. But remember what I tell you now. When the day comes to make a stand, you're not going to want your Johnny to live this kind of life. He's not going to want you to live it. It's going to be hard. Might not seem like it now, but when you're in his arms and he tells you he has to fight, it'll be hell."

"I've thought about that," KJ says, "There's not a day, really, that I haven't thought about it. I know that he'll feel that way, just like you said, and I know he'll go forward. He's a man. The thing is, I'll go forward, too. I'm a white woman. We're not running away anymore. At least I'm not."

Boyle rises and walks toward the back room. He turns to face KJ from the threshold.

"Good night, Roisin," he says.

KJ does not know what he means, but she does not ask. She knows the name must have significance.

The supper that Johnny Bowen brings is excellent, though it might as well have been mundane and bland. KJ's senses are captivated by his

presence. The two make small talk and share laughs and words about subjects that would be frivolous if their relationship was not so intense. It's a way for both of them to forget about the trials and tribulations of life while adding color to what they already know about each other.

"Angel," Johnny says as supper and leisure time comes to an end, "I can't say when just yet. God knows I wish I could, but as soon as we can, how would you like to go on a second date?"

"Yeah," KJ says, "I'd love to."

"We could go by the little place in Markleysburg," he says, "I'll make dinner. It'll be fun."

"We'll make dinner," she says, touching his hand, "That would be more fun. When do you think we can get together?"

"As soon as I take care of some business," Johnny says.

"Nice," she says and nods, a little smile on her face.

KJ hoped that he'd ask her out again. The euphoria is still with her long after she arrives at the Campbell House. Tomorrow's a school day, but she's too joyous to feel any dread.

The reality of her life at Uniontown High returns on Monday. While walking from her first class to the second, KJ hears the usual cacophonous banter between students. There is no way to avoid listening. An attractive blonde junior complains about the senior girls. Amber Gross, a redhead who once seemed to be awakening, stops to put on makeup. Her boyfriend stands by with an impatient look on his face.

Senior Brandon Dreiling is talking to a member of the junior varsity basketball team. Dreiling hangs out with both black and white students and would pride himself on being an "anti-racist." He might not even realize that anti-racist is the code word for anti-white, since he cares more about being an "Alpha" stud than a fighter for his race. His rumored number of sexual conquests would be true if one divided the total by its sum. While confident beyond reason, Dreiling is not delusional. He doesn't possess the beauty of a Garret Fogarty or the rugged handsomeness of a John Ashley Bowen. Still, he is far from ugly. His body is too skinny, but strong in a wiry way, though it is covered with too much hair. Unfortunately, he has the mistaken conviction that he should show as much hairy skin as possible. It no more makes him a man as his lack of racial awareness. He does have his share of female attention, but none of it from a girl half as attractive as KJ Campbell.

"Hey Kaylee," Brandon yells. KJ knows that whatever he has to say, it will be irritating. "You know, you'd be really hot if you weren't trying so hard to be a man."

KJ considers her words as fast as she can, lest the comeback be tardy. She will not emasculate even this cretin. Emasculation has become cliché and highly damaging to real white men in the eyes of racially-unconscious white women.

“Why not?” KJ says, “You’re trying to be a whiny little bitch.”

“Loser,” Brandon says.

KJ ignores him.

The rest of the day lurches from periods of boredom to a few flashes of excitement. There’s a brief scare near the shop classrooms just after lunch when another student approaches, her hands behind her back. KJ avoids her, and sees from a distance that she was sneaking food to class. Someone turns the clock up ten minutes in Mr. Grossi’s physics class and Grossi, none the wiser, ends the lesson early. The chicanery raises KJ’s spirits, as do events at the Campbell House. Neither Gene nor Erica talks to her. The day ends well.

At Laurel Highlands High, Anna Murphy faces less danger and ostracism than her white sister KJ, though the levels of pro-establishment propaganda, and its invariable anti-white bias, is comparable to those at KJ’s school. Unlike KJ, Anna can drive to school and park in the student lot. Unlike KJ, the administration is not hoping for an excuse to expel her. Of course, vengeful non-whites have not tried to sexually assault her, nor has she responded with the dreaded n-word. If they had attacked her, the details would have been similar to KJ’s unfortunate predicament, with one huge exception: Gary Murphy. Anna’s father would have destroyed a coward like Weems, verbally and quite possibly physically.

Toward the end of sixth period, Anna leaves her anatomy class for a scheduled appointment with Steve Rogowski, one of Laurel Highland’s guidance counselors. Rogowski is a bespectacled man in his late 60’s. Short and thin, he seems to run everywhere he goes. To his credit, he does try to help students as he knows the meaning of the word – or believes he knows. Though Rogowski is none too bright he is a pleasant fellow who did not change his demeanor toward Anna after her recent fight and rather bloody triumph over the obnoxious yet popular bitch Sarah Springer.

Anna always wears long sleeves to school, no matter the temperature. When she responds to inquiries – and then only when the person asking is part of the administration – she says it’s for cosmetic reasons. Her father has verified her claim. In Rogowski’s mind, the issue ends there. Today is no exception. Anna is wearing a long-sleeve t-shirt.

“Hi, Anna,” he says as she enters his little office, “Take a seat.”

He's smiling as always.

"I have a few offers you might be interested in," Rogowski says as he pulls a folder from a stack of similar clerical supplies. "Oh, I'm sorry, Anna. How rude of me. How are you today?"

"Good, thank you," Anna says, "How are you?"

"Fine, fine," he says, "I see there's a big test coming up in Environmental Science. Are you ready?"

"Yes, sir," she says.

"Gosh," he says, "You're making me feel old, Anna. Please, call me Steve. I have some information..."

He opens the folder with her name on the tab. Inside are the various forms and pamphlets from universities such as Pittsburgh, Penn State, WVU and Ohio. There is one from Stanford. He taps on that one.

"I think you have a shot to get in," he says, "If you do well enough on the SATs, together with your GPA you might get a scholarship."

"OK, cool," she says, "Anywhere out west would be awesome."

"Any idea what you'd like to study?" he asks.

"Yes, actually," she says, "Forestry."

Steve Rogowski proceeds to show Anna the information about the other schools as well as offer her advice should her chosen subject change, as it is apt to do. He feels like he's not doing his job if he doesn't cover all the bases. He's resolved to concentrate on Stanford, however. What he doesn't know is that Anna has no intention of attending college.

After lunch, a female voice on the PA system calls for Kaylee Campbell to report to the office. She expects some kind of punishment. KJ passes a group of students mulling around their lockers. Most are white, though one is black and another is a mulatto. Someone – it could be any of them – calls her a "Nazi cunt" after she's passed. It was probably one of the spineless whites. He no doubt feels strong insulting a lone white woman who dares to love her race; their race.

At the office, an impatient Christine Tozzi waits for KJ to arrive. When young KJ enters the secretary's office and inquires as to who wishes to see her, Tozzi notices the black boots and blue jeans and does not need to look up any higher to know Kaylee Jane has arrived.

"Come in," Tozzi says from her desk.

KJ does not sit. Tozzi, a guidance counselor, doesn't offer her a seat nor is the other chair in front of the desk. KJ doesn't mind looking down at the 33-year-old rumored homosexual. Tozzi's bony body and smallish head appear even more diminutive under her thick bob hairstyle. In reality, the emaciated, bitter neurotic is not a lesbian, but she'd be the last to

dispel the rumor. It gives her job security should she ever face punishment for her vindictive ways. At this stage in life, having turned away any male suitors with condescension and unpredictable aggression, Tozzi might be willing to give sodomy a try.

Tozzi never liked KJ. The young lady is too intelligent and rebellious for the good of the politically-correct system. Now that it's clear that she's pro-white, KJ has become an object of hatred for Christine Tozzi. According to Tozzi, KJ represents the worst kind of evil in the whole wide world. Tozzi is quick to make such theatrical condemnations. She is a bitter woman who would never admit that she alone is responsible for the great majority of her problems.

"I see that you'll be repeating second semester in the fall," Tozzi says. She doesn't take her eyes off of the papers on her desk. "Since you have an obvious discipline problem, Miss Campbell, perhaps you should consider a career in the nation's armed forces."

Tozzi finally looks at KJ. There is loathing in the counselor's blue eyes; that and nothing else.

There is a poster on the wall. It attracts the eye due to its central location and the huge black-and-white image of children playing on a jungle gym. *It will be a great day when our schools get all the money they need and the air force has to hold a bake sale to buy a bomber.*

"No," KJ says, "I haven't considered it."

Tozzi uncovers her propaganda pamphlets. There's a picture of a black woman on the Marine pamphlet. There are other blacks on the army papers.

"I'm sure you could meet the physical requirements," Tozzi says.

"So am I," KJ says, "Even if they hadn't lowered the standards for female recruits."

KJ stifles a laugh. She knows her words will irritate Tozzi.

"Maybe you'd feel better in front of a judge or a parole officer," Tozzi says.

"I don't care for men in black dresses," KJ says.

"Good luck with your future, Miss Campbell," Tozzi says.

"I don't depend on luck," KJ says.

Tozzi turns to face her computer. For ten minutes she works in silence. It is possible that there is a requirement for the amount of time she spends with a student. Tozzi does not utter another word until the ten minutes have passed.

"Go back to class," she says, "Make sure you go straight."

KJ leaves. Tozzi will never meet with her again.

On Wednesday afternoon, KJ and Johnny Bowen concentrate on self-defense training. Today he introduces a prop knife. He'll begin teaching her the simpler rules of knife fighting. Once more, he knows she will not become proficient without years of practice. He can help her, however, and it just might save her life.

"Listen to me, angel," Johnny says, "I urge you, do not get tangled up in a knife fight. This is a last resort and as always, get the fuck out of there. Run away. Evade and escape. Even if you end up shanking some cocksucker, run away." He stops. "And call me."

She gets that little smile again. He's not the only one with expressions that provoke passion.

After a turn in the shower and a change of clothes, KJ takes an envelope out of her bag and hides it under some clean towels. Inside are twenty ten-dollar bills and a thank-you note that includes her written desire to contribute to the ammunition fund. It's a token of her appreciation and only a fraction of what the others give to her. KJ Campbell could not stand to continue taking without giving something in return. For now, it'll be money for the ammunition and tool fund. She emerges from the bathroom after twenty minutes. She's wearing a t-shirt as usual, though she decided to bring a new pair of jeans that are even tighter than usual on her body.

Before KJ and Johnny sit down for supper, he takes her in his arms and squeezes her. She closes her eyes and holds on tight.

"You look beautiful, angel," he says.

He noticed. She knows what she'll wear on their second date.

After supper, Johnny and KJ spend their remaining time sitting on the front steps of the hall. The stars are big and bright again. KJ reaches over and rubs Johnny's right shoulder, where the black rabbit leaps on his skin.

"I'd like to have a life somewhere where we can have peace," she says, "But we can't run away from what's right."

She rubs the rabbit a little while longer. He puts his arm around her.

"How can I say that we need to do something," she says. He pulls her in tight. "How can I say that we need to fight, and then be gutless and tell you or someone else to do it?"

"I'd never expect you to ask that of me," Bowen says, "But I would do it. I will do it, for us and our race, and for you and me. I'll do it for the children you bring into this world, whether or not I ever see them."

She wants to tell him that of course he will. She does not know if those sentiments will come true, so she holds her tongue. Her hand runs up his back to his left shoulder.

"Tomorrow we're going to meet again at the hall," Johnny says, "I'll come by early so I can see you."

She cannot say any of the things she wants to say right now. It's too early to go that far.

Thursday the 9th flies by with rare velocity. It's another nice day without a hint of the humidity and heat of summer. Once KJ is home, she grabs her bags and flees the Campbell House. Erica isn't home and Gene goes back to the middle school for a teacher-parent conference. No one troubles KJ on her way out.

KJ is first to arrive at the hall. She unlocks the door, but does not forget to lock it behind her. She didn't use shampoo the last two days, so today's shower will last longer. She lathers her thick mane of chestnut hair and then lets the water wash every trace of soap from the innumerable strands. For a while she stands in the warm water. She closes her eyes and leans forward, both her palms against the tiled wall.

When Johnny Bowen enters the hall he hears the shower running. He, too, locks the door behind him and heads for the little room outside the bathroom. After a short while, the water cuts off. He can hear KJ slide the shower door. After fifteen or so minutes, the door opens. KJ sees him and takes two steps forward, and then stops and smiles. In her black jeans and red button-down shirt, she is breathtaking to behold. Johnny moves toward her. He looks down at her hands. She's holding a brush, which he slides from her right palm.

"Take a seat, angel," he says.

KJ sits on the chair in front of the rectangular wall mirror. Johnny runs his hand over her damp hair and then begins to brush its gorgeous and plentiful brown mass. KJ closes her eyes. Each act of intimacy that he gives to her stirs the depths of her soul. Far from resisting his touch, she embraces this white man, body and soul, and has no difficulty finding ecstasy in a simple act of love such as the brushing of her hair.

The two share a pleasant dinner. Johnny stocked the refrigerator a few days ago, and he and KJ make Delmonico steaks and scalloped potatoes on the little range and oven that are now inside the inner rooms of the hall. At the end, Johnny spears the last bit of salad with his fork and then hands it out for KJ to take. She finishes the last bite. Her soft little laugh becomes an alluring smile that lasts twice as long as usual.

"Let's grab a good spot," he says once he's finished loading the dishwasher.

It's very early, but the empty room gives them an opportunity to talk and enjoy each other's company in privacy. At 5PM they hear the arrival

of the first vehicle. It's Gary and Anna. Next to arrive are Cristi O'Toole and John McShane. Big Robert McKenna escapes from his tiny car and joins the others in the hall. Jesse and Rian enter in front of Bill and Megan. Mason Walker and Austin Kelly arrive at the parking lot before the Neely's, but they enter the meeting room after the husband and wife are already seated. The two young men bring the drinks. Kevin Toomey comes in and sits at Bill's table. Only one of the Fox brothers makes it this evening – David. KJ can hear him telling Bill that his brother John couldn't get off from work. Last to enter is Garret Fogarty. He's wearing jeans and a short-sleeved shirt, not unusual for the crowd but a little less formal than his normal attire.

KJ, Anna, Gary, Johnny Bowen and Garret sit together at what's become known as the Murphy Table. Mason passes by with the refreshments and this time everyone takes a Guinness or a cherry wheat ale.

"Be careful, angel," Johnny whispers to KJ, "that's five and a half percent."

"Just one," she says.

Johnny raises his bottle for a toast.

"To you," he says.

"To us," she says in an instant.

Johnny touches her bottle of cherry wheat with his Guinness.

There are laughs and pleasantries and news. Sinead's in County Limerick. She'll be back in June. Bill calls her return a "visit." Megan's auburn hair is resplendent. Jesse remarks how nice it looks. Jesse makes eye contact with KJ and waves. A few minutes later, she comes over to speak. Jesse is in high spirits tonight, and is simply ravishing in her stylish red dress. No one except Gary notices that Anna and Garret are holding hands under the table. It is his responsibility to observe such things. He doesn't intervene. Anna's sleeveless top reveals much of her ivy tattoo. It is indeed living art.

Jimmy Ford enters the hall. The top button of his white shirt is unfastened.

"Johnny," Cristi says, "Johnny!" he repeats much louder. "Hi, KJ," he says when she looks at him. "Johnny, come here a minute."

Johnny touches KJ's head and then walks over to Cristian O'Toole's table.

"Is Wednesday good?" Cristi asks.

"Yeah," Johnny says.

He leans over the table with his hands flat on its surface.

"How's everything going?" Cristi asks.

“Good,” Johnny says, “It’s all good. Hey, I’ve been meaning to mention, sometime in early June let’s get a canoe trip together, while we still can.”

“Hell yeah!” Cristi says.

It’s like old times, when he and Johnny used to make similar trips all summer long. He doesn’t dwell on the probability that they will run out of time beforehand.

Johnny and Cristi shake hands. Then Johnny shakes hands with the others at O’Toole’s table. Johnny steps around to Austin Kelly, who has just returned to the table. They shake hands and Johnny pulls him into an embrace. Kelly is clean-shaven, and to KJ it looks strange.

“Thanks for the work, man,” Johnny says, “It’s fucking awesome.”

“Let me know what she thinks,” Austin says.

His face is shaven, but hair is getting long again.

Johnny returns to his seat beside KJ. She looks at him with an inquisitive look.

“Some of that’s a surprise,” Johnny says, “but you can ask if you want.”

He brushes the hair from the side of her face. KJ notices that Gary is looking at them. In his light blue short-sleeve shirt, Gary’s folded arms look huge. His red hair is the exact hue of Anna’s. Tonight, Anna’s hair is free to flow around her shoulders. Gary smiles at KJ and watches as Johnny touches her hair. It makes KJ feel a little bashful.

“It’s so nice to see friends and family gathered together,” Bill says.

There’s nary a hint of the weariness and worry on his face. He has the look of a robust Irishman and fills his light sweater with much more musculature than corpulence. One would swear that somehow he’s gotten a little younger.

“Bill looks good,” Anna whispers.

“Sinead’s safe,” Garret says.

County Cork and the Donnelly’s friends and IRA connections will provide her with an impenetrable refuge.

“Until Ireland is blessed with diversity, that is,” Gary says, “She’ll be safe until then.”

“Friends and allies,” Bill says, fiddling with his empty bottle of Guinness. “There are friends, and there are allies. Enemies of enemies can be allies. Can be; but to consider them friends is usually the judgment of a fool.”

Voices lower in tone until not even whispers break the silence. At no time does Bill demand quiet. The group wishes to hear his every word.

“During the Troubles,” Bill says, “some of us had an alliance with the Palestinians. Did I call them allies then? Of course I did. Would I call them friends, either then or now? Of course not. Most of them would just as soon cut an Irishman as an Englishman, or a white Californian if he told ‘em to get the hell out of our white nations. They’d cut you down if you told ‘em to stick their religion up their arse. The more useful among us knew that. Palestinians were allies. They were never friends. I think our dear Johnny Bowen could say a word or two on that regard.”

Johnny nods.

“Right now, there’s only one country standing up to Israel,” Bill says, “and some whites who care for our race’s survival are tempted to think of them as friends. They’re bucking horns with a tribe that wants us to go extinct. In a way, the Iranians are already our allies. We can work together... but we can never live together. Our noble women are not going to submit to their backward religion, and our brave men are not going to bang their heads on the floor for no one. But as I was saying, we can be allies and help each other a great deal. Palis, Moslems, Iranians, you and I. But there’s a line and we both have to respect it. They don’t come and stay in our places, and we don’t go and stay in theirs. We are not friends.”

Bill pauses, and KJ looks at Johnny. He notices and turns to stare into her blue eyes. She gets a faint smile, one that is not so shy or innocent. She’s thinking about their upcoming date and what she’s going to wear. She has an idea that he’s going to like it a great deal.

“There’s something more important than such distant relationships,” Bill says, “Those close to us, who could be friends and who are white, but who are not our friends. We know that anti-whites are far from being a friend or ally. Any anti-white is an enemy, no matter if I agree with everything else he ever says. But I tell you, my friends, beware the conservative and the libertarian. In exchange for the accolades of the anti-white establishment, most of them will follow its rules, and more often than not they will sell you out.”

“Isn’t that the truth,” Austin says, “I told you about my first job. ‘Mr. Free Speech’ Dusty Roache goes straight to HR when he hears me use the word ‘coon.’”

“Garret,” Bill says, “What did you tell me once about these so-called respectable conservatives?”

All eyes look toward Garret Fogarty.

“No man or woman,” Garret says, “who refuses to challenge the anti-whites and their actions shall ever be my friend, no matter what political causes he espouses or what opposition he claims to represent.”

“Our survival is what matters,” Cristi says, “There are precious few who we can call friends, because precious few can be trusted. As for allies, if it helps our survival, I’m all for it. The second it doesn’t, the alliance is over.”

To KJ, Cristi seemed a bit whimsical in comparison to the other men. She couldn’t quite say why. He’s handsome and fit, and very attractive to a woman, yet his demeanor lacked the intensity that she finds intriguing, even captivating. She realized that she might be mistaken, since she does not know him very well. His proclamation about alliances convinces KJ that she was wrong. She looks down, and then she looks at Johnny Bowen. Cristi was Johnny’s best friend for much of his life. He wasn’t just an ally.

Gary notices what many of the others must have already realized. Aaron Van Dyke is not among them.

“I guess Aaron couldn’t make it today,” Gary says.

No one challenges his assumption. Garret would like to tell them that he won’t be coming anymore. He’d like to tell them why. Instead he must shrug and feign ignorance.

The return of casual conversation comes like a summer rain, with a few drops paving the way for a shower. Soon most of those present are sharing their thoughts and stories. After a little while, the Neely’s come over to the “Murphy Table” and Tom and Sarah pull up seats near Anna and Gary. Sarah’s raven hair is almost as thick as KJ’s and is tied up in a neat bun. Anna is quick to tell her how nice it looks. Tom sits without his elbows on the table. He puts his arm around his wife and asks Gary if his back’s been giving him any trouble lately.

“No, sir,” Gary says, “I put it through hell but it hasn’t bothered me anymore, thank God.”

“Do you want to tell them?” Sarah asks her husband, who nods.

“We have some big news,” Tom says, “Not the biggest news we could have.”

“That’ll come soon, we hope,” Sarah adds.

“It’s bittersweet, that’s why I didn’t say it was good news,” Tom says, “The bitter part is, we won’t be dropping by for too much longer. The both of us have been looking around for a better place to work, and it looks like both our ships have come in. Sarah will be working at the hospital in St. Joseph, Missouri, and I’ll be working with two other surgeons at a private office. We checked it out last week, and fell in love with the place. The city will take some getting used to, but the opportunity for both of us is just too good to pass up.”

"I knew you were considering a move," Gary says.

He takes Tom's hand, which disappears in Gary's huge paw.

"Best of luck to you, son," Gary says.

He then takes Sarah's hand and kisses it.

"Wow," Anna says to Sarah and Tom, "Congratulations!"

"Thank you, Anna," Sarah says, "And don't worry about the dress, it'll be done by Sunday."

Anna jumps up, as does Sarah, and the two embrace. Then Sarah works her way over to KJ, who also embraces the doctor's wife.

"I'm sorry we couldn't get to know each other better," Sarah says, "I admire your courage a great deal and I would have loved to have seen you more often."

"Thank you," KJ says.

"Keep in touch," Johnny says to both Tom and Sarah, "We're all family here."

"We will," Sarah says, "I promise you'll see us again."

She looks at KJ and smiles.

Some greet the news of the Neely's departure with great surprise; others, who must have had an idea, offer their immediate congratulations. Once the kinsmen begin to disband for the evening, Jimmy Ford comes over to Johnny Bowen and KJ. He shakes Bowen's hand and then turns to KJ.

"I'll pick you up tomorrow at five," Jimmy says, "If something comes up, make sure you call my brother."

"OK," KJ says, "Thank you, Jimmy."

She looks at Johnny Bowen, who doesn't ask.

"It's a surprise," she says.

KJ leans over and kisses him on his cheek.

As soon as she can arrive at the hall on Friday, KJ begins preparing for her penultimate trip to *Dynamic Ink*. Ten minutes after she exits the Long Hall, Jimmy Ford begins driving down the lane past the Donnelly Home. KJ hops into his Ram Charger as soon as it rolls to a stop. In spite of the pain of the procedure, KJ is eager to begin the final phase of her tattoo. Tonight her left wing will be complete.

Once *Bush's* "Little Things" comes to an end, Ford pauses his iPod. The small fields and copses of trees near Perryopolis flash by in the side windows. KJ takes her attention off of the green and amber colors and looks at Jimmy.

"Do you have any idea what song you'd like to sing?" Jimmy asks.

"Yeah, I think so," KJ says, "What limits are we looking at?"

“Acoustic, one guitar,” Jimmy says, “So obviously we can’t do metal or anything like that. Is there any alternative you really like?”

“How about “Wild Horses?” KJ asks, “It’s not really alternative, but it’s the last song I performed before my parents ended my lessons, so I learned it pretty well.” She shrugs. “I like it. I think it can be pretty powerful.”

“It’s a fine song,” Jimmy says, “Let’s see if you can make it your own.”

KJ looks out the window again. They pass a very small inn that somehow remains in business and the auto auction that dwarfs any other structure in the small town. The iPod resumes playing, selecting the song “In a Lonely Place.” KJ remembers the first time she heard that particular song, on the now-defunct “Funky Monkey” station in Seattle. It’s gone now, too, like so much of her old life. KJ was never tempted by Erica’s evil offer to return to the place of her birth, but there are times she’d like to go back. She thinks about days spent in the thick forests and on the trails to Rainier. She imagines walking there, hand-in-hand with Johnny Bowen, and then turning around and jumping up into his arms. She can see them in Victoria, walking in the rain, the gray skies and the waterfront the perfect backdrop for their brief saunter. The daydream ends with her and Johnny sharing a kiss.

There’s little time for small talk before Paddy begins working on her ink. This is a sizable job and they’ll need every minute tonight. It’s all as well, since KJ isn’t in the mood for an involved conversation. While he works, Paddy does mention the upcoming *Opeth* concert, which is anticipated by admirers of their flavor of metal music. KJ replies that she’d like to go to that one, but right now it’s rare for her to have time. She can hardly visit Diamond anymore.

“Too bad,” Paddy says, “I don’t know if they’ll ever come around here again.”

The return trip is uncomfortable for KJ, since she is adamant about not disturbing her ink. Jimmy Ford drops her off at the hall around midnight. Bowen’s waiting there, under the bright stars. He’s leaning against his Rubicon when the Ram Charger pulls into the parking lot. Jimmy waves to him as KJ climbs out of the Dodge. Johnny can see she’s being careful not to disturb the left side of her back. He waves to Jimmy as the black SUV drives off, and then he watches KJ as she strolls up to him.

“Anywhere but your middle or upper back, right?” Johnny asks.

She nods and then embraces him. His hands find a place very close to her rear; just above it, in fact.

"I'm glad I can touch you here," Johnny says, "I didn't think you were getting a tramp stamp."

She laughs. He knows because he feels it in his arms.

"No," KJ says, "I'd never get one of those ugly fucking tats."

"I know," he says, "I was just fucking around. So how'd it go?"

"I'm good," she says with a smile.

"Well, then, when's the big moment?" he asks.

"I have one more session, and then I'm all done," she says, "When it's healed you'll be the first to see it."

He kisses her head.

"Oh, shit," he says, "Did you eat?"

"Relax, sweetheart," she says, "I have something ready at home."

"OK, if you're sure," he says.

Johnny pulls her close again.

Whether devoured or thrown away out of spite, the dinner that KJ prepared is not in the refrigerator at the Campbell House. She shakes her head and curses Erica and Gene without opening her mouth. She grabs some cheese and various greens and makes a large salad. Covered with homemade blue cheese dressing, it suffices. Before bed, KJ hides the breakfast items as best she can, lest Erica ruin Johnny's meal as well.

Saturday and Sunday are typical days at Coalsack, if any day at Coalsack can be considered typical. The only change in the program occurs on Sunday. Boyle has KJ take a long shot from a hidden position and then tells Anna to find her. She does so rather quickly, and although Boyle is more impressed with Anna's ability rather than KJ's failing, young KJ cannot help but feel a little disappointed.

On Sunday evening, when KJ lets go of Johnny and walks backward to the Chevy, the temptation to run back to him is enormous. She wants to leave behind the hateful world that pulls her under the moment she goes back to the Campbell House. In his presence, she can talk and vent and express herself without fear of oppression. In the refuge of his arms, she can be a proud and affectionate white woman without suffering constant belittlement and attack.

Johnny watches her. He'd like to tell her not to go away. She'd like to tell him she'll never leave him again. Erica would send the police. They'd have no mercy on a white rebel like John Ashley Bowen.

KJ kisses her gloved hand and waves it at him.

"Goodnight, angel," he says.

Gerry Fiorentino did not object when Garret offered to work late on Monday. Gerry's never enforced a strict schedule and Garret's never

abused the freedom. On Monday morning, Garret stands outside the Long Hall. Today he waits alone.

At 9 AM, a red Kia Soul turns off Old Braddock Road and proceeds down the lane to the Long Hall. Garret had hoped that the Neely's would come. He is adept at not showing his emotions, though he still feels them, and right now his relief is sizable.

Tom and Sarah Neely park between the dump truck and Garret's Jeep. Tom is dressed casual and Sarah's in jeans. They're leaving this week. Garret sets a bag on the hood of his Wrangler and when Tom approaches he shakes the doctor's hand. Sarah follows her husband. Garret embraces her and she kisses his cheek.

"I wanted to congratulate both of you one more time," Garret says, "And thank you for agreeing to this. I can never thank you enough for what you've offered to do for us."

Sarah smiles. It's more sad than happy.

"It's unnatural to pray that you never see someone again who is dear to you," Garret says, "But I won't feel the sadness. You two will have a life, God willing a beautiful life, so this isn't an occasion for sadness. Tom, Sarah, I know you'll do your part for our beleaguered race. That's enough of course. But again I thank you for agreeing to help us in a more concrete fashion."

The sun breaks through the clouds. The wind has a mind of its own and rises at the most inopportune moments. A fresh breeze moans in the boughs of the adjacent forest.

"Whatever you have planned, Garret," Tom says, "I wish you god-speed. You know your business and we know ours. Personally, I think the Mantra is our most powerful weapon. I've used it and I'll continue posting it to forums and the comment sections of websites."

"I've seen your work," Garret says, "You've stayed on message every time I've seen you post. You've never let them distract you." Garret turns toward Sarah. "Thank you for joining him. More than anything we need our women to speak out for our race."

Sarah nods. She wipes her eyes before speaking.

"Take good care of yourself, Garret," she says, "And Johnny and KJ, too." She smiles. "Take care of them, too."

"Their fate will be in their hands," Garret says, "But rest assured, if they chose to accompany me, I will do everything in my power to support them."

Tom takes Garret's hand. His blue eyes are much darker than Garret's but just as clear.

"Maybe you can find some other way to fight," Tom says.

"I can't thank you enough for considering and accepting my appeal," Garret says, "I'm afraid that someday we might need your skills. I pray that you'll be able to make a difference if we do. You're right about our most powerful weapon, though. Please, continue to post the Mantra to websites, and hammer away at the anti-whites who respond. Someday those words will strike terror in the hearts of anti-white traitors. They need to know this is serious. They will be punished. Until the Mantra and the efforts of those using it begin to awaken the sleepers, we will do our part. The fear we create will cause at least a few of the betrayers to hesitate. That hesitation might save some of our own, even after we're gone. Those lives we spare are worth the sacrifice."

"We'll play our part," Sarah says, "Please, Garret, please be careful."

Garret picks up the shoulder bag from the hood of his Jeep and hands it to Tom.

"The key is to Procyon," Garret says, "It's one of four in existence. Keep the cell phones charged and turned on. This next part is very important. Never call with the phones or answer a call. If it rings, check the number. If it's the first number on the note, it means that we need you at Procyon. If it's the second, it means we've been compromised."

Tom cannot speak. He stares at the unopened bag.

"May we never see each other at Procyon," Garret says.

Sarah wipes her eyes again. When she hugs Garret it breaks Tom out of his trance. He shakes Garret's hand and embraces him as well. Then the Neely's part, with Garret wishing them well and hoping to never see them again.

As he, too, drives away from the Long Hall, Garret sees Bill standing near the entrance of Old Braddock Road. His Cherokee is parked beside him.

"So, that's it," Bill says when Garret lowers his window.

"Like I said," Garret says, "They're in." He sighs. "At least they can have a life and a family."

Bill nods.

"Tom and Sarah will be there if you need them," he says.

"If I think it might put their family at risk," Garret says, "I will not call. I won't have the BATF burn their children alive."

"They'll make the decision," Bill says, "It's a war, my boy. There will be risk for all of us. Having that white skin is already a risk."

"For Anna and KJ it's an even greater risk," Garret says, "If no one makes a stand, their skin will mark them for death. But we'll keep them out

of it if we can. They have vital work to do, women like them, if we're going to survive."

"We all have work to do," Bill says.

Reagent bottles crowd the tables behind Anna's 4th Period Chemistry class. Most of the substances are familiar to the more attentive students. A few are new. Today is the first segment of a major chemistry project that will be the last of the semester. The chemistry teacher, Mrs. Habecker, reads from the lab manual about today's exercise. Then she turns the pupils loose to begin a series of simple experiments.

Anna tries not to yawn. She looks for the magnesium strips required by her particular set of exercises. They're at the far table, next to a pair of glass jugs. One has a bright red label. Before approaching, Anna reads the words. It's probably not the most expensive reagent, but it is new and it's the only one vulnerable to an accident. There are no open flames in the vicinity. The strips are beside the jug. This one is easy.

Mrs. Habecker looks up from her magazine when she hears the jug of Tetrahydrofuran roll across the furthest table. Before she can speak, it crashes against the hard laboratory floor. The jug shatters and 4 liters of Tetrahydrofuran splash across the floor. Habecker waddles out of her seat and rushes as fast as she can to the back of the room.

"What happened?" Habecker asks before she can maneuver her mass around the last row of tables.

"I'm sorry!" Anna says, "I knocked it off while I was counting my strips."

Habecker shakes her head. She looks at Anna in anger, but it subsides.

"I left it too close," 40-year-old Habecker says, "I knew this would happen. There's just not enough room."

She shuffles toward the storage room, returning with a spill kit that, truth be known, costs twenty dollars more than the Tetrahydrofuran. She also has two pairs of nitrile rubber gloves.

"Give me a hand," Habecker says.

Anna takes her time putting on the gloves, and then assists Habecker with the clean-up. Only when class is over can Anna smile from the satisfaction of a mission accomplished.

On Tuesday, Johnny Bowen and KJ split their time between unarmed self-defense training and target practice. Her precision with the .45 has become lethal. Johnny is also very pleased with the power of her punches. Cold reality won't give her more than one chance to stun a resilient male attacker. If she could carry her 1911A1, that little equalizer

would reduce the danger considerably. His worst fear is an ambush or sucker punch. Non-whites are notorious for group attacks and sucker punches.

Megan Donnelly prepared something special for the two young lovers: nettle soup and honey-glazed chicken. She delivers the meal in person. Mrs. Donnelly is as lovely and welcoming as ever, with her soft smile and gentle yet unyielding manner. KJ feels the latter when she tells Megan that she doesn't have to slave in the kitchen for her sake. There is patience and a little rebuke in Megan's smiling eyes when she looks upon young KJ and touches her cheek.

"Enjoy the meal, dear," are the only words Megan says on the subject.

After two long hugs and a few words about the family's health and Sinead being in Ireland, Megan leaves Johnny and KJ so that they might dine as a couple. When it's time for KJ to depart, Johnny tells her that he won't be coming tomorrow. It has to do with the business he mentioned a few days ago.

"Anna will be over," Johnny says, "When I told Bill he said to make sure that you two drop by the house for supper, around 4 o'clock. I was thinking, after you eat, you and Anna could do a little rifle practice around the field. Ask Bill, OK? I think you both ought to try some timed shots and see how fast you can target. Try a few close range shots, too, close enough that you can't use the scope. That way you can get used to taking a snap shot, if God forbid you ever need it."

"OK," KJ says. She embraces him before leaving. "I'll miss you."

"You too, angel," he says.

Johnny rubs her head and then, when they separate, he draws her hair around her cheeks.

"It's like you're submerged in a sea of hair," he says, "Like a veil over that beautiful face. I like that. It looks nice."

She smiles and looks down, revealing her bashful side.

An hour before she prepares for bed, KJ fulfills her physical exercise requirements. She'd prefer to listen to her iPod Touch during the cardiovascular part, but she dares not risk it. Since the most recent battle with Erica, she's been cautious with her few precious possessions. They, and her money, are locked in the pickup.

The rules of the contract at Snyder Transportation permit three unexcused absences per year. On Wednesday, May 15th, Johnny Bowen takes his first. In the early morning hours he drives from Deer Park, Maryland, to St. Albans, West Virginia. At around 10AM he arrives. Bowen

does not enter the town. He chose his route with great care. A winding hillside road leads him to a once-clear spot. Vegetation is reclaiming what was once believed to be a profitable location for residential development. With no one in sight, Bowen drives into a field and angles the Rubicon for a thick patch of trees that lie a quarter mile from the road. The masses of rose bushes and forest backdrop hide his Jeep from a casual glance. Mud on the sides and the rear of the Jeep cover and obscure the license plate. No one drives by as he parks, and no one is coming when he exits.

Johnny Bowen enters the woods. In his hand is a small telescope. Under his unbuttoned shirt is a .45 caliber 1911A1 pistol.

Johnny's route through the woods is as precise as his route into St. Albans. After following a very careful and circuitous path, he comes to a rise in elevation that provides an excellent view of the Kanawha River. Trees shroud the position, which blends into the surrounding forest and is nondescript among the higher surrounding hills. Johnny takes his time and chooses an excellent vantage point, and then he lies down and opens the telescope. From between the trees, he can see the parking lot of the *Touch of Class* strip club. He will wait as long as he can until either the owner arrives, or he must renounce this recon mission. He will wait until 8 PM if necessary.

At 2:30 PM, Mark David Strader enters the lot. His vehicle's changed – he now drives a black Hummer H3 – but his face has not. Bowen makes a mental note of this information. For another hour, he studies every detail of his position as well as the club and its surroundings. Then, practicing maximum stealth, Johnny Bowen departs.

As Johnny creeps through the woods toward the Jeep Rubicon, KJ arrives at the Long Hall. Today she'll wash and change before doing any kind of practice or study, since Bill will be expecting her at the dinner table. Knowing this, KJ brings a few more items of clothing that she'll keep in the dresser at the hall. Today she'll wear her nicest jeans and an orange pop-over blouse over her plain white t-shirt. While KJ showers and dresses, she has the washing machine going, with the items that have accumulated over the past two weeks inside. Once she's washed away the tedium and dust of the school day, KJ goes out to the bed of the pickup and from the rear storage box she collects the iron and ironing board she bought last Monday, as well as a sewing kit that she's assembled. Back in the hall, KJ stores the items and leaves a little money in an envelope for the electric and water bill, and then she departs from her little enclave.

Anna is waiting for her inside the entrance room. She, too, wears jeans, though her shirt is a button-down green blouse that is more com-

plex and elegant than KJ's. Her forearms are uncovered and KJ sees the ivy that emerges from beneath Anna's elbow-length sleeves and continues winding around her arms until it comes to its final tendril. She looks up at her sister's gorgeous face, which has the all the traits of a beautiful Celtic redhead. So, too, does the thick red hair, which is again in a ponytail.

The young ladies greet and embrace. Anna refrains from touching KJ's back.

"Thanks for thinking of my back," KJ says, "It's healing really fast, you know. I mean, like, really fast, faster than I could have imagined."

"So, is one of them done?" Anna asks, "Can I see it sometime?"

"Johnny has that honor," KJ says.

"I mean after him," Anna says, "I figured you'd show him first."

"Yeah," KJ says, "Once it's done and he's had the first look, then you can see it if you want."

"So what do you think?" Anna asks.

A wicked smile on KJ's face answers Anna's question.

"It's fucking awesome!" KJ says. She loses the smile. "Some things are worth the pain."

Anna Murphy knows all about that.

Outside, the clouds have rolled in and obscured the sun. It's a little too warm for KJ's liking, though she and Anna will take a cloudy day over a cool, sunny one.

Megan greets Anna and KJ at the rear entrance of the Donnelly Home. She wears a lovely spring dress that is elegant and emphasizes her beauty, but simple enough not to make Anna or KJ think that they've underdressed. Her own auburn-red hair is free to flow down her back. She hugs the two warrior sisters. Megan must know something about KJ's back. She puts her hands low, away from the huge wings.

"You two are such lovely young ladies," says Megan as she steps back to admire the young beauties, "I'm so happy to have the two of you over for a proper dinner. How have you been, Anna? And you, KJ?"

Megan touches KJ's cheek when she asks. She's been worried about the young warrior woman. At the moment, Anna is in less peril, and she has Gary who would give his life to protect her. KJ has Johnny Bowen, who would do the same. Of that, Megan has no doubt. But Johnny cannot be at Uniontown High or in the Campbell House. Like Megan, he is often a phantom in the distance, with the power only to watch.

Bill enters the room. He's just as spry and joyous as he was the other night. The short-sleeves of his pale green shirt show that he, too, is a pow-

erful man. He embraces the two sisters-in-law and nearly rubs KJ too hard, but remembers before his big hands touch her upper back.

"You look well, Bill," Anna says.

KJ nods. Anna laughs a little from Bill's "hover-hands" as he pulled his arms back so as not to rub KJ's back.

"How are you, Bill?" KJ asks, her haunting blue eyes touching this father-figure deep in his soul.

Bill touches KJ's cheek.

"Very well," he says and smiles, "How's Johnny?"

"Good," she says.

"We have you to thank for that," Bill says. He claps his hands. "Now, off to the dinner table with the likes of you."

"Thank you, Bill," KJ says.

"Afterward, sweetheart," Bill says.

The two young ladies remove their boots and enter the house.

The spread on the table is spectacular and the meal is sumptuous. There's a pork belly roast that is sweet and juicy and cooked to absolute perfection. Smoked salmon rests upon fresh soda bread, the taste of which brings back KJ's fondest memories of Seattle. The salad consists of fresh greens and spring onions that grew in Megan's little garden, and in pots on the enclosed porch. There are a few wild ramps as well. Bill finishes his meal with a Guinness. The ladies enjoy elder blossom and peppermint tea. They sit for a while and converse while their bodies digest the feast.

"Any news from Sinead?" Anna asks.

Anna misses her friend, with whom she became quite close over the past few years.

"She phoned this morning, in fact," Megan says, "From Clifden. She's in town with Sean and Lisa."

"It's awesome that she could go home," Anna says, "Maybe I can visit someday. I hope my Irish is passable by then."

"It already is," Bill says. He looks at KJ. "But it's not necessary to speak the Irish. Either of you would be welcome in the homes of my kin and my colleagues."

"Our Sinead's a young woman like yourselves," Megan says, "In a different time, you'd all spend days out in the flowers, or enjoying a long walk through the mountains. I can remember when my worst fears were about impressing this young lad." She takes Bill by the arm. "But we were asleep then. It's a sweet dream to remember, but we were hurting Sinead by not keeping an eye on the bigger picture. And we hurt David, too..."

“Recall what I once said to you Anna, and to you KJ, more recently.” Bill says. “You can ask me anything, but it doesn’t mean that I’ll answer. The same goes for you two. I may ask, but you do not have to answer. I’d like to make one request for the two of you, before I begin. Whatever you think you can tell me, do not withhold it from my wife. There are no secrets between us. Before we married, I told her I was an IRA man. She accepted being the wife of a rebel, knowing full well the risks involved.”

Anna nods and she and KJ await Bill’s question.

“I’d like to start with you, KJ,” he says, “Not from preference or pity, so don’t misinterpret my motives. Tell me, hon, what do you want out of life? What would bring you joy?”

“Looking into the eyes of my baby,” she says, “Knowing that I did everything in my power to give him a future where he can live in peace, among his white brothers and sisters, where he belongs. And when I look into my husband’s eyes, I’d know that we shared our lives and our bodies, without holding anything back. That’s what would give me true happiness.”

Anna takes KJ’s hand from under the table. Her thoughts differed in their semantics, but the core was the same. She does not reiterate. She does something better.

“If that wasn’t my dream,” Anna says, “It is now.”

Megan smiles at Bill.

“I’m tempted to stop there,” Bill says, “But I think I’d be derelict. Anna, KJ, you’re both very bright young women. You’re not the children the establishment says you are. You will face difficult decisions, and soon I believe. The life that you desire may not be possible, depending on what path you take.”

“I’ve thought about that for a long time,” Anna says, “And now the time’s almost here. The other day, the guidance counselor says I can get into Stanford. I told him to try. You know why? So I have a reason to go out west. Or an alibi, like I was going to Stanford instead of staying here beside my loved ones. I’ve decided to go forward with the struggle. I worry about my father. I do. I love him, God knows I love him. He’ll suffer my decision no matter what it is. Do I go to Stanford, find a good white man and have a family? When my son’s seventeen, what do I tell him? Fight for the next generation? Oops, sorry son, I didn’t do that for you. Now it’s your fight. Oh, by the way, it’s a lot worse now because I waited.”

“You could spread the truth,” Bill says, “The Mantra, everything you’ve learned. You could fight the information war, and you’d be far from useless.”

"I've thought about that, too," Anna says, "but as a woman, I know that we have to fight. We can't just cheer anymore. We have to be there. At least some of us do. I'm good at what I do and I believe it's just what we need right now. We can spread the Mantra and that's vital, no doubt. But if our people don't see that this is a life-and-death struggle, the anti-whites will keep making it harder to speak out. They already have hate speech laws and can ruin a man just for saying he loves his race."

Anna shakes her head and looks away for a second. She worries about Gary, and what they might do to him.

"I know we wouldn't be the spearhead of a revolution," Anna continues, "I'm not fooling myself. I don't believe in an uprising or any other silly dreams like that. I am sold on the information war, especially the Mantra. I think it will save our people, if anything this side of God can save us. But they have to be afraid of us. At least the weaker ones might hesitate or give up their anti-white hate if they're afraid of being punished. At least they'll see they can't kill my people without a response. It's a judgment on them. It's punishment for trying to kill the love between a white man and a white woman, and it's punishment for killing our white babies. We give birth. I'm honored to be able to give a future to our race." Anna touches the back of KJ's head and looks into her eyes. "We do that. Our men can't. That's one reason conscious white men cherish us, but most of us are too far gone to realize it." She looks back at Bill. "Since most of us are lost, women like us have to stand up with you. But you know, we should have, all along. It's our future and our children who grow inside our bodies. I'm so sorry we didn't stand with you before."

"That's not your burden, Red," Bill says. He hasn't called her that in a long time. "You never betrayed your brothers, and God bless you for it."

"I always wanted a little house up in the mountains," KJ says, "There'd be trees and vales, and trips to Victoria and holding Johnny's hand in the rain. If I'm not part of the struggle, then everything in my dreams is built on lies and death. How long until death asks for his payment? Do I offer my husband? My son? I cut their throats a little each day that I don't make a stand." KJ looks up from the table and into Bill's eyes. "Could I wake up beside Johnny and tell him that I won't fight for our children's future? Or the future of any white child? Could I say, fuck you and fuck our son, I'd rather have fame and fortune or an easy life, even if our son has to pay for it with his life? I'm sure there are those who could do that, but I'm not one of them. I'll wake beside Johnny in a tent, somewhere, and I'll know that we're fighting for our sons and our daughters, and for Anna's sons and daughters. That, or I'd rather not wake up."

"It's a hard, hard life," Bill says, "It's a merciless life."

"But it's a life," KJ says, "It's not a living death."

Bill nods. Megan's hand is on his shoulder. He looks at something that only he can see.

"I lost a son to this evil we face," Bill says.

"I lost my brother," KJ says.

"My God," Megan says, "Dear KJ..."

Anna puts her arm around KJ and lays her head on KJ's shoulder.

"I can't tell a man to fight for our future," KJ says, "But I will promise to stand with him when he does."

"God bless the both of you," Bill says, "Someday your attentions will go from the battlefield to the crib, and that will be a far greater day than when you go to war. And on that day, I know a few places where you might go and have those families that you so desire. I have relations in Limerick and Cork and good friends in Galway. It wouldn't be much, and getting there would be up to you. I'm sorry we can't help with that part. But there would be a roof over your heads and warm meals for your bellies. Your men could work on the farm and drive the lorries, and everything would be squared with my relations. I'll keep in touch with Garret. I hope to work this out for the two of you, at least before we take any final steps. It's not perfect, but it's a little refuge where someday you might have those little children that you need to have."

Anna is looking at Bill. KJ is looking down.

"Now," he says, "to make something clear from the start. It doesn't matter who's of Irish blood and who isn't. You're both white and you've already done more for my people than a great deal of my countrymen. Irish or not, whether you speak the language or don't know a word, you will be welcome. I'm not so foolish to think the war back home will up and go away, and to be honest, it shouldn't. But for the here and now, we're all together in this genocidal war, English, Irish, German, Russian. We must have solidarity, and among my friends and family, you shall."

"Thank you, Bill," Anna says.

KJ nods and mouths the word "yeah."

"These are hard times," Bill says. He glances at his wife. "I'm sorry, ladies, we'll make your next visit more pleasant."

"Sometimes you have to bleed before you can heal," KJ says.

Bill and Megan watch the two young women walk toward the Long Hall.

"What a life they have before them," Bill says. He shakes his head. "A beautiful white woman finds it easy to have all manner of comforts, but

the life she has is hollow. Somewhere deep in her soul, even the most wicked of women knows she's a traitor, and she recoils like a snake. Or they can try to be hospitable and avoid the struggle altogether. It's a life just as hollow, and a sentence of suffering and death for their children. Or a woman can rise like dear Anna and KJ. But, my love, I fear that their lives will be very hard. Those who want our people to die for whatever reason will know the power of an awakened white woman. Those who call us haters will hate these two like no others. Those who call us evil and merciless will have no mercy on these two young warriors. I pray for them."

"At least they'll have a life," Megan says, "and not a living death."

"You heard their words," Bill says, "When I heard what KJ said about life, I thought about how the enemy calls us haters. She didn't say a word about wiping someone out, or supremacy or any of that shite. She said she wanted her children to live in peace with their white kinfolk. The preachers of tolerance will hate her for that. Oh, they'll hate her alright. So much they'll call her the hater, and in their twisted minds they believe that the so-called hater must die. I fear for our Anna and KJ, but at least they're alive. At least they can leave this world clean, which is more than many of us can say."

"I'd give anything to help them live their dreams," Megan says.

Bill nods.

"We live in a special time, love," he says, "It is dark, but I have so much hope. Anna and KJ are real. Gary and Garret, Johnny Bowen, John Boyle and Jimmy Ford are real. Mason and Jesse, Aaron and Cristian, Austin and John and Kevin, they're real, and so are Sarah and Tom and Bob. The Fox Brothers are real. And our own Rian, our Sinead and Michael. You know what Cristian told me just the other day? Someone got the Mantra posted on the fifth-largest website on the internet, and it stayed for two days. God knows how many eyes saw it before they pulled it down. As long as they don't get distracted, I believe there's hope. But these young men and women are desperate, and there are so few of them that I fear they will not last. They are extraordinary and precious beyond measure and in a just world they'd be the ones living in peace, with beautiful babies in their arms and nothing but love in their hearts. Most young whites fall for the enemy's lies and seek the approval of those who are destroying our race. So many of our youth give in to the madness, and sell their bodies and their loyalty for cheap. They lose things they can never reclaim. But these two are lovers and fighters and they will not surrender to the enemy. Back in the day, we needed young men and women like Anna and KJ. Honest-to-God, Megan, maybe we would have stopped this

evil before it fell on these young souls, and on our son. But no one could see back then, and we let the evil grow and now we're in jeopardy of disappearing forever."

Bill smiles for a moment. There is no joy in it, and the memories are very painful.

"I lost all hope when David died," Bill says, "But I feel it again, my love. Thank God for Michael and all he's done. He has the money to live the so-called good life, but instead he fights for the future of all white children, Irish and otherwise. And thank God for these young white warriors. Thank God for these two."

"They're not the haters," Megan says, "They're lovers. That's why they'll fight."

From the forest, KJ fires at a target at the far end of the field. The range is around 200 yards. The shot hits dead-center. KJ doesn't move for a while, not even to remove her earplugs. Once the powerful noise fades and the jays and sparrows gradually lose their timidity, Anna scans the woods with her scope. After twenty minutes, which seem like hours, she radios KJ on the walkie-talkie.

"About ten meters from the old black locust," Anna says, "Right in front of you are three stones, one with a white scratch that points straight toward your head."

There is a momentary silence before KJ returns the call.

"Fuck," KJ says, "I really need to work on this shit. Yeah, it's me."

Before KJ leaves, she changes from her camo outfit and tall assault boots back into her school clothes. She's always been careful not to give Erica a reason to question what she's doing at the Donnelly Homestead. Since their battle, KJ's caution has become extensive. Out in the parking lot, she rubs her jeans against the dirty side of the big dump truck.

Anna sighs as she watches.

Friday morning begins bright and sunny. The thunderstorms that rolled through late last night have raced off to the coast and the humidity has fallen in their wake. The crispness of the morning air is pleasant. KJ puts on her sunglasses and waits until Gene's unlocked the car doors before she leaves the shelter of the front porch. She has hopes that this will be an uneventful day.

After waking a little early and taking a long, refreshing shower, KJ managed to escape the Campbell House without seeing Erica. She hopes that luck will continue to be on her side. School life is fraught with tension and uncertainty, and has made her an extreme pessimist from 6 AM to 3 PM, and as Gene approaches Uniontown High KJ begins to dread what

the day will bring. Unfortunately, no amount of pessimism can prepare her for what awaits at the end of this school day.

Most of the day passes without event. After lunch KJ shoves her school backpack and extra notebooks into her locker. She's a little surprised that the dial is not glued. She removes two notebooks and a pen from the upper shelf. It's all she'll need to finish the school day. When the last bell rings she returns to her locker. Since Epstein and quite probably others began their harassment, she's come to expect some form of vandalism.

She always inspects the dial before touching it even though she usually wears gloves. She makes sure it's clean. If she's not certain, she'll bring paper towels from the bathroom and wipe the dial. Aside from the remains of fast-drying Gorilla Glue, she's never found any other substances. Her close inspection reveals that the dial is clean, so she tests the little black knob. It's not frozen. She completes her combination and opens the locker.

The smell is not overpowering, but it is noticeable and it is unmistakable. It is more than disgusting; it is a triumph of vileness and malevolence. KJ recoils in horror. She drops her books and pen and covers her mouth with her hands. Someone has managed to open her locker and either urinated or dumped urine on her possessions.

KJ's horror turns to outrage and then fury. She slams her locker so hard it flies back open. Her emotions rise, approaching an uncontrollable level. She wants to charge into Weems' office and scream at him for being a coward and a traitor. She wants to run outside to Gene and spit into his face. Instead, she shuts her locker and charges through the exiting crowd. Some look at her in surprise. Others see how upset she is, and they revel in it. Someone makes a cruel comment but she does not care to listen.

Not far from the principal's office is Ken Andrews. He's changing trash bags. When he sees KJ, he knows something is wrong, and by the way she's fighting back tears he knows it's more than a glued locker.

"What's wrong?" Andrews asks as she walks up to him.

"Somebody," KJ says, and then stops in order to regain her composure. "Some motherfucker pissed in my locker."

He doesn't ask if she's sure. One look tells him that she is.

"KJ," he says, "Listen, KJ. Go on home. Listen. Go home. I'll talk to Weems. I'll show him what happened. Go on home."

She nods and looks around. He watches her as she turns and begins to leave. Then she looks back and says "Thank you." He nods and waves. The look on her face will haunt him.

Andrews follows her. He wants to see the locker in case the perpetrator tries to cover his own tracks now that he – or she – has had their evil fun. It's clear that someone knows her locker combination. The door is undamaged. Andrews does not recall seeing Epstein at school today. In fact, Epstein's on a trip with the orchestra. For once the spiteful little coward is not the culprit.

KJ says nothing to Gene. He asks her if she forgot her backpack. She tells him she doesn't need it this weekend. He doesn't inquire further. The drive to the Campbell House seems to last forever. Fate relents when they do arrive. Erica isn't home. KJ rushes her preparations and runs out the door. Once she's on her way to Bill's, her emotions get the best of her. She pulls over for a few minutes to regain her composure.

Weems is still in his office when Mr. Andrews knocks on the doorframe and enters. He sits before Weems can invite him inside.

"I'm just finishing up, Ken," Weems says. The top two buttons on his shirt are unbuttoned. "Can it wait until Monday?"

"No, it can't," Andrews says. He doesn't wait for Weems to respond. "Someone opened the Campbell girl's locker. Whoever it was urinated all over her backpack."

Weems looks like he's concerned.

"Do you think she's hoaxing it?" Weems asks, "That happens all the time with troubled young girls."

Andrews looks at him. He wonders what kind of coward KJ has for a father. Why isn't he in here demanding justice for his daughter? Andrews wonders if she even has a father.

"I'd like to believe that she wouldn't do something like this," Weems says, "I hate to say it, Ken, but based on her track record she might."

Andrews' eyes narrow.

"Pull the goddamned security feed," he says, "For Christ's sakes, you watch everything in this place. Let's find out who's responsible."

"Ken," Weems says, "You know I cannot allow access to that."

"Are you complicit?" Andrews asks.

"What?" Weems says, "That's preposterous! How dare you make such an accusation?"

His bluster has all the force of a slapped poodle.

"How dare you accuse her of a hoax when you haven't seen the feed?" Andrews snaps back.

"OK, OK," Weems says, "Let's settle down, Ken. We're not adversaries here. Until we can sort this out, I'll have the Campbell girl store her belongings in my office."

"Someone has her combination," Andrews says, "The locker wasn't forced open."

"Go ahead and clean it," Weems says, "Then when it's resolved we'll change the combination. If you can, remember to tell her on Monday to put her stuff in here."

Andrews rises from his seat. It's the best he'll get from the coward and he knows it. He heads back to KJ's locker, hoping he'll someday learn the identity of this new tormentor.

After arriving at the Long Hall, KJ washes her face and hands but only changes her t-shirt. She'll take a full shower after they're done for the evening. Anna and John Bowen wait for her at the indoor range. From the moment she enters they can see that something isn't right. When Johnny hugs her he can tell that whatever happened is not minor. Anna can see it in KJ's motions. It's normal for KJ to be reticent and moody while she's in the Campbell House or at Uniontown High. Among her friends and especially in the company of Johnny Bowen, her melancholy is becoming rare. Today is one of the major exceptions. Other than the usual greetings and a forced smile, she barely utters a word. The turmoil does not affect her aim but the struggle to stay focused is brutal. Part of the way through target practice, Johnny comes over and stops KJ from reloading. He addresses Anna though he never takes his eyes off of his angel.

"Anna, KJ and I are going to practice self-defense," Johnny says, "Are you OK with that?"

"Yeah, sure," Anna says.

She knows her presence could be disruptive, even though she has good intentions and wishes to show her sympathy to KJ. Johnny is the one who must comfort her. Among relatives and family friends, Anna has seen female well-wishers impose themselves and inadvertently damage or retard the growing relationship between a man and a woman. Anna is wise beyond her years. She knows this is how things should be. KJ needs a man's strength, not the tears of a friend.

KJ does not resist Johnny's suggestion. She lays the pistol on the firing line counter and leaves with him. At the Long Hall, Johnny unlocks the door and holds it open for his lady. She touches his arm on the way through but does not make a sound as she heads for the room to the right. Johnny follows her. She wants to turn and look at him but she cannot. She did nothing wrong, yet she feels somehow to blame, as if she's let Johnny and the others down in some way she cannot place. She feels weak and useless. Then Johnny's hand touches her shoulder. With gentle force he turns her to face him.

"Can we fix this?" Johnny asks.

The ancient fire of the white man burns bright in his soul. He sees the woman he loves submerged in pain and sadness and he wishes to engage whoever dared to harm her. No sane man loses this glorious and terrifying flame, in spite of the best efforts of those who profit from the gulf between white men and women. For John Ashley Bowen it is more than a flame; it is an inferno.

KJ embraces him, her head in his chest.

"Just hold me," she whispers.

Her eyes are closed. His left hand caresses her head while the right arm encircles her lower back. She holds on to him so tight it's as if hell were trying to pull him from her arms.

"I'm sorry I let myself get like this," she says through her tears, "I shouldn't let them get to me."

"You can't stop it," Johnny says. He kisses her head and nuzzles her hair. "We're human. None of this is natural."

It's so nice and warm in his arms. Hell couldn't pull him away from her.

"Do you want to tell me about it? Hmm?" he says.

"Someone opened my fucking locker," she says, "and pissed on my backpack."

The inferno inside Johnny Bowen begins to rise. She needs him to control it. Loving her gives him the strength to control his fire.

"I'm sorry, KJ," he says, not for the deed but because he couldn't be there to destroy the perpetrator.

"They know I won't apologize," she says, "They're so fucking hateful and degrading. I wouldn't even think of doing something disgusting like that."

"I know, angel" he says.

"It's because I love my brothers and sisters," she says, "America is going to be just like South Africa someday. When we're powerless they'll kill us just for being white." Her grip on him gets even tighter. "I won't let someone hurt my children."

John Bowen wants to talk to Gene. He wants to ask him what kind of father lets others denigrate and abuse his daughter, regardless of the reasons. He wants to demand a good reason why a white girl who loves her race deserves to suffer belittlement and abuse. When Gene cannot give a good reason, which is a certainty, Johnny would like to knock out his teeth.

"When will you leave that place?" asks Johnny.

"When they can't use me to hurt you," KJ says.

He wants to tell her not to think about any difficulty he might face. Instead he kisses her head again. He feels her nuzzle his chest.

"I love you," she whispers.

"I love you too, angel," he says.

Her arms slide down his back and she steps backward. She looks into his eyes. He never averts his gaze, even though her blue eyes are full of defiance and sorrow and fiery, savage love. She does not avert her gaze, even though his stare is a union of fury and desire.

Tears wet her cheeks though she no longer shows pain in her expression.

Johnny steps forward and brushes the hair from her face.

"Get the gloves, angel," he says, "Be sure to stretch first, and then fuck 'em up."

A little smile comes to her face. In a short time she's pounding the heavy bag. When she's finished she walks over to her lovely Johnny. She looks down and smiles again. Then her eyes return to his. The smile disappears. There's not a sign of sadness or even a hint of consternation on her face. This is a different look.

John Ashley Bowen unfolds his arms and steps very close to KJ. He touches her hair and puts his hands on her cheeks.

This is no timid peck on closed lips; their first kiss is deep and passionate.

When the two lovers return to the range, Johnny's arm is around KJ. She shows none of the sadness that dominated her just an hour in the past. Johnny joins the two ladies when they resume practice. His shots are rapid and his aim is deadly-accurate. It's obvious to KJ that he's had a lifetime of practice. KJ watches his every motion. When she turns to resume shooting, KJ notices that Anna is watching her. Anna is trying to stifle laughter. She's not very successful, or, more likely, she's not trying very hard. KJ mouths a silent "fuck off". Anna makes a face and sticks out her tongue. The two fire off a few rounds until both must reload. As KJ fills a clip with bullets, Anna leans over and bumps KJ with her shoulder. After a few more cycles, while Anna reloads, KJ reaches over and tugs on her ponytail.

Once the final clips are empty and the earmuffs are in the cabinet, Anna puts her hand on KJ's shoulder. Closed-mouthed chuckles become laughter; in Anna's case quite loud. KJ closes her eyes. In contrast to her redheaded sister, KJ's body and breathing reveal her laughter much more than any audible sign.

"I'm glad I'm not Irish John," Johnny says.

Johnny's arm is again around KJ when they bid farewell to Anna for the night. Once Anna's Subaru is no longer in sight, KJ turns to Johnny with a smile. Instead of a "good-night" he tells her to wait by the hall. Johnny dashes off toward Bill's house, leaving KJ to wonder what he's after.

She gets an idea when a motor comes to life from behind the Donnelly home. She can see a second Jeep come down the driveway and enter the lane to the Long Hall. KJ waits while Johnny pulls up beside her. This Jeep, a CJ7 hardtop, is older than Johnny's. Someone has repainted it a medium-blue color. It is street-legal, though by the looks of the tires and the body it appears quite capable of heavy-duty off-road travel.

John Bowen climbs out and walks over to KJ. He hands her the keys. She looks at him before taking them.

"We put you on the insurance, but the title's in a safe name," Johnny says, "It doesn't matter whose name though, this baby's yours. I think it suits you a lot better than the Chevy pickup."

"You bought me a Jeep?" she says.

Her face shows her surprise.

"You know that commercial they used to show?" he says, "That Lexus commercial? If that nigger can buy his race-traitor whore a Lexus, I can buy my woman a Jeep."

She hugs him and gives him a big thank-you kiss. It's like many others she's given him, except this one is on the lips.

"How much do you spend on me?" she says, "You know you don't have to."

He does not respond to her question.

"It handles like a Jeep," Johnny says, "I'm glad you've driven mine a couple of times. It won't give you trouble, just be careful and watch the speed."

She smiles and says "OK".

"Do you think you can drive to Coalsack?" he says.

"Yeah," she says and then realizes the gravity of the question. "Why, sweetheart?" she asks.

"I can't come tomorrow," he says.

"Oh," she says and looks to the side for a moment. "I'll miss you."

She takes his hand.

"You too," he says. "Oh yeah, hold on."

Johnny jogs over to his Rubicon. She sees him working with something in the rear. Then he returns holding a backpack.

"Here, angel," Johnny says, giving her his backpack, "Don't touch the contaminated one. You don't need it anymore."

"Johnny, you don't have to..." she says, the bag now in her hands. She holds it as if it's an object of great value.

"Come on, angel," he says.

She touches the backpack to her cheek and then slings it over her shoulder.

"No one's going to fuck with this one," she says.

"Listen, sweetheart," he says, "If you find out who did this, tell me. As God is my witness, if some kike or nigger or goddamned traitor ever hurts you, so help me I'll kill the motherfucker. He'll beg for me to kill him. Or her; I don't give a fuck."

"Johnny, please," she says, "Don't talk like that!"

"Of course I will," he says "You're my woman."

"You can't risk your life doing something like that!" she says, "There are more important things than me!"

"No there aren't!" he says.

"Johnny..." she says. It's barely a whisper.

Johnny takes KJ by the shoulders before she can say another word. He looks deep into her eyes. The look of urgency and concern on her face fades away in the presence of his fiery green stare. He runs his hand through her copious mane. She moves close to him and puts her head on his chest. He smells her hair. Then he pulls her back to see her face. Their eyes meet again. After another long and sensual kiss, he brushes her cheek and flashes his little smile.

"You better get home," he says.

"Yeah," she says, "Will you pick me up on Sunday?"

"I sure will," he says.

He caresses her lower back before they separate.

John Bowen stands beside his Rubicon and watches KJ drive away. She doesn't pop the clutch or stall her new vehicle. The motions of the blue Jeep are fluid. If he had forced the issue, there is a very good chance that John Ashley Bowen could have taken her tonight. By practicing discipline and decency, he resists the temptation. It is not self-denial; it is respect. It is not weakness; it is strength. Knowing that he can wait until it is right to take her will make him even stronger. If she cannot be his, at least he will not destroy that which is not his to take. If she shall be his, the triumph of having all of her, body and soul, will be beyond beautiful for both of them. Then, the moment shall be right, and there will be no more hesitation.

Chapter XIII

Tide and Time

KJ rises earlier than usual on Saturday morning. The stars are still bright outside when she finishes breakfast and departs for Coalsack. Once she's safe inside the Jeep and the doors are locked, she plugs in her iPod Touch and turns on the *Zero Boys*. Johnny's backpack is on the passenger seat. KJ puts the Jeep in first gear and pulls out from under the pin oak. A little smile comes to her face. She's surer than ever of what she'll wear on their next date. It will drive Johnny Bowen wild.

Today is KJ's first time driving to Coalsack and she is cautious. She arrives a little after Anna, who comes running when KJ parks her Jeep.

"Fucking hell!" Anna says, "Is that yours?"

Anna's red hair is in its usual copious ponytail. Excepting her black army boots, Anna's whole outfit is camouflage pattern.

"Johnny says it is," KJ says.

"You don't think so?" Anna asks.

"I didn't want him to spend..." KJ says.

"Bullshit!" Anna interrupts, "Let him enjoy giving it to you."

"Fuck!" KJ says, "I was too stupid to think of that!"

"No, you weren't stupid," Anna says, "You just worry too much about him spending money. You didn't bitch at him, did you?"

"No," KJ says, "God, no."

"Good," Anna says, "I'd have been surprised if you did. So how's it drive? It looks sick."

"Great, actually," KJ says. A little smile grows on her face as she admires her Jeep. "Johnny takes care of his woman."

"I'm sure that's not the half of it," Anna says.

KJ looks at her sister, who winks.

"C'mon," Anna says, "Let's go bother John."

Boyle has a little surprise for them. On a metal table near the flat shooting range sits a big, black rifle. Its angles and features are unfamil-

iar to KJ and the unusual weapon fascinates her. Anna's seen similar rifles in shooting magazines. Her eyes get wide.

"Fifty caliber!" Anna exclaims.

She rushes toward the weapon.

"You'll shoot it so many times you'll get sick of seeing it," Boyle says, "But for now, Miss Murphy, get yourself back to where KJ is standing."

KJ hears them but her attention is fixed on the rifle. It sits there, angled upward on its bipod.

"This is a Barrett Model 99," Boyle says, "You'll learn to operate the weapon, but it will not be your primary rifle. This one's for special occasions. If either or both of you fail to adapt to this beast, it will not be the end of your training. Both of you have progressed well enough to continue, regardless of your aptitude with the fifty. We will find out who can add this rifle to her list of toys."

He moves aside to allow the ladies to inspect the Barrett rifle. Anna lifts the rifle and looks through its scope. KJ does the same.

"Put on your ear muffs," Boyle says.

He loads one of the huge bullets into the .50 caliber and gets into position on the range. The blast echoes through the Clay County hills. Using binoculars, Anna and KJ can see his strike: a bull's-eye at 400 yards, the furthest target at the range.

"I sighted her myself," Boyle says, "So if it's off, it's you, not the rifle." He looks at KJ. "You're first, Roisin."

KJ is cautious with her preparations. She's concerned that the weapon will jump and the scope will strike her head. She puts on one of the pairs of safety glasses from the shooting bench and slides her muffs back over her ears. She is very careful to properly seat the powerful weapon. Once her eyes are on the target, her trepidation dissipates. She breathes as she was taught, which is now second nature to her. KJ squeezes the trigger in the manner taught by Bowen and Boyle. The gun fires its round and the bullet finds the intended mark.

"Good," Boyle says, "Your turn now, Anna."

Both Anna and KJ translate their abilities to the new weapon. This time, however, KJ betters Anna. The difference between the two is miniscule; at the 400 yard range they are both deadly accurate. As they shoot, Boyle contemplates how he might increase the range. One option is ridge-to-ridge shooting, which will require that he or John Bowen perform a wide sweep before the ladies begin their practice.

The sun has just risen on Sunday the 19th when KJ drives on to Old Braddock Road. Today she's first at the turn-off to the Donnelly Home-

stead. She exits the blue Jeep in order to admire her vehicle in the light of dawn. The color of the Jeep is a basic blue, neither light nor dark. It is obvious that someone's repainted the vehicle, which looks rugged and a little primitive. KJ adores it.

KJ hears an approaching motor and turns to see Johnny Bowen making his way toward the turn-off. She looks down and smiles. He sees her there, wearing her camo pants and black tee, a black toboggan on her head and the ubiquitous gloves on her hands. She's wearing one of the pairs of lace-up assault boots that he bought for her in the past few weeks. Johnny watches as she approaches. Even in her looser-than-usual garments, he can see enough of her body to enjoy its spectacular beauty.

"Hi, Johnny," KJ says through his open window.

KJ bends down and gives him a kiss. It's closed-mouth unlike the ones on Friday, but it's on his lips. Their lips and mouths will feel more kisses from now on, at the expense of their cheeks.

The two share a breakfast before leaving for Coalsack. KJ did not eat, so that she might enjoy the meal with her lover. They sit inside her Jeep during the course of the meal and watch the amber altocumulus sheep that graze lazily on the blue sky. For now, it's nowhere near bright enough for KJ to don sunglasses or exchange her toboggan for her old Seattle Seahawks cap.

On the way to Coalsack, they listen to *Anorexia Nervosa*, among others. KJ realizes that the stereo system in the Rubicon is the same as that in her blue Jeep. She looks at her man. She won't ask him how much he's already spent. Instead she rubs his leg.

The route to Coalsack has become a vibrant green. As usual, spring tiptoes in with buds and fuzzy looking trees, and then in a flash the entire world is awake and alive. The price will make itself felt today. Though the morning is brisk enough for KJ's toboggan, the afternoon thermometer will reach 85 F with very high humidity. Neither Johnny nor KJ, or Anna for that matter, feels comfortable above the mid-70's, though the ladies prefer it to be even cooler.

After he drives on to the rugged Jeep trail to Coalsack, Johnny turns off his iPod.

"I told you to tell me if anyone gives you any trouble," he says, "They ruined your shit, and God knows, I'd fuck them up for that. But we'll leave it be if you want. I can show restraint. One thing, though, and I'm fucking serious, angel. If anyone ever – ever – lays a finger on you, tell me who it was. I demand that you do that."

"OK, Johnny," she says.

Before KJ exits the Rubicon, she kisses her man and looks into his eyes. She smiles and he touches her head. Anna arrives as Bowen leaves. He pulls over into the woods to let her pass.

Last night, Johnny Bowen prepared supper for KJ and himself. It's in the refrigerator at Deer Park, though he will not go there until he's ready to return to Coalsack. Today he has business at the Long Hall. When Johnny arrives, Cristian O'Toole is waiting outside. Johnny shakes his hand and the two begin walking toward the field.

"Did Boyle check it out?" Bowen asks as soon as the two old friends enter the woods.

"Yeah, on Friday," Cristi says.

"What's he think?" Johnny asks.

"It's good killing ground," Cristi says.

A low flame burns in Cristi's chestnut eyes. His demeanor would be frightening to most, since it is unemotional when he says the words "killing ground." His face remains pallid.

Johnny nods as he looks across the field. Pink Dame's Rocket is in full bloom.

"Tell me, Ash," Cristi says, "Why Strader?"

"Aren't you sold on it?" Johnny says, his piercing green eyes now fixed on Cristi.

"Yes," Cristi says, "I'm all about the reason, I agree with that. But why this dick?"

"He's an easy target," Bowen says, "There were a few more repulsive owners, but any of those would require a more complex operation. This one's KISS."

Cristi removes a printed map from his shirt pocket.

"I'll be here," he says.

There is a very small mark at Cristi's proposed location. He does not point.

"Did you get a good look?" Johnny asks.

"Yes," Cristi says, "I walked up there just like Boyle."

"Excellent," Johnny says, "I appreciate it."

"I'll be waiting on you," Cristi says, "If there's trouble or if Boyle can't get out, whoever is left will exfiltrate. There's a map in my Jeep. I'll give you a copy when we're back at the hall. It's the same as the one I gave to Boyle."

"Good," Johnny says.

He puts his hand on Cristi's shoulder.

"When do we meet?" Cristi asks.

"You and I will meet here at 4AM," Johnny says, "We'll pick up Boyle in Clay County."

"OK," Cristi says.

"Listen," Bowen says, "If your cell rings and you see it's me, leave immediately. No heroism, alright?"

"What do I tell KJ?" Cristi asks.

"I'll handle that," Johnny says, "But tell Anna I was right. Not all of us will walk away from this."

Once they return, Cristi gives Bowen the map, which includes other pertinent information. After a handshake Cristi departs. Bowen enters the Long Hall. On the table, covered by cloth, is a Remington .30-06 with a Leopold scope. It is neither Anna's nor KJ's, since this one has a wooden stock rather than a gray McMillan. He wraps the cloth around the rifle and heads for his Jeep.

When Johnny returns to Coalsack, KJ and Anna are sitting under the wide roof of the porch. Boyle is nowhere to be seen. Johnny watches them embrace and say a few parting words before KJ trots over to the Rubicon. She opens the door and tosses her bag on the floor. Then she looks inside, her hands on the doorframe. It's far too hot for a toboggan. Her hair is free to surround her.

"Hi, Johnny," KJ says before hopping into the passenger seat.

"Hello, angel," he says.

There's an old side road not far from the town of Clay that cuts deep into the forest before coming to a dead-end a half-mile to nowhere. The trees around the abandoned road will obscure a parked vehicle if the driver continues all the way to the road's end. This Johnny Bowen does, so that the lovers can have supper in complete privacy. Nothing, not even an inquisitive crow or irate red squirrel interrupts their solitude.

On the drive home, Bowen asks KJ about Seattle and her thoughts on their camping trip, as well as the song she wrote. She, in turn, asks him about high school and his hunting trip to Maine, his last vacation before going to Iraq. They joke and laugh and listen to music. He searches the iPod for a certain song he wants her to hear. It's evening when they arrive at the Long Hall. Johnny waits for his angel to exit before he removes an envelope from the glove box.

KJ turns toward him when he comes around the front of his Jeep. She hugs him and nuzzles his chest, a custom they both adore. Johnny sits the envelope on the blue Jeep's hood and then he pulls her close to him. The kiss they share is just as passionate as the first, though this one lasts longer than any of the others. KJ reciprocates the passion. Her

hands roam over his cheeks and through his short hair. Again she tells him that she loves him. Again he replies in kind.

Johnny reaches over for the envelope.

"KJ," he says, "If something ever happens to me..."

"Johnny, don't," KJ says, her face showing her sudden perturbation.

Johnny stops her from speaking by putting his finger to her lips.

"Shh...Just listen," he says, "If something ever happens to me, there's a place you can go and no one will fuck with you. You can stay there. There's enough money for food, and gas and other shit to last 'til January or February if you're careful about spending it. Listen, angel, in that envelope there's a key and directions from Google maps. I've also written down how to get to the exact place, and some other information I think you'll need to know. Angel, it'll be your place until you can move on."

KJ feels an urge to weep. She embraces him and nuzzles his chest, and then she pulls him down and gives him his due in kisses.

"You do so much for me," she whispers.

"I love you, angel," he says, "I won't leave you with nothing."

"I love you so much," she says, "No one ever cared for me like this. My relatives call me white trash, but you respect me." She looks into his eyes and touches his cheek. "You love me."

His eyes stare deep into hers.

"Leave that world behind," he says.

"When they can't use me to hurt you," she says, "Then I'll fucking run to you."

He doesn't pull her to him this time. He steps closer to her and they kiss. Then he touches her face and turns away, walking to his Jeep without another word. KJ smiles for no more than a second and waves goodbye.

Inside the blue Jeep, KJ turns on her iPod. "The River Runs Frozen" begins to play.

Monday is another school day and KJ Campbell is certain to be in attendance. An hour and a half before his lover awakens from a deep sleep, John Ashley Bowen departs from the Long Hall with Cristian O'Toole. Bowen does not wear an outlandish costume, nor did he paint his face. His shirt is brown and his pants are olive. Cristi wears jeans and a dark green tee. They do not exchange many words as *Def Leppard's* "Go" begins to play on Cristi's iPod. In the back seat a long object lies beneath a pair of green sheets.

The black Toyota Land Cruiser makes its way south. O'Toole bought it several years ago from an old man in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. It is not

his usual vehicle. When they reach the Coalsack turn-off, Bowen notices Boyle's pickup tucked away among the trees. Cristi parks, but before he can shut off the motor, John Boyle appears. He's wearing jeans and a dark shirt like Cristi, and carries what appears to be a large musical instrument case. Inside is no saxophone or keyboard; inside the case is Boyle's Armalite AR-10A4. Its twenty-round magazine is loaded with high quality .308 ammunition. There is an extra loaded clip that Boyle carries in his shoulder bag. He hopes not to fire a single round. He'll fire all of them if necessary.

At a little after nine in the morning, Cristi passes the narrow mountain road that winds up to and then away from Bowen's chosen hiding spot. He slows down just past the thickest forest, near an abandoned lot.

"Three hours or abort," Cristi says.

He does not need to remind them.

Bowen and Boyle slip out of the Land Cruiser. Each holds his respective weapon, wrapped in a dark sheet. Cristi drives off as the two Johns cross a brush-choked lot and disappear into the forest.

Boyle begins to shadow John Bowen. A while later, Bowen stops and Boyle forges ahead. Bowen hears four calls from Boyle's bird call whistle. The forest is clear.

Mark David Strader rolls out of bed at 10 AM. He looks out the window at what is a beautiful spring day. The myriad cumulus clouds add an occasional shadow but there is no sign of impending rain. The humidity relents after last night's isolated thunderstorm. Strader calls his ex-wife to ask if the kids are at daycare or if he'll have to watch them. Her new boyfriend took care of it. Strader is free to attend to some business at his club.

Strader, a native of Parkersburg, West Virginia, may be losing some hair but he's still a burly and aggressive male. The odds that he could take Bowen in a fight are miniscule, but he might have more luck with John Boyle or Cristian O'Toole, should either enter into a physical confrontation with the strip club owner. None of them have the slightest desire to do so. Strader is muscular; especially his arms, which are nearly as large as Johnny's, and he has recently lost enough weight to be in decent physical shape. His features are not unattractive to the eye though his chosen line of work is repulsive. After a breakfast of cold pizza, Strader showers and gets ready for a day of work at the club. Before leaving his deluxe Charleston apartment, he puts on a pair of shorts and an untucked button-down shirt. He'll be less casual tonight when the club caters to a private event. Right now, he has to make sure the preparations are complete.

The eldest of Strader's children is female. She is four years of age. He would never dream of employing her once she's eighteen. He doesn't have to; thanks to him and males and females like him, from the owners to the strippers to the clientele, there are numerous other clubs that will be glad to hire her.

At noon on Monday, the 20th of May, a black Hummer pulls into the *Touch of Class* parking lot. The truck stops in the first space to the left of a giant flagpole. Strader does not exit at once. He retrieves his cell phone from his attaché case and in a huff tries to contact the caterer who should be present. Once he feels assured that the caterer and his crew are coming, Strader cracks the door. A light breeze flutters the huge American flag that flies above the club. Then it pauses. Up on the hill, a few sparrows chirp. Nothing is out of the ordinary on this quiet day in May. Strader exits his Hummer.

The natural impulse to abhor miscegenation was never potent in Mark David Strader, though he did not like seeing white women with non-whites. He suppressed his disgust when he opened his strip club. When black males request lap dances from white strippers, Strader sees only the color green, as do the girls. Because of their own self-destructive choices and the lure of money offered by owners like Strader, the strippers no longer feel any natural revulsion, or natural loyalties for that matter.

The forest smells fresh after a late night shower. John Ashley Bowen looks down the scope of his rifle at the emerging head of Mark David Strader. A half hour ago, Johnny thought of his target as a prick; a smut merchant who profits from broken men and women, and who tempts them to forfeit the spiritual nature of their sexuality. Now, as he looks through the scope, Johnny Bowen doesn't think of his target at all. The shot is all that matters. If Strader ducks back into his Hummer, Bowen will abort the mission. Strader does not return to his seat. He rises from the vehicle. Bowen takes careful aim. Strader looks up at the sky. For a moment he is motionless.

Gerry Fiorentino calls Garret on his work cell. Gerry tells him the bad news. It came down to a choice between his company and his family. Effective June 3rd, the Terradox brand name will cease to exist. HyCore Technologies made him an offer and, in light of Terradox's biggest client suddenly cancelling their contract, he had no choice but to sell. The news is worse for Garret. HyCore will bring in their own designers and programmers. Fiorentino offers to help Garret find another job. He asks Garret where he'd like to go. They both know he'd like to remain in west-

ern Pennsylvania. High-end programming jobs are very rare, and Garret is vastly overqualified for the ones that are available. Garret expresses his sympathies and tells his old boss that he does not blame him for selling. Then he answer's Fiorentino's question: The Pacific Northwest. Gerry promises to do all that he can, apologizes once more and closes the call. Garret, who is working today from 3-11 PM, climbs into his Jeep. He departs from his Washington apartment to the sound of Vera Lynn's "I Will Wait for You."

John Boyle makes an arc around Bowen's position. He keeps his eyes and ears sharp and his rifle at the ready. When he comes to a break in the canopy, he stands to each side and scans the blue skies for any sign of a helicopter. There is nothing thus far.

The clouds above Mark David Strader are assuming various shapes, as fair-weather clouds often do. One of them looks a little like a white horse, with a puff of dying cumulus around its head like a curious little halo.

It had been a golden age for club owners like Mark David Strader. Those who profited from the belittlement and destruction of love between white men and white women, from strip club owners to porn merchants to the feminists who supported their assault on chastity and virginity, each had their piece of the sleazy but lucrative pie. Each of these profiteers made far more filthy money than any working man or woman could ever hope to earn for their families. Other than those who dabbled in drugs and stepped on the wrong toes, no club owner had paid a physical price for choosing his line of work, and certainly none had suffered for their complicity in the self-denigration of young white women. None, that is, until Mark David Strader rose from his Hummer.

Strader never hears the report of John Bowen's .30-06. The 180-grain bullet strikes him near his left temple and traverses his skull and brain. Blood splatters the club's stucco wall, splashing a hornet that buzzes and rolls on the ground before flying away.

The silence of the forest does not last. Once the myriad life forms realize that they are not targets, they carry on as usual. At first Bowen does not move. He examines the scene around the strip club. Someone runs over to Strader's corpse. Two others run for dear life. They have no idea that they're not in danger. Now it's Bowen's turn to act. He begins to crawl back from his spot. When he is certain no eyes can see him, he rises to a crouch and begins to move away.

John Boyle approaches Johnny Bowen once the latter emerges into the heart of the woods. Bowen caught sight of Boyle just before revealing

himself. He made sure it was Boyle. The two make steady if cautions progress to the southwest. They edge around an ill-used dirt road and then cross a second abandoned highway. Boyle makes no effort to hide his semiautomatic rifle. At this stage, he'll shoot rather than make conversation.

The total distance to the pick-up point is about a half-mile. Not long after meeting with Boyle, Johnny Bowen turns on his hand-held radio and signals Cristi. Within two or three seconds, he turns it off and pulls the tape that holds the batteries in place. The two resume their movement south.

Cristian O'Toole is parked along one of the area's two-lane rural highways. He appears to be talking on a cell phone. He speaks Romanian, though most passers-by would not recognize the language. He hears Bowen's signal from his bag. Cristi then pockets the cell phone, which he leaves turned on.

In fifteen minutes, Bowen and Boyle arrive at the meeting point. Police will be combing the area in a very short time. It is a great relief when they see the Land Cruiser driving up to the place where the hillside road bifurcates. Bowen followed by Boyle, dashes around thick multiflora roses and enters the rear of the Toyota. Bowen sits to the right. His rifle, wrapped in the green sheet, is now on the floor. Boyle, who sits beside Bowen, leans over his uncovered Armalite. They have no doubt that a police helicopter is on the way.

The three men do not breathe any easier until they come to a paved highway some distance from the hillside. Even then, there is still tension and uncertainty. Boyle wraps his gun and lays it on the floor. All three are armed with automatic pistols. Cristi follows the directions he's memorized until he comes to Highway 214. Nearby is the four-lane US 119. Instead of merging, Cristi crosses under Highway 119 and drives along a parallel road until he finds another place to merge. The slight detour gives him the chance to see if they're being followed and to make a route adjustment – or to bail – should the enemy begin pursuing his black Toyota. There is no sign of pursuit, however, and Cristi merges onto the larger highway. As he enters US 119 from the east, Cristi can see two police cars roaring down the opposite lane.

John Boyle is lying on the floor in an uncomfortable but obscured position. Johnny Bowen lies across the seat. He's covered with one of the green sheets, and if someone just happens to see him they'll think he's sleeping. Another sheet covers Boyle on the floor. It will be a long and agonizing ride for the both of them.

The return trip is an opportunity for Cristian O'Toole to demonstrate his driving and navigation abilities. He changes highways, even heading away from their destination on occasion. The general trend is northeast.

Instead of leaving Boyle at the entrance of Coalsack, O'Toole will continue on State Highway 16. They will not compromise the Coalsack site, even if it costs them their lives. Boyle will have to hoof it into camp. Not until they near his point of departure does anyone discuss the mission.

"Mark Strader was a white man with white children," John Bowen says, "I hope he can find some forgiveness."

These are the only words that anyone says on the matter.

John Bowen will spend the night at Deer Park. Cristi will store his Land Cruiser at his uncle's place in rural Garret County, Maryland. He won't drive it again until Ford and Kelly repaint it. Back at his uncle's home, Cristian replaces the WV license plates that he stole from a derelict with the authentic Maryland plates that are in his name.

John Boyle enjoys the hike through the deep forest toward the so-called "Coalsack Sportsmen's Club." When he finally arrives at the cabin, he stores his rifle and then takes a long shower in the outdoor stall. Supper will consist of preserved foods as usual, though he'll have some fresh perch from yesterday's fishing trip. Boyle considers rehydrating some of the morels that Garret gave to him. He elects to keep them for Sunday evening.

Strader's death is the lead story on every local television channel and newspaper, including their respective websites. The media attempts to fan the flames of fear by speculating that the sniper could be a serial killer. Most readers do not buy the line. Strader's flesh industry goes hand-in-hand with drugs and prostitution. He must have angered the wrong person. To the majority of the population, Strader was the only target. Deep down, a few of them feel that he deserved it.

KJ wakes on Tuesday morning before her alarm can sound. She tries to go back to sleep for the remaining half hour, but cannot. She gathers her clothes and heads for the bathroom. For some reason, Erica turned off the air conditioning before going to bed, and the house warmed to an uncomfortable temperature. Wearing only a white sleeveless t-shirt and a black thong, KJ still had a restless and sweaty night. In the bathroom, she looks into the mirror and yawns. Gradually she comes to life. She flexes her arms and checks out her body, admiring the results of years of vigilance and exercise. She takes off her top and grabs a hand mirror. With its help she examines her nearly-completed wings. She can't

help but smile. Paddy wasn't joking when he said they'd be amazing. She has an urge to show the tat to John Bowen, with her body dressed exactly as it is right now. She exhales, long and deep. That dream will have to wait.

After a long shower, KJ dresses in jeans and another tee, leaving the thong and white shirt in the hamper. She's surprised to see Gene already drinking coffee in the kitchen. KJ lays her new backpack on one of the chairs and sets about making her breakfast.

"Where'd you get that?" Gene asks.

"I've used it at work," she says, "Bill said that I can use it at school if I want. I think it looks pretty cool."

Gene returns to his newspaper. They won't share another word today.

Today is warm enough for KJ to leave her jackets and hoodies at the Campbell House. When she enters Uniontown High, she does not stop or even look at her locker. She couldn't care less if her belongings are still there and will never touch them again. KJ keeps the backpack that Bowen gave her on her person. She'll never allow them to despoil it. Inside are her lunch, two thin spiral notebooks, a calculator and her calculus book. All of those things are disposable.

At the start of lunch, Mr. Andrews sees KJ walking to the cafeteria.

"For what it's worth," he says, "Weems said that you can put your things in his office until he figures out who opened your locker."

"Yeah," she says, "I'm sure he's all over it. Thanks anyway, Mr. Andrews, but I've been thinking. You better quit talking to me. They'll fire you for being racist."

KJ turns and walks away. Andrews thinks about the life she'll have, and the world that her parents and their generation have created for her, and he feels a terrible pain in his soul.

The iPod Shuffle used to make class a little more tolerable. The ear buds made it easy for KJ to listen unnoticed; although her hair is so thick she could have worn standard phones with the bar turned horizontal rather than across the top of her head. Now the Shuffle is gone. Her iPod Touch is too large and she wouldn't risk it, anyway. Daydreams are her only refuge. As powerful as her imagination is, they cannot always take her away from the lies of the professors.

Today in Dagostino's European History class the lies are particularly egregious. Dagostino mentions the flagging white population of Europe, and the need for labor, which he says must come from Turkey and Africa, of course. He neglects to mention that not one of those non-white coun-

tries is an industrial or information giant. He never cites Europe's open-borders policies and generous welfare benefits as the reasons why many cities are clogged with violent and uncivilized non-white immigrants, or the fact that white men and women can no longer visit certain neighborhoods for fear of being raped or murdered. He never mentions that by flooding the labor pool with non-white immigrants, governments and their allies in the corporate world have driven down wages and forced white men and women to work long hours, thereby driving the white birthrate even lower. Dagostino does mention racism; to him, the rise of anti-immigration and nationalist parties in Europe, in particular the Front National of France, is a sign of intolerance and bigotry. When he says those words, he looks at KJ. She's looking out the window. He seizes the opportunity to belittle her.

"Miss Campbell," Dagostino says, "Tell me, what did I just say?"

She looks at him without any hint of emotion on her face.

"You support genocide," KJ says.

"Interesting words coming from a person with your worldview," he says.

"Which is?" she asks.

"White makes right," he says, "Or am I wrong?"

"You usually are," she says.

"So by supporting human rights and dignity for immigrants," he says, "I support genocide. Hmm...I see. Hitler was anti-racist! Is that right, Miss Campbell?"

His words are meant to evoke laughter. A couple of self-professed antifas do laugh, but the majority of students just want to get on with the school day.

"In your case, yes," KJ says, "You believe in a final solution, just like Hitler. But yours is the final solution to the white problem. Flood white nations and only white nations with non-whites, force assimilation and silence dissent. You ban freedom of association and freedom of speech for white people, and you destroy white men for daring to stand up for their race. At the same time, you encourage black solidarity and Latino nationalism. Good plan, Hitler. You'll be happy to know it's working."

"I bet you have a lot of friends," he says. He wants to call her a bitch. He's never come so close before. He settles for being cruel. "You know, the prom's coming up, maybe the Republican Party could provide a little Eichmann to be your date."

His brazen hatefulness is not a sign of courage. Dagostino knows that no one at Uniontown High will protect a racist white girl. Her own father proved that.

"I doubt it," KJ says, "They're too busy trying to impress anti-whites like you."

Petite brunette Belinda Catherman has also worked hard to maintain an attractive body. Unlike KJ, her face lacks stunning beauty and uniqueness. Most boys at Uniontown High will stare at her body. None dwell on her yearbook photo. When KJ was part of the herd, Catherman rarely spoke to her out of jealousy. Now she dislikes KJ because it's become popular to do so. KJ is racist, according to the consensus, and that's the worst thing a white person can be.

"Aren't you tired of being called racist?" Belinda Catherman says. Dagostino is pleasantly surprised that Catherman has spoken out against KJ. "Where are you going to work? I mean, no one wants to hire a racist."

"Don't you get tired of obeying the rules?" KJ asks, "Any white person who opposes the extinction of his race is called racist, even if he's not a hater. If Hitler's plan is successful," KJ says, motioning with her head toward Dagostino, "Where are your children going to live? Will they even be allowed to live?"

"I think we've had enough hate speech for one day," Dagostino says, "Thank you, Miss Campbell. It's always a pleasure."

Dagostino continues his lecture for at least five more minutes. Racism, which means the white race, is responsible for dead Jews and dead blacks and virtually every evil known to man, and probably some as yet undiscovered. KJ looks out the window. The clouds on the horizon are heavy and foreboding. It will storm tonight. She fancies watching the light show as she lies in bed. She can imagine strong arms around her body as the thunder murmurs and groans.

Like a day off from a menial and soul-rending job, KJ's time with Johnny Bowen at the Long Hall races by, and she finds herself back at school the next morning. Today she stores her salad, sandwich and juice in Weems' office. She tells him she's leaving it there.

"Make sure it doesn't leak," he says.

She does the wise thing and leaves without responding.

There's a flier posted on a board near KJ's physics class. She notices it on the way to the classroom. It must be an advertisement for some musical event; several bands make the list, including *Icarus Feather*. She enjoyed them at Diamond. After class, KJ steps over to the board to find out the date and place of the concert. The advertisement is posted between the ubiquitous rape awareness poster that shows only white people, and an announcement for this year's prom. The concert is on the evening of Friday, June 8th. She may have a little extra time if she's

lucky. Maybe Johnny and Anna, and even Garret could go with her. Perhaps it could be a double date...

Those who might wish to harm KJ have no trouble identifying her at a glance. In order to help protect herself, she tries to associate faces with names and names with dangerous reputations. Even though she's interested in the flier, KJ is cautious and looks over each shoulder at prudent intervals. She stops looking at the board when one notorious individual appears in the crowd. He veers off his straight path and heads in her direction. His face is one that ranks very high on the dangerous list.

Many blacks do not like Markael Yates. If he were to harm KJ, they'd still cover for him. She's a white racist, which to them is far worse than being a violent sociopath. Besides, he's a brother. Yates' friends have differing motivations for associating with a miscreant hell-bent on a life of aggression and depredation, and quite probably an early death. Some see him as a rising star and a ticket to respect and easy pussy; others have fallen into his circle and fear him far too much to walk or even run away. One of the former is the thuggish Trevon Chaney. The two have been friends since Yates moved to Uniontown with his grandmother. Their association continued even after Yates quit the football team.

KJ turns toward Yates. She takes a step to his right. This opens an avenue of escape. He notices and stops his approach. She looks right into his dark eyes. He is hate personified. Rumor has it that when he and his family lived in the Hill District of Pittsburgh he was involved in numerous violent altercations. KJ has no doubt that he'd hurt her. He might do worse. His arms are big as is his body in general. He's not as strong as Chaney, though he more than makes up for it with ferocity.

"That rape shit don't apply to you, bitch," Yates says, "From now on you better keep your whore mouth shut. Know what I'm sayin'?"

KJ does not avert her gaze. If Yates takes another step, she'll flee. She hates the feeling, but she can't take this beast in a physical confrontation. To try would mean injury or death, or even worse.

"You hear me, white bitch?" he says.

KJ's mouth remains closed.

"You've been told," he says.

Yates turns to leave. Until he turns the corner, he'll glance back over his shoulder.

One of the female juniors stands to the left of the message board. She's a little too skinny to be attractive, but has long, lovely auburn hair.

"Did you hear what he said to me?" KJ asks her.

"That's between you and him," the girl says, "Leave me out of it."

Tonight, KJ embraces Johnny Bowen and squeezes him extra hard. They share a quick kiss when Anna's back is turned. Although they don't think so, she knows what they did. KJ's arm is around Anna as the two young women walk to the parking lot. As soon as the redhead begins driving away, Johnny and KJ share a proper kiss.

That night KJ lies awake in bed. The lightning flashes outside. It's a splendid sight. The only thing missing is Johnny Bowen's embrace. KJ feels depressed. If Erica would let her leave, and if Johnny can figure out a way that they can be together forever, she'd be in those arms right now. Sometimes he seems so far away.

There is no meeting scheduled at the Long Hall on this Thursday evening, and with good reason: Bill and Austin Kelly will be doing some work inside the hall. Regardless, Anna Murphy is excited when the school day comes to an end. There's no school tomorrow, which makes for a three day weekend. Since this week represents the best opportunity for the school prom the organizers have chosen tonight for the big event. Anna's green dress awaits her at home. Sarah Neely completed the desired alterations before leaving for her new life, and Anna already knows how it looks on her. Tonight should be a fun distraction for the beautiful young redhead. Life has become uncertain. She does not know who might be next to leave forever; perhaps Johnny, perhaps Garret. She may have to leave her home and her dear father. Tonight will be a nice break in the accelerating chain of events.

Elijah McClure is still a very decent young fellow. He's always been handsome and athletic and has become even more so, though he's not particularly muscular. His bright hazel eyes have a spark of inquisitiveness and adventure. Like Garret, he has never sworn in Anna's presence; unlike Garret, Elijah is not racially aware, at least not to the best of Anna's knowledge. When he asked Anna to accompany him to the prom, she accepted without equivocation. They both know it's not a date or a romantic fling.

KJ also has Friday off. That afternoon she practices unarmed self-defense. She remains focused, though there are opportunities for small talk and touching while Johnny instructs her and she translates his words into action. Uniontown High is also having their prom tonight. The numerous boys who would have asked KJ to go with them all found some reason to refrain. Some would have loved the opportunity to get close to her body. Most would have loved to accidentally put their hands on her ass. They didn't have a chance, whether or not they asked. They've had opportunities to pass the test that differentiates fools from strong white men. A

few of them are too timid. These eliminate themselves by their lack of courage. Some, like Kowalski, were thinking about asking her, but they've heard about the urine incident. They'll be graduating soon. None of them will jeopardize their establishment-approved futures to help a doomed white girl feel a little less alone.

Thanks to Johnny Bowen, KJ knows that she is not alone. Still, there are barriers that keep him away, and it would have been nice to attend the event in the manner of Anna Murphy. KJ would have worn a gorgeous dress that would have stunned the students at Uniontown High. Later that evening, she'd have returned not to the Campbell House but to the Long Hall, and left on her dress. That way Johnny could have seen it, and he could have made her feel like the most beautiful woman in the world.

Bowen halts KJ an hour before their usual end-time. It's enough for tonight. She has to go to Pittsburgh tomorrow and she'll be out all night. They had better not push it with Erica; not until KJ can leave her uncaring parents behind. KJ hits the shower and changes into jeans and a sleeveless white t-shirt.

Anna takes the floor with Elijah. One of the alterations to her dress is the addition of longer sleeves. The school runs this event and although everyone seems to know she has a tattoo, if she displays it they'll force her to leave. The dress is, however, splendid. It reveals her figure without displaying too much skin or the cleavage so many prom dresses now emphasize. In Anna's case, most contemporary dresses would show far too much cleavage. Elijah is quite skilled at dancing – more so than Anna, who is no clod – and the two share laughs and tales in addition to several lovely turns on the floor. Anna doesn't care for the sappy songs or the homogenized pop tunes, but it matters naught. There's a simple sweetness in this old white tradition and a great deal of joy in the night's harmless levity. Anna's very glad to experience it.

KJ dries her hair with a towel and brushes its multitudinous long strands. She emerges from her little corner of the hall eager to share a meal with John Ashley Bowen. When she enters the entrance room, Johnny is standing beside the utilitarian little table. Supper is there, under metal covers. A lit candle sits beside the two plates. KJ smiles at him and he pulls out her chair. They share the beautiful little meal, which, together with an intimate hug and kiss goodnight, would be enough for her. He's not finished, though.

"I saw Gary the other day," Johnny says, "I guess tonight's prom night for Laurel Highlands. You know, mine kinda sucked. It'd be nice to have another shot at it, but they'd arrest me if I tried to go back in again."

KJ smiles and laughs a little.

"I brought a MiniMove and some music," Johnny says, "You know, I was hoping you'd help me fix that old memory."

KJ exhales hard through her nose.

"You know it's prom night at Uniontown High, don't you?" she says.

"Yeah," he says, "Just go with it, angel."

She looks down. All her life she told herself that events like the prom don't matter. And as isolated events, they don't, but as part of a life story they are a beautiful background. She looks up when he touches her gloved hand. Johnny rises from his seat and retrieves the speakers and iPod from his bag in the corner of the room. He puts them on the table and chooses "Thirty-three" from *The Smashing Pumpkins*. He steps over to KJ, who is still seated, and extends his hand.

"Don't send me back to my seat," he says.

KJ looks deep into his eyes and takes his hand.

"I wish I'd worn a dress," she says as they begin a slow dance.

"You couldn't be more beautiful," he says, "No one could."

Anna does not drive home from Laurel Highlands High. She calls her father.

"It was beautiful, dad," she says, "I'll tell you all about it later. Dad, I'd like to show my dress to Garret. Would you object to that?"

"Garret's a decent man," Gary says, "and a father couldn't be more proud of his daughter than I am of you. Don't do anything to ruin it, OK?"

"I won't," she says, "Thanks, dad."

Anna closes the call and then phones Garret.

"Hi, Garret," Anna says, "Hey, I got something to show you. Do you have time for me?"

She smiles when he gives the predictable answer. Although Anna's off tomorrow, she doesn't want to stay out too late. That would be disrespectful to her father. Garret has to be at work tomorrow morning, but he understands that she doesn't have much time before she has to return home, so he cuts his relaxation time and hurries to see her.

The two meet in the parking lot of a family-run pizzeria on the outskirts of Connellsville. Several couples from Connellsville High dine at the restaurant, and most of the guys check out the stunning redhead in the green dress who came from God knows where.

"What do you think?" she asks.

"You made Sarah's job a lot easier," he says, "Still, it's an amazing dress. I'd imagine the young men couldn't keep their eyes off of you."

"I don't know," she says, "I have a reputation as a tough girl."

"It's deserved," he says, "But only a blind man couldn't see the complete you."

He's closer to her now. Garret touches her cheek and her ponytail, which hangs over her left shoulder. In the soft light of the parking lot, her pale skin is luminescent.

"So you like it then?" she asks.

"You're the most beautiful thing I've ever seen, Anna," he says, "The dress is perfect."

Anna is the opposite of KJ when it comes to feeling bashful. Garret's sweet words do make her feel a little, though.

Garret runs his hand over her head and he looks into her pale blue eyes. The sight of such a girl has become exceedingly rare. Red hair and blue eyes may become a memory, and then a myth. He takes her into his arms and kisses her on the mouth. Though their lips are closed, it is the first time their lips have touched. He does so once more before letting go. She opens her eyes and looks deep into his. With his index finger he traces the little line that runs down her chin.

"I'll see you tomorrow," he says.

Anna smiles. The pain of not knowing whether their relationship can come to fruition is never far away, but tonight Anna feels it much less. It's been a beautiful day.

On Friday morning, KJ wakes later than usual. Again, Erica turned off the air conditioning and again KJ suffered for it. After a long shower and a decent breakfast, KJ returns to her room. There, she looks through her clothes. Some will remain; she'll take most of the others to the hall and give the remainder away. She shoves all the t-shirts that she bought to one side. There are too many of those to sort right now. She separates her jeans and dress pants, realizing how few formal pants she has, and it stings her a little. She doesn't want to be a man, and she doesn't want to deny Johnny her most feminine side. To the right are numerous pairs of leggings and she looks at two of them in particular: the shiny black one that Aunt Chloe bought for her, which are very tight, and the dark snake-skin-pattern leggings that KJ bought back in November when she realized that Erica hates to see her wearing such apparel. KJ sets the shiny black pair among the clothes on her bed. That pile is destined for the Long Hall. The snake pattern pair will remain at the Campbell House. They're just as tight and Erica will be just as jealous and angry when KJ wears them. She'll take all but two or three of the other pairs to the hall.

Eventually KJ works her way to the clothes that Erica and Gene bought for her. There's the Steelers t-shirt that she defaced with the big

black "X". The Campbell's had just moved to Pennsylvania. KJ, who at the time supported the Seahawks, was still sore over the poor officiating that cost her team the Super Bowl. Gene bought the Steelers shirt in order to show his support for his new superintendent's favorite team. KJ was supposed to wear it for the superintendent's first visit to the Campbell House. Gene could have shit when KJ walked in wearing the defaced tee, right in front of the super.

Two years later KJ no longer supported any NFL teams. She began to notice how they treated white athletes and how less-talented, violent and criminal non-whites always had chance after chance to win a roster spot. Though never a lover of the sport, she liked the Seahawks. When she saw the ugly truth of the NFL's de facto anti-white discrimination, she purged her wardrobe of all Seahawk paraphernalia, though she would keep the sea-green hat that her grandmother sent her a few years later, but only as a reminder of her old stomping ground. She also kept the Steeler, or rather ant-Steeler shirt. Now it sits on the pile to be given away. It's actually made of good fabric and that's what counts for a white child in need.

KJ would keep the lovely purple blouse that Erica bought for her last spring. It's getting tight on her arms and body, but it shows her shape now without being slutty, and she likes how it looks. It was the last gift they ever gave to her. For that reason she'll give it away. She sets it on the chair with the other clothing meant for the poor.

On Monday, KJ will buy a few replacements for some of the clothing on the chair. She'll ask Bill if he knows how she can be sure that poor or disaster-affected whites will receive the clothes. When she thinks about it, she adds a good pair of jeans to the pile. It's one of the brand-new pairs she bought a couple of weeks ago.

At the motocross course in Romney, West Virginia, Rian Donnelly suits up for practice. He's been racing for a year and a half, winning several minor events in the process. Tomorrow is a major race but he will not be in attendance. This exercise is for sharpening his skills, not stroking his ego. He's already razor-sharp. Since before he could legally drive, he has been proficient with two- and four- wheeled vehicles. There was a time his father thought it could be a very useful skill, should his son follow him into the CIRA. Bill thanks God for his foresight. This afternoon, Bill, Megan and Jesse will drop by to watch. Garret and Anna have promised to come. Johnny Bowen will make his way to Romney after he brings an empty tank trailer to Cumberland. He mentioned that KJ cannot come; she has an obligation to be in Pittsburgh. Still, there will be a rather large crowd for a

practice event. The more the merrier; spectators never affect Rian's concentration, whether he's on the course or behind the wheel.

KJ arrives early at the Long Hall. It's not so warm today, though the sun is unforgiving. KJ wears sunglasses to protect her blue eyes and stays well out of the sun's burning rays. Perhaps it's a trace of the cloudy northwest in her soul, or perhaps it's from her racial awakening, but she takes pride in her flawless porcelain skin. Pop culture calls it sickly; the man who matters calls it gorgeous. She opens the door and waits inside while she listens to *M.O.D* on her iPod.

Jimmy Ford also arrives early. He sees the blue Jeep and seconds later sees KJ emerging from the hall. When she enters his Ram Charger Jimmy inquires about the blue Jeep. KJ thanks him for taking her, and then answers his inquiries. Her appreciation and pleasure are evident in her responses. Ford doesn't tell her that the refurbishment and modification of the Jeep was a three-man job: Austin Kelly, John Bowen and himself. He doesn't tell her how much the project cost Johnny Bowen.

KJ keeps her shades on throughout the trip.

"It's easy to hate winter until the sun gets like this," she says, "Who am I kidding, I don't hate winter."

Jimmy laughs.

"I've heard Anna talk like that," he says, "You're not going to believe it, despite him being a driver, I've heard Johnny say that kind of thing, too."

KJ is quiet for a while. Jimmy breaks the silence.

"So this is it," he says. He recalls Paddy saying there would be one more session. "Anybody ask where you've been going?"

"No," she says, "I've kept it hidden. Not even Johnny's seen it, only Anna, and that was at the start when I asked her to show me how to take care of the new ink. Johnny's going to be the first to see the finished art."

"How's it look so far?" he asks.

"Better than I could have imagined," she says.

Tonight, as Paddy puts the finishing touches on her feathers, the angel's dream becomes reality. She finally has wings that are worthy of her.

KJ gives Paddy the rest of the payment. He shakes her hand before she departs but does not tell her that he's outdone himself this time. Paddy is not known for false modesty and has no reason to be humble. He is a tremendous tattoo artist, certainly the best in Pittsburgh and arguably one of the best alive. Still, the work he's done on her feathers surpassed even his fanatical expectations. It has thus far been his greatest artistic achievement.

It was another very long and tedious session, but the project is complete. A couple of week's healing and she'll be ready for the unveiling. Among the clothes she's stored at the hall is the string bikini she purchased for the event.

The humidity is growing by dawn on Saturday the 25th. It increases the discomfort of a day already destined to be far too hot. KJ adjusts breakfast accordingly and the result is refreshing rather than hearty. Johnny keeps the air in his Jeep from becoming uncomfortable, while the hard top and the sun shades keep the bright light out of the side windows. The long ride to Coalsack actually becomes fun for KJ, considering who she's with, the tunes on the speakers and the reality of being away from Erica and Gene. Bowen is relaxed and open. He asks when he'll get to see the tattoo. If it heals as fast as the rest has, it'll be soon, she promises.

The bliss comes to an abrupt end shortly after Johnny exits I-79 for Highway 16 toward Clay. He notices an approaching vehicle in the rear view mirror.

The color and row of flashing lights give it away: a West Virginia state police cruiser is coming up fast.

"Fuck," Johnny says.

The sequence of events snaps KJ out of a music-inspired daydream. Bowen stops the iPod. KJ notices the police cruiser. Her mind flashes to Erica. Did she report KJ missing? Kidnapped?

"Johnny," she says, "What can...?"

"Listen, KJ," he says as he watches the road, his speedometer and the cop, "If I tell you to bail, grab the gun out of the glove box and when I stop, get out and run. You hear me? Run. You can make your way north and call Bill.

"Johnny, what..." she says.

"Just listen," he says, "Just listen to me, angel."

She goes silent.

"If the police get to you," he says, "throw away the gun and give up. Tell them whatever you need to."

The cop car accelerates. Johnny pulls a little to the right and prepares to slow down. He does not stop. The cruiser comes up on his bumper and then swings around. The trooper doesn't look at Johnny. He passes the Rubicon and zooms away toward Clay. Bowen slows to let him go.

KJ's already opened the glove box, though the gun is still under a piece of cloth.

"Stay alert, angel," he says, "This may not be over."

When they reach the road to Coalsack, Bowen continues driving. He pulls over about a mile away, just past a few houses and the resumption of the deep forest.

"Keep the glove box open," Johnny says to her, and then looks into her face. "I'm sorry about getting you into this."

"No, Johnny," KJ says, "We were born into this."

"I'd give you a life so far away from this shit," he says while he looks into the mirror.

"We have to deal," she says, "I promised that I'm not going to run away from you, whatever you've done." She touches his hand. "Please, don't tell me. I know it was right. I won't run away from you, Johnny, not now and not ever."

KJ reaches into the glove box and removes the pistol from under the cloth. She holds it with her right hand and lays her bag on top of it.

"Other girls would say that they've been kidnapped," Johnny says, "It'd get you out of this if you told them that."

"I'm not the other girls," she says, "If you ever need an alibi, I'll tell them you were with me. If they try to hit you with statutory rape, I'll force them to examine me. They'll see I'm still a virgin. What the fuck would they do then?"

He checks the mirrors again, and then looks at her.

"I love you, Johnny," she says when their eyes meet, "I love my life in spite of the fear and the pain. That's what you've given me. I won't walk away from that and I won't let anyone take it away from me."

He cannot see it, but her grip on the gun is resolute.

Johnny starts the Jeep and returns to the trail that leads to Coalsack. The two arrive at the locked gate and he stops gain. He looks into her blue eyes.

"I love you too, angel," he says.

When the two enter the parking area at Coalsack, Anna and John Boyle are standing by the cabin. They're talking at the time and Anna pauses to wave to KJ and Johnny Bowen. KJ would love to feel Johnny's arms around her. The morning has been sobering. It's given her a glimpse of a hard life, but it is a life, not a living death.

KJ turns back toward the Rubicon to wish Johnny a good trip. Instead of leaving he exits the vehicle. He walks around the front of the Jeep and pulls her to him by her shoulders. Then he slides his hands up to her cheeks and kisses her, in spite of the audience. Afterward, she embraces him. From his chest she speaks to Anna and John Boyle.

"Yeah," she says, "We kiss."

They separate with a smile and Bowen touches her nose. He looks at Boyle.

"John," Johnny says.

"John," Boyle says and nods.

"Hi Anna," Johnny says.

Anna waves. When Bowen fires up the Jeep, KJ looks at Boyle.

"What are you staring at?" she asks him.

"Nothing," Boyle says.

He turns and walks to the range.

John Boyle doesn't check their rifles, though if he had he'd have found them loaded. His spot-checks once kept Anna and KJ vigilant. Due to the scares and sense of both urgency and foreboding, both women now load their rifles as a matter of habit. Once, after the day was done, KJ told Anna what she feels when the rifle is unloaded.

"It's almost like being naked and someone's watching," she said, "but you don't know who."

Today the two start with the .50 caliber rifle. Boyle is very pleased with the results, especially from the prodigy KJ. After some instruction he'll have them try some countersniper exercises like they did at Bill's. This time he'll participate. He knows that KJ will need practice. Today, however, he's most interested in testing Anna's capabilities.

While the ladies continue their training at Coalsack, 162 kilometers away near Amboy, West Virginia, Gary Murphy drives down a long unpaved driveway, through thick woods and into a small forest-encircled field. The driveway leads to a recently-completed house. Once he parks at the front entrance, Gary removes a key from his shirt pocket. It is one of four such keys in existence. Gary opens the door just wide enough to fit inside.

To those in the know, this is far more than a house: this is Procyon. Inside, Gary sits at a large table in the living room. He opens a copy of *The Devil Knows How to Ride* and begins to read. The person he waits for, Garret Fogarty, will be along presently.

Garret drove from the motocross track in Romney to Amboy, and parked his Wrangler in a secluded spur off of the rural route that leads to Procyon and, eventually, to Rowlesburg on the Cheat. In that forgotten spot, he changed into a rugged pair of pants and a long-sleeved hiker's shirt, and then he set off on foot. Later, Austin Kelly and Jimmy Ford came by and drove Garret's Jeep back to the Long Hall. While Anna Murphy slept in her bed, Garret spent the night in a small tent that he erected in a thick stand of maples. The forest that surrounds Procyon is vast, and

Garret was invisible to any passers-by for his entire mile-long hike to the vicinity of the safe house.

The woodland entrance to Procyon House is camouflaged. The attention to detail is fantastic. Without previous knowledge, only those with significant luck could discover the trapdoor. Such luck in this case would border on the supernatural. At present, only Garret Fogarty, Johnny Bowen, Gary Murphy and James Ford know its location.

Once Garret can see Procyon through the thick growth, he returns to the general area of the trapdoor and looks for the three signs that guide him toward its general location. Either of the three alone is meaningless and mundane. Together, in this exact combination, they tell him from where to begin his measurements. These he has memorized; there is no sign directly above or even very close to the trapdoor.

With great care, Garret Fogarty unlocks and opens the subterranean entrance to Procyon House. Only he, Johnny and Jimmy have keys to the trapdoor. He does not disturb the camouflage pattern or accessories, natural and man-made that hide the trapdoor itself. Garret turns on the flashlight from his backpack and climbs the first few steps into the tunnel. There, he closes the trapdoor and secures the inner lock.

The entrance steps are built so that a person of Garret's height – 6' or so – can walk down into the tunnel without having to bend or crawl. Garret descends and enters the long outer tunnel. There are two, actually; one for travel, and a second, smaller one to his left for ventilation. He shines his light about ten feet down the tunnel and finds the light switch. When he flips the switch, the lights wired along the tunnel roof begin to burn. He looks down the tunnel's length. For most of the tunnel to the secret entrance/exit, the width is enough for one large man to comfortably move to and fro. The tunnel is lit well enough for Garret to see where it widens so that two men can walk side-by-side. There, all parts of the tunnel are tiled. Jimmy Ford intends to tile the narrower tunnel as well, all the way to the secret entrance. Beyond the wider section are a wall and three doors.

Garret begins walking the length of the somewhat narrower tunnel. At the halfway mark, he sees a locker-style door on the left. Inside are two pump shotguns.

At the end of the wider tunnel section are the three aluminum flush doors. Garret goes through the one to the left. Inside is the entrance to the ventilation tunnel, which is big enough for a man to crawl and could serve as an emergency exit. It eventually merges with the main tunnel just below the secret entrance. There, the ventilation tunnel widens and be-

comes an open doorway so that a man could stand up and pull his body up on the stairway to the exit. At the room that is dedicated to ventilation are several fans and shafts to the upper world, where air can travel through several layers of mesh and then circulate through the shorter, wider tunnel and the longer one-person tunnel. There is a panel that can be attached to the shaft during winter's deep freeze, and a few heaters in storage that can be used to thwart the inevitable cooling of the subterranean passages. A kill switch on the wall can cut all power to the fans and even the tunnel lights if necessary.

Garret passes through a door at the far end of this room and enters another subterranean room. This one has an open doorway to the left and two closed ones to the right. The left doorway leads to the beginning of the ventilation tunnel, which includes a larger vertical shaft to the outside world. This one is protected by both mesh and bars, with the bars sporting spikes and razors that are aimed upward. As with the smaller air shafts, the large one is camouflaged at the surface, especially from the sky, and there are panels that can be bolted to the ceiling to close off the shaft. The entire ventilation tunnel is tiled with numerous drains in the floor. These drains lead to a pipe that runs north to a small creek. Should rain ever defeat the slanted outside air vents and enter down the air shafts, the drains should handle the flow and the tile, which features no wood or other easily-degraded substances, should dry out with a minimum of care.

Garret opens the furthest right-hand door and shines his flashlight inside. Covered in plastic are a large table and several carts, trays and other objects. This is the medical facility of Procyon. Garret closes this door without entering and returns to the right-hand door that is nearest the ventilation tunnel entrance. He opens the door and turns on the light inside. This room's purpose is obvious from the firearms that line the left-hand wall: this is the arsenal. In addition to the firearms, there are boxes of ammunition, tools and items of importance and various liquids and special containers with yellow labels. Opposite the entrance is a door to a storage room and the stairs that lead to the house. To the left is a door to the medical facility. It is for emergency use only, as the red writing on the door makes clear. Garret walks through the armory and through the opposite door.

Just before the door to the stairwell that leads to the above-ground house is a storage room. This chamber is the same size as the armory and the medical facility, though its longest dimension lies adjacent to the other two rooms. Garret looks over this room, which like all the others is

very clean. There are boxes of imperishable foodstuffs such as cans of soup and MREs. There are also boxes of topical medicines and analgesics, as well as common-use bandages and other items. A second door parallels the one to the armory. It is the main entrance to the medical room. There are four seats in the storage room, each with its back against the wall that leads to the medical room and armory.

Garret turns back to the stairwell door and, after unlocking it, climbs the steps to the final door that opens into the house. This one is wooden and it, too, is locked. With another key from his ring, Garret unlocks the entrance and steps inside the ground level of Procyon House.

Gary, who heard him open the first stairwell door, is watching him through the open living room door. In the big man's hands is a 12-gauge shotgun.

"Well?" Gary says, "Do you like what we've done with it?"

Gary lays the shotgun on a long black counter that curves around rows of wall and floor cabinets. There is a sink next to the gun.

"You've done well," Garret says, "I'm highly impressed. Thank you, Gary."

Garret glances around the upstairs storage room where he presently stands. A washer and a dryer sit to the left along the wall. There are all manner of boxes, fireproof safes and containers, as well as a long bench and a few stacked chairs. On the wall is a fire extinguisher. Last time he was at Procyon they discussed this necessity. Now each room has one or will shortly, including the underground chambers. Garret steps to the threshold of the living room where Gary awaits.

"Leave your shoes at the stairs and we'll take a look around," Gary says.

Gary opens a door to Garret's right and turns on the light.

"This room is for books, computers, stuff like that," Gary says.

Like the storage room, this one is well lit. This room, however, has a window. Garret notices the blinds that block any view from the outside.

Once Garret is finished looking over the room and its large number of outlets, Gary turns out the light and closes the door. The walls of the storage room feature a total of four doors. One is to the stairs down, one is to the future media room, and a third goes to the living room. The fourth door, which is wooden like the rest, remains closed for now. Garret already knows what's inside that one. It was one of the first rooms on his mind when the Procyon idea came to fruition. It is the exercise room, and those who contributed, Garret included, spared no cost in outfitting the room with free weights, aerobic tiles and mats and a wide array of excel-

lent exercise equipment. Whoever joins Garret's cell will spend many hours in this room strengthening and maintaining their physique.

Garret follows Gary into the living room.

"We'll have more books in here," Gary says, "Not the vital ones like in the computer room. These will be for entertainment, hobbies and such. We'll put in a little music system for your iPods."

Garret looks at the tables. There is a small one to the left, just large enough for four persons, and a larger one out from the counter that could seat six. Gary's book is sitting on that one.

"That door over there is the front entrance," Gary says. He points toward the door on Garret's right, the one flanked by two large windows. Blinds block those windows as well, and drapes will ensure that no one can see inside. "Make sure whoever's with you knows that he can never use it."

"It's drilled in my mind," Garret says, "I'll make sure they understand."

Aside from the storage room and front entrances, there are four other doors in the huge living room. There's also an air-conditioning control on the wall. At present, the air is off.

Gary crosses the room and opens the door opposite the one from the storage room. Inside is a hallway. A long carpet covers the tiled floor and there are four more doors, two on the right, one ahead that is off-center, and one near the end of the hall to the left. As the men enter Garret looks over his right shoulder. There is a wall there with no window. He's glad that there aren't very many.

The first door on the right opens to the first bedroom. The room is spacious and very clean. A covered window is on the opposite wall. There is a large cabinet and dressers as well as a body-length mirror between two of the dressers. Alongside the bed are a nightstand and a little table with two chairs. Garret looks at the bed. It's queen-sized and looks very comfortable.

There are two doors in the interior of the room. The door to the right is closed while the one on the left-side wall is open. He can see that there is a second door in the same frame as the open one, much as hotels used to do between rooms. Presently both are open. Through the doorway Garret sees another bedroom that seems to be very similar to this one.

"There are bathrooms in each of the four bedrooms," Gary says, "We had them put the toilets furthest away from the door, and there's a real good ventilation system."

Garret recalled the work crew installing the plumbing for the bathrooms. He remembered buying large tubs for each of the four bathrooms

as well as the shower fixtures and other necessities. It seems like ages ago, yet it hasn't even been a year.

Gary moves on to the next bedroom. The furniture is the same as in the first. The walls are bare, of course, and there is a closed and covered window. Garret imagines that the occupants will cover those walls in paintings or pictures or whatever makes this room their own.

The next door down, the one that is off-center in the wall at the end of the long hallway, opens to another bedroom much like the other two. Garret looks inside from the door but does not enter.

To the left is the door to the kitchen. Garret enters and takes a long look. Right away he notices a door to the outside, but it has no window and is barred and locked. A system of latches holds the bars in place and prevents any use of this door as it currently stands. To the right of the door is another window, and as usual blinds and drapes prevent any outside view.

"We kept the door for appearances," Gary says, "It's clear enough ground that you won't want to exit that way. Any goddamned Barney Fife could gun you down if you tried."

Garret examines the large table. There is space for six. Nearby are several small wooden tables that fold for easy storage. They will be very useful for food preparation. He opens a few drawers and cabinets and to his delight he finds that Gary, et al, has already begun to stock utensils and other items.

There are two large refrigerators and two large iceboxes in the kitchen. Garret thoroughly examines each one. One icebox sits in front of the window. It would provide some cover for a shooter who uses the window to fire. Gary leans on the icebox.

"This isn't meant to be a compound," Gary says, "You can't survive a siege here."

"I never intend to," Garret says, "but this is a good idea. Someone might have to slow them down." He turns his head from the icebox and looks into Gary's blue eyes. "A sentinel like me."

"Let's hope not," Gary says.

He touches Garret's shoulder.

In the wall to the left is another door, and straight ahead are two. The left-hand door on the opposite wall is different from all the others in the house. Unlike any other door in Procyon House, this one features carved shapes upon its surface. None are gaudy or emphatic, but up close they must be beautiful. Gary opens the door to the left, which is an opening into the living room. Neither crosses the threshold. Instead, Gary closes the

door and moves on to the ornate door on the opposite wall. Before opening the door, Gary turns toward Garret. His back faces the closed wooden door.

"This room is gonna be important to you," Gary says, "Very important."

Gary unlocks and opens the door. Garret notices that some of the engravings represent marine life. His attention changes to the room as the door opens. Inside is the most beautiful room he's seen thus far. The bed in the center-right of the room is magnificent. Queen-sized, it is a canopy bed with a beautiful frame. So far there are no sheets or gossamer silk drapes around the frame but Garret can imagine how it will look when his cell moves into Procyon House. Without question it will be nicer than any bed he has ever slept in.

From the doorway, Garret looks around the rest of the room. There is a closet and a trunk, and a door to a bathroom. Two beautiful dressers sit against the left-hand wall, and a cabinet is nearer the bed.

Gary puts his hand on Garret's shoulder.

"I'm not so old or foolish, son," he says, "If my Anna chooses to follow you in this life you've chosen, I have no doubt you'll need a little place like this. So might any others who come along. Just take care of my Anna as best as you can."

Garret looks into Gary's eyes. He seizes the older man's hand.

"I'd give her my life if she needs it," Garret says, "As a sentinel and as a husband. I doubt there are any words that can move a father who would never put his daughter in harm's way. We know how important our women are to the struggle. Johnny was right when he said they'll make the difference in the end. He also said it's easy to say things like that when the name doesn't have a face."

Garret stops for a moment. He never averts his gaze; neither does Gary.

"If it's your wish," Garret says, "I will do my best to persuade Anna to choose a different path. I'll make sure she doesn't join a combat cell."

Gary takes Garret's hand into both of his, and he smiles at the young warrior.

"I prepared Anna for the decisions she has to face," Gary says, "I did everything I thought I could, but I know I couldn't do it all. There are the little regrets of a father who loves his daughter. I do love her, my son, dearly. As much as anyone who walks this earth. But I love her enough to let her live her life. If she wishes to follow you, don't turn her away. My Anna wants a home and a family to call her own. I'm sure you figured that

out. But my Anna's also a fighter. She's gonna fight for her babies, whether they're born yet or not."

Garret closes the bedroom door.

"Let's go," Gary says. He turns to lead Garret into the living room but stops just short. "I went the distance with that room," Gary says, "If my Anna cannot see Ireland on her honeymoon, at least she should have a nice bed."

As much as he loves her, and he has fallen deeply in love with Anna Murphy, there are times when Garret wishes she'd taken a different path in her life.

"Pick me up by the first 'Y' in the Aurora Pike," Garret says."

"I'll be there," Gary says, "Be careful, son."

Garret returns to the storage room. This time he'll charge through the tunnel, pistol drawn and backpack on his shoulder. Someday, he may need to escape in a hurry. He'll see how fast he can move to the exit.

Back in the living room, Gary returns to his book. Even at a quick pace, Garret will need all of two hours to arrive north of Amboy. The forest is thick and demanding. Garret will also proceed with great caution. When the time does come, Gary rises from his seat. In the small of his back he can feel the .357 magnum revolver that he often carries. His main concern is not self-defense. Whether or not Anna will need Procyon, there are others dear to Gary whose lives will depend on its secrecy. Gary will not betray them.

At Coalsack, KJ waits for Johnny Bowen to arrive. She unwinds with Anna after an unusual practice session in which both ladies took snapshots at close-range targets. The exercise was nerve-racking but vital. Boyle insisted that they learn to effectively shoot their rifles from close range and informs them that from now on they'll be practicing snapshots during each meeting, time permitting. Threats have a way of appearing, he told them, sometimes so close that a scope is useless. That doesn't mean the rifle has to be.

This is not his only revelation.

"You two will be alone tomorrow," Boyle says to Anna and KJ as they hide from the sun on the shady cabin porch.

Anna often keeps KJ company, but since the growth and strengthening of KJ and Johnny Bowen's relationship, she tries to leave just as Johnny arrives. Anna misses their conversations and light-hearted teasing, but a sister must leave a brother in peace when he's being intimate with his woman. John Boyle startles them with the news and Anna and KJ stop talking and look up at him.

"If anyone comes," Boyle says, "and I mean anyone, make yourselves scarce. Otherwise, practice your shooting at the range. Anytime I can't be here, keep shooting. Wind, rain, do what I've shown you and what you've read and learned."

"Lightning, too?" Anna asks, just to fuck with Boyle.

"No," Boyle says, "KJ, get in the cabin if there's lightning."

"What about me?" Anna asks.

"You?" Boyle says, "You can keep shooting."

He turns to walk off.

"John," Anna says.

"Fuck off, Anna," he says.

"I love you, John," the redhead says.

KJ laughs. As usual, her body and breath let them know it's genuine laughter.

KJ and Johnny have supper in the Jeep with the air on and the music playing. He turns on a little flameless candle and puts it beside the stick shift. KJ smiles and remarks on how "fucking cute" it is. The act, which is simple and frolicsome, stirs her emotions deeper than even he thought it would.

The candle is plastic. Its "flame" burns thanks to AA batteries. They eat inside a rugged Jeep in the middle of the woods. She's wearing camouflaged pants and a t-shirt; he's wearing jeans and a tank top. She could be in a five-star restaurant in Seattle. Her beau would be just as handsome as Johnny and one hundred times wealthier. The meal would be exquisite. To the observer, she would have everything.

They wouldn't see the price. The dying ember of what was once a roaring flame would torture the girl who used to be KJ Campbell. She'd be esteemed and much-desired. Sill, that ember would aggravate and burn her. She'd drown the final flame as best she could, raging against the very ideas she once held dear. This would make her even more popular among her new peers and those who now control her life. It would further distance her from who she once was, and who she could have loved for real. She'd see noble things that didn't exist in her new boyfriend and her so-called girlfriends. She'd cling to those lies, and whatever other illusion that might replace the loss of her flame. She'd never find anything to fill the void. Someday, somehow, if she lived long enough, she would admit to herself that the big house and the perfect life were nothing but lies. She betrayed her people and even deeper than that act of unforgiveable treason, she betrayed herself. She'd have a luxurious living death, and nothing more.

The plastic candle, the Jeep and the woods and Bowen's delicious supper are a part of life; real life. He is real life. She takes his hand and smiles.

"We laughed a little," she says, "and that candle is fucking adorable." The smile disappears. "But I wouldn't trade this for anything."

KJ looks at the glove box and opens the little door. She removes the cloth-covered .45 pistol.

"Do you mind if I keep this in the blue Jeep?" she asks.

He smiles and shakes his head.

"Not at all," he says.

When the two lovers part ways at the Long Hall, Johnny kisses her on the head. He does not kiss her lips.

"Here, angel," he says. He hands her a key to the gate at Coalsack. "I won't see you tomorrow," he says, "I know you can get there on your own."

"OK, Johnny," she says, "I hope this doesn't happen too often."

He smiles and touches her cheek, and then walks to his Rubicon.

A certain joy is missing on Sunday morning when KJ makes breakfast for one. The taste is excellent as usual and her parents leave her in peace as she eats. There was a time when she enjoyed eating alone. Now it's not so nice.

KJ makes good time on the road to Coalsack but it's out of a sense of necessity and responsibility. She feels urgency and has a genuine desire to learn and excel at the extraordinary art of marksmanship. She also wishes to see Anna. They have quite a lot to talk about. A certain yearning is absent nonetheless.

The Coalsack site is splendid on this late May morning. Wingstem crowds the sides of the dirt track to the cabin. Big snails whose progress is measured in millimeters cling to many of the bigger leaves. Hawthorns are omnipresent though they do not yet offer their bounty, only their thorns. KJ opens the gate and enters the parking area. She can see that Anna hasn't yet arrived. She parks the Jeep by the cabin and walks back to the gate. Her .45 pistol is in the backpack slung around her shoulder.

When Garret arrives at the Long Hall, he finds Bill Donnelly standing beside the big Chevy dump truck. Bill looks as well as he has of late. The warm morning will turn to a hot afternoon, so he's put on a thin shirt and pants. As usual, he wears his dark tweed cap. Garret parks and is quick to greet the elder Donnelly. Bill slaps him on the shoulder and they head inside the hall. There is a large rectangular table in the meeting room and seven empty chairs spaced around the table.

Garret feels a little on edge. He won't show it in his language, but he feels it. His nerves are telling him that this will be a very important meeting; perhaps the most important yet. He and Bill take seats at the table. Both converse but neither mentions the business at hand. There is no point. The hour is far too late for a change of heart.

KJ locks the gate behind Anna, who yells a greeting and then tells her sister that she has a key. At the cabin, the two raid Boyle's beverage stash and share a bottle of black cherry juice mixed with club soda. They agree to take a break after three hours of shooting. The two women warriors shoulder their rifles and lug a box of ammunition out to the range. All of a sudden Anna stops. They set the box down on the grass.

"What's wrong?" asks an apprehensive KJ.

"Let me see your gun," Anna says.

For just a second Anna cannot contain her mischievous smile. It hardly forms but KJ notices.

"It's loaded," KJ says.

"Let me..." Anna begins to say.

"Fuck off!" KJ says.

Anna acts like she's going to grab the rifle. KJ turns out of her grasp and jogs away.

"Carry the fucking box by yourself," KJ says.

She keeps jogging until she reaches the range.

At the range, KJ ejects the shell in her .30-06. She quickly loads one of the snap caps they use for dry firing. Anna arrives after lugging the heavy box. She messes up KJ's hair which, considering its mass is both easy and difficult to do. Anna sits on the ammo box.

"Go on," Anna says.

"What?" KJ says.

She pushes her hair back into place.

"Take a shot," Anna says.

KJ takes her sweet time inserting her earplugs. Then she takes aim and pulls the trigger. Silence replaces the expected boom.

"Good thing Boyle isn't here!" Anna says, "He'd have gotten all righteous on your ass."

"Yeah," KJ says.

KJ moves her foot off of the unspent round and flips it with her boot toward Anna. Anna realizes that the gun was loaded after all.

"I wanted you to have some fun," KJ says, "Just not too much."

Anna puts in her own earplugs. She takes aim at one of the targets but does not get off of the ammo box.

"You're gonna get awful bored once those four rounds are gone," Anna says.

She pulls the trigger. It's a warm-up shot but it nails the bull's-eye at 100 yards. Her arms crossed and her rifle on the bench beside the shooting stations, KJ looks at Anna and shakes her head. Anna looks up at her.

"If you behave," Anna says, "I'll give you a round."

Before Anna can chamber another round, KJ grabs her.

"Stop!" Anna says, "Alright! Alright! I'll get off the box."

Both of them move the box to a spot equidistant from their lanes of fire. Anna opens the lid to reveal row after row of .30-06 ammunition.

"I was just fucking with you," Anna says, "You know that, right?"

"Of course I do," KJ says, "That's what sisters do."

The first man after Garret to arrive at the Long Hall is John Boyle. He parks his Ford Ranger alongside Garret's Jeep. Boyle shows himself into the meeting room, whereupon Bill removes his hat and he and Garret rise to greet him.

Always thin with the iron build of a farmer, Boyle's features are more wolf-like than ever. That his jeans and shirt seem to hang on him does not mislead either Garret or Bill. Boyle can be a fearsome adversary with or without a weapon. Bill cautions him not to forget to take the clothes and other items they've purchased for him and for the Coalsack site.

Cristian O'Toole enters the hall followed by Jimmy Ford. Bowen is next. He enters as Robert McKenna pulls into the parking lot. Once the seven men are seated, the meeting can commence. Bill begins speaking.

"For the moment," he says, "our brethren who are absent from this meeting have the blessing of time. For us the time is at an end. Today, each of us will commit to a course of action. There will be several options, but as leaders of men, you have decided that there will be no turning back. Now, let us begin the rest of our lives."

"The Mantra, as created by Robert Whitaker, is our most powerful weapon," Garret Fogarty says, "The more that our sleeping kinfolk see it, the more they will think and question. That's why we have to be relentless. It will make them think, if those who love our brothers and sisters in race are adamant about spreading the good word and staying on the topic of white genocide. I am convinced that there will come a day when our people drive anti-whites from power. The inheritors will punish the traitors. But time is short and the enemy remains both powerful and ruthless. Mr. McKenna, Mr. Donnelly, your ideas for an interim organization that protects white youth during this dark period is an admirable one, though I can no longer subscribe to it."

Robert McKenna listens to Garret's words. He knows these men, his brothers in race and mission. He will have an opportunity to discuss his idea and air his differences.

"We are not strong enough to create a viable Dullahan training program," Garret says, "We cannot create an organization like the Guardian Angels with a racial nature and hope to survive the attack that is sure to come from the establishment, which I can assure you will be severe and probably murderous. We must be cautious to such an extreme that we would retard all progress toward protecting and training those most in need. That combination of secrecy and active recruiting would make us reactionary by necessity and any forward movement would be agonizing. Worse, once the nature of our organization became known, many who would count on our efforts would suffer and die because of our lack of speed. By defining ourselves as a protective and training force, we would have to wait for the enemy to act. The vast military power of our enemy and the willingness of most white Americans to run to the authorities without any hesitation would force us to be fanatical with our security preparations, just in order to survive. KJ's case is a perfect example. She was right next door, not in Seattle or Boston. And still we could do very little until she came to us."

Garret looks at Bill and then Robert.

"If we would forsake caution for speed," Garret says, "and trust fate to luck and the mercies of the powers-that-be, I assure you that there is no better road to oblivion. The establishment seeks the death of innocent and accommodating whites, let alone white men who will fight for their race. The anti-white establishment will hunt us relentlessly and mercilessly. They infiltrate and entrap with impunity and will burn children alive to destroy any white threat, real or imagined. There's a reason KJ is the only one we've ever allowed into our core group, and we took an enormous risk with her."

Of the men in the room, only Bill Donnelly is unarmed. The others all have pistols on their belts or under their shirts.

"Privacy and liberty no longer exist for the white race," Garret says, "We have no homelands or space of our own. Our thoughts are regulated and dissent over racial matters is quashed. *Posse comitatus* is a myth. The insurgents in Afghanistan will receive far more mercy than any of us. Yet I see a day when Dullahan will rise. Once many of our people are awoken by the Mantra, we will be strong enough to form self-defense units. They may become our future army. I can see that army, which makes none of the mistakes of the enemy's armies, and which will not

intervene in other nations, but will protect our white people. That day will come. We are not there yet; not even close.”

John Bowen listens to Garret’s every word. A pump shotgun leans against his leg, held there by his right hand.

“Until the Mantra awakens the sleepers,” Garret says, “and ‘Dullahan’ or something similar can arise among our youth, we must not sit still. This is a war and, as optimistic as I am, a positive result is not a certainty. Even if I am right, and we will win our struggle, we do not have the right to sit still. For each traitor and parasite encouraged by our lack of a response is an innocent white brother or sister raped, murdered, misled or ruined. Our children are murdered inside the womb; our beautiful women succumb to the degradation of our race and destroy their genetic heritage by mating with non-whites.”

Garret waits for a moment to see if there are any questions or comments. The men know he’s not done and leave him to continue.

“As an example,” Garret says, “Anti-white film directors churn out thousands of ads that serve as propaganda against our race. They promote our genocide without the slightest fear. They receive large checks and create more anti-white filth. Someday we’ll be powerful enough to rip that money from their hands. Until that day, they will keep hurting our youth without fear. My proposal, gentlemen, is that we make the traitors afraid to betray our race. If just one enemy hesitates to produce more propaganda or enforce another anti-white law, we have saved God knows how many young whites. At the moment, we cannot threaten their bank accounts. We cannot threaten them with incarceration. Gentlemen, there will be no general uprising, no outright revolution. This won’t play out in that manner. This is about justice and punishment for aiding genocide. This is about our white youth. It is not about ruling or telling them how to live. It is not about politics, for which I cannot care less. This is about giving our youth the chance to live, free, among other whites, not in a darkening country where white skin is a crime and the rape and torture of whites are the norm. For those already lost and those who suffer, for those just born and those who are brave like Anna and KJ, I promise that I shall strike terror into the hearts of traitors as long as God grants me life.”

“Won’t this hurt us?” McKenna says. Though his dress is casual, it is not slovenly. He takes this meeting deadly serious. “They’ll use your actions, righteous as they are, but they’ll use them to marginalize and destroy any pro-white sympathy that might already exist.”

“Any open display of pro-white sympathy is already virtually a crime,” Garret says, “The enemy treats the love of our race as the worst sin imag-

inable. This anti-white system is, for some, a religion, as well you know. Of course they'll use any pro-white response for more propaganda. That's why a response must be relentless and precise. I have no interest in genocide fantasies. This is not about exterminating blacks or Jews. It's not about absolutism, either. Non-whites who use race to escape punishment, who commit atrocities against our people or produce anti-white propaganda will be targets. Traitors will be our priority, however. I am quite sure that most whites will distance themselves from our actions. I'm not referring to traitors or the racially unconscious. Many allies in spirit will condemn and disavow us. Whatever it takes to awaken the sleepers. If this is what they must do in order to awaken the weak and the timid, I support their condemnations. I myself will never condemn them for doing it. Let them keep their hands clean. Whatever it takes for them to survive and grow, should they succeed in helping our people, then I am in their debt. They have their role, but so do we. The guilty will not walk free without knowing that there is a price for betrayal and genocide. Some of them will pay that price."

"Do you have an IRA structure in mind?" McKenna asks.

"No," Garret says, "We don't have anywhere near the support. We will not make demands or issue statements unless we are sure it serves our purposes, but never as a bargaining device. Our veil of silence will be broken by the crack of a rifle. Until the others know victory for our people and the traitors are punished, those who join me will keep alive the spirit of justice and direct action against the genocide of our race."

"Whatever you should choose, any of you," Bill says, "You shall have my support, to the greatest of my abilities. Whatever money or items of use that I can spare, I will donate to you. My friends, we are dealing with lives and people more dear to us than our own beating hearts."

"I cannot agree with you, Garret," McKenna says, "I don't believe this is the best way to proceed. You know that I'll look out for you and whoever joins you, but I cannot support an insurgency. I think it will do too much damage to our cause. I agree we're too weak for the Dullahan idea. I also agree that the relentless use of the Mantra will make us strong enough someday. That, gentlemen, is my choice."

McKenna takes the conversation in the direction that both Garret and Bill hoped it would go. John Boyle is next to speak.

"I don't figure it's a surprise that I agree with Garret," he says, "I was in the fight when I was with Continuity. I did things that make a normal life an impossibility. Don't be fooled, I'd do them again. I see your side, Rob, but we need a scrap right now. Doesn't matter if it lasts. They have to

know it's real. There's a price for being a traitor. Fuck 'em, they've had their fun, now we get to have ours."

Johnny Bowen, who sits to Boyle's right, is next.

"The day that goddamned anti-white nigger took the reins of the fucking government," Johnny says, "our youth lifted that piece of shit to the highest position of power in this illegitimate anti-white fucking nation. Why'd they do it? Are they worthless anti-whites like a lot of goddamned fools would tell you? No. We fucked them over, our own brothers and sisters, the young and the unborn. We're the reason they picked a nigger to be their leader. When Morgantown chose a city commissioner, guess who they chose? Out of all the white candidates, they chose the nigger. And they paid him more than the retired commissioner. Republicans? The fucking so-called opposition, which all they oppose is taxes on the fucking rich traitors, who did they chose as head of the RNC? A fucking anti-white nigger. Did niggers choose him? Nope, no fucking way. White people did. Our generations did. That's the message we send to our youth. Niggers and kikes are better than you. Hate your skin. Hate your white brother or sister if they won't help make the world non-white. Tell the government if you suspect anything. Betray your brother. The traitors hold the power. They will attempt to destroy any serious challenge to white genocide. I agree with Garret that the Mantra will open minds. I agree with Robert that someday there will be a Dullahan. But those like KJ don't have time for Dullahan. They need hope right now. I won't stand by while we lose more of them, not if I can help it. Their lives are more important than a goddamned promise. Fuck respectability and high roads. They're one reason I have to fight. I will not watch them degrade themselves or suffer anymore just for standing up for their race."

Jimmy Ford looks at each of the other men. It's his turn to voice his thoughts.

"If time were in any way on our side, I'd go with Rob," Jimmy says, "Our numbers are dropping. The synergy of the state and big business, and the managers who wield the real power in both organizations, force white men and women to work longer and longer hours for a stagnant wage. Of course that discourages white births, and stress and abortion have driven our fertility down toward a death spiral. I know that niggers have that problem too but it hasn't had the catastrophic effect on them as it has on us. One reason being, we pay them to have children by transferring money from working-class whites, and that just pushes our genocide even faster. The border is wide open and Haitians and Somalis are flooding the smallest, whitest towns. The constant push to assimilate and

intermarry with non-whites has already darkened a lot of families that I know personally. Once that happens to a majority of us, we'll be gone forever." He looks at Johnny Bowen. "Everything that's beautiful to us will be gone. There's no time to wait anymore. We have to act and words alone aren't going to cut it. I'd like to have a family someday. I imagine we all do. Anyway, I don't want my son or daughter facing what KJ and Anna have to face. I know we can't overthrow the order of things but we can deal with at least a few of the traitors. As Garret says, we might just scare the cowards enough to quit pushing our genocide. I'm with you, Garret."

Cristian O'Toole sits to the left of Bill Donnelly at the other side of the table. He speaks next.

"As the Mantra and awareness of the genocide begins to grow," he says, "those who profit from our genocide will make a fanatical effort to hold on to their wealth and their power. They will try to divide us. I can guarantee they'll take advantage of any pacifistic or anti-violence attitude that we might have. Up to this point, there's been little doubt that Whitey will keep taking it up the ass. If they do not fear that the white man will rise, the enemy will present a greater cohesiveness than they otherwise could. Cowards will join them because there is nothing to fear from us, while we all know that the enemy will destroy a man just for using a fucking word. They've even killed to enforce their will. However, if there's a compelling reason not to aid and abet our genocide, some of the cowards will hesitate, or even refuse to participate. We have the opportunity to create that fear. If it saves one little white baby, I will fight and I will die for it."

O'Toole crosses his legs. An automatic pistol hangs from the holster on his belt.

For some reason, Johnny Bowen expects Bill to be the next man to speak. His intuition is correct.

"When this grand circle of friends was still dreaming of girls at school, and I was still in Ireland and still an active member of the Continuity Irish Republican Army," he says, "a young man with auburn hair and bright blue eyes presented me with a beautiful idea. That young man wished to create a dedicated organization of other fine young men and women, white men and women, who would aid and protect our own. And by our own, he meant white Irishmen and Irishwomen, not those granted citizenship by an anti-white state. Like me, this young man was a member of Continuity. He's been to London and Paris and he'd seen what the anti-white paradise looks like, with cars burning each night, riots and neighborhoods that were once white but are now far too dangerous for whites to enter. His reasons were compelling and sincere, born of a genuine love of his Irish

brothers and sisters. That wasn't all. He recognized the racial element of this global program of genocide against our white race, and he implored me to help him raise such an organization, if possible within Continuity because he still held dear the beliefs of the CIRA and had no desire to leave an organization that he pledged his life to serving."

Bill clears his throat.

"I did not listen to my son Michael," he says, "Once I called him paranoid. And now my youngest son's blood is on my hands because of it."

The others are silent. Two of them did not know.

"I believe that the necessary infrastructure exists in Ireland," Bill says, "We could begin a self-defense wing of the IRA or whichever Republican organization that takes up the cause of saving our white people from extinction. Dullahan could work in the mother country, but would we have the courage to create it? Or would we continue to be blinded by anti-white propaganda? Would we give away the future of our white Irish children for a feeling of superiority over other whites, who we call racist? Do we prefer to sacrifice our children rather than be considered racist ourselves? When I read the Mantra for the first time, and saw the words 'anti-racist is a code word for anti-white,' what should have made sense before began to make sense in this old fool's head. When I see Irish lassies hand-in-hand with non-whites, destroying the beautiful genetic heritage that makes us white and Irish, I see that we are to blame as well as our daughters and the traitors who sell that image for profit and approval. Whatever path you choose, I will support each of you with my treasure and my blood, to the end of my days and beyond if I can leave something behind, just as long as you fight the gradual extermination of our white race. Those beautiful Irish and Romanian and French faces, all the faces and eyes and hair that come with our white skin, must never pass from this Earth and they shall not pass as long as we fight."

Bill squeezes Garret's shoulder and then looks at Robert.

"Whichever path you take," Bill says, "be it Garret's or Robert's, you will have my full support. Everything I can spare and scrounge will be at your disposal. There will come a day when none of you can return to this place, for your own safety. In Ireland we have the infrastructure and we'd have the support if only our people will awaken. We'd have our own Dullahan defense force. Our own would be well protected. There is no structure here. Our white brethren are eager to denounce any movement or even dialogue that doesn't fit their plan for respectability in an anti-white system. We are fractured and despised. There are very, very few who we can trust."

"There will be deaths," McKenna says, "I have no doubt that any of you would give your lives if necessary. Keep in mind, though, it may not be you who dies." He looks at Johnny Bowen. "What if it's KJ?"

"She deserves a choice," Johnny says, "It's her life and if she chooses to stand in spite of the risk, I will support her."

"Are you sure they'll stay committed once the shooting starts?" McKenna asks, "They don't know what it's like."

"I trust Anna and I trust KJ," Bill says, "We fear for them, wish them well. We hope they'll walk away for our own sentimental and selfish reasons. They'll decide as Johnny says; they deserve the choice. They are living the nightmare of an anti-white world. If they choose to fight, I will trust them to the end."

"I'm not casting aspersions," McKenna says, "I can't help but wonder what life they'll have, or any of you for that matter."

"They will have a life of their own," Garret says, "not the life of a slave. We will have to make sacrifices but we will live, and we will not crawl."

"There are other ways to resist," McKenna says.

"That there are," Garret says, "Depending on time and other variables, some are far better than what I've chosen. But it's too late now, and we don't even have a voice anymore with the increasing suppression of pro-white voices." He pauses for a moment. "I know we do not see eye-to-eye in this, but Rob, this is the choice I've made. If you wish to pursue your own plan, then you will have my support. I will ask for yours as well, even if it's anonymous."

"I can't be part of offensive operations," McKenna says, "I'll do what I can for you, but I won't cross that line."

"I won't ask you to," Garret says, "All I ask is that you keep our secrets and send word if you learn something that could spare our lives."

"I agree to that," McKenna says, "But one of the best points you've made is about infiltration and betrayal. How would we communicate? They'll monitor email. Hell, they already do."

"That's why we'll use code," Garret says.

McKenna raises an eyebrow.

"I'll let you know when I've worked out a code for you," Garret says.

Bill breathes a heavy sigh.

"Garret, my boy," Bill says, "for the formality of it, I ask you, what is your final decision in this gravest of matters?"

"I will fight," Garret says.

"Robert, lad," Bill says, "What do you chose?"

"I will continue to persuade our brothers," Rob says, "I am certain that someday we will see our people protect one another. I will not be part of open warfare."

"Cristian, what is your decision?" Bill asks.

"For our European and American kin I choose to fight," Cristi says.

"Jimmy," Bill says, "What decision have you made?"

"Someone has to fight," Ford says, "I won't tell someone else to risk their life if I'm not willing. I will fight."

"John, what is your choice?" Bill asks of John Boyle.

"I have two loves," he says, "Ireland and her white people. For Continuity and our beautiful white race, I have fought and I will continue to fight."

Bill looks at Johnny Bowen.

"This ends," Johnny says, "One way or another, this fucking slow death of our race is going to end. We're not going to end war between whites or solve any of the conflicts that trouble us, but goddamn it, we have to fight this war first before we can settle any of that shit. The enemy doesn't care if we're fucking Irishmen or Ulstermen or Englishmen or fucking Romanian for that matter, all he cares about is that we're white. It's about time that's all we care about. My life's in this war and until I die or we win, and brothers and sisters like KJ and Anna can live in peace and love their white race in the open, without fear, then I will fight this god-damned war on their behalf."

"Gentlemen," McKenna says, "I wish you the best. It's our personal war, in all parts of our lives and the lives of loved ones. Whoever wins this war against white genocide, however he wins it, I owe him my life."

Bill and the others rise, one by one.

"Robert," Bill says, "Please, do not make yourself scarce. You are welcome here as long as it's safe for you to come.

The two men embrace.

Each of the other men takes turns shaking Robert McKenna's hand, and a couple of them embrace him.

"I pray that your mission will bear fruit," Garret says to McKenna, "Teaching our youth to defend themselves and each other is vital. Please, Rob, err on the side of caution until the Mantra opens the minds of our sleeping brothers and sisters. Please take great care if you try to recruit for Dullahan."

McKenna nods and the two men embrace.

"The rest of us have a great deal to discuss," Garret says, "Forgive me for asking you to leave, but I must."

It is a measure of the respect that Garret has for Robert McKenna that he asks him in such a polite manner.

"Of course," McKenna says, "It's how it has to be."

The two shake hands again. McKenna departs without further delay. Garret can see him through the blinds as he climbs into his car and drives off toward Old Braddock Road.

The group that remains is united in their decision, save Bill whose role is unique. They break for tea before continuing the next stage of today's conversations. Bill takes Bowen aside.

"Johnny," he says, "None of these decisions come easily. Some will torment the soul. I know you quite well and I know that ego will not interfere with what's best."

"We agreed to this," Johnny says, "We left ego at the door. This is war."

Bill puts his hand on Bowen's shoulder.

"That it is," he says, nudging Johnny's back with his hand in the direction of the inner room and the little kitchen, "Let's have some tea before the others finish the kettle."

Break time arrives at Coalsack, and although the day's just half done it is already hot and terrible outside. Instead of providing relief, the forest seems to make the air more oppressive, although at least it keeps the sun away from beautiful but vulnerable white skin.

"I was hoping it wouldn't be so hot today," KJ says.

She sits in the shade inside the garage at Coalsack. Nearby are two ATVs, one large and one built for speed. Boyle's Ford Ranger is gone.

"Imagine what it's like in Uniontown," Anna says. She too has taken refuge in the shade. At the moment she's standing just inside the open door. "It could storm today. I saw a couple of rabbits in the forest."

"No shit?" KJ says.

"I don't watch the Weather Channel anymore," Anna says, "Aside from becoming diversity central, they put on their fucking 'Storm Stories' just when you need the forecast. That, and ten thousand commercials."

"Hey, did you see that fucking Pepsi commercial?" KJ asks, "I was walking through the den and my dad had the TV on. I was going to say something, you know, just to fuck with him, but Erica would have forced me to stay home."

"I don't think I've seen it," Anna says, "Wait, is it the one with the nigger showing the white guy how to dance in front of his girlfriend?"

In spite of her somewhat loose camouflaged pants and matching t-shirt, Anna presents a seductive silhouette as she stands near the en-

trance. Her tall laced boots and the .30-06 rifle on her shoulder provide a militant contrast.

"I'm used to that shit," KJ says, "but it still fucking angers me. You know, I am so tired of white women always being bitchy in commercials. Pathetic director-wannabes show us as bitches, always humiliating white dudes in front of a nigger, like, if they show it often enough people will start to act like that. They turn a lie into reality, and most people act like it's always been the truth. Well, fuck no it hasn't! But that shit's all we see, so most people fall for it and the lie gets internalized as truth. We're bitchy and winey, white guys are weak and fat and we're supposed to denigrate our own men while some black bitch acts all superior and puts him in his place. I mean, what the fuck? Why do we let them do this shit to us? You know what I want to see? One ad, one fucking ad where a white man comes home, and his young white wife jumps into his arms and wraps her legs around him, and then they kiss and she snuggles the fuck out of him. Just, like, sweet and fucking beautiful, that's what I want to see."

Anna walks over and crouches down to the right of KJ.

"How the hell did you become... you?" she says, "You're from Seattle for Christ's sake! My dad's a big fuckin' Irishman from Fayette County. It's not surprising I'm the way I am." Anna hesitates for a second, realizing that it actually is surprising. "Well, not as surprising as you, anyway!"

KJ responds in a voice so quiet if Anna weren't next to her it would be hard for her to hear. It is like a soft lamentation, full of suffering and raw beauty.

"How did they become who they are?" KJ says, "If I'm Seattle, they adore me. If I'm KJ, they hate me more than any nigger ever could. If I'm Seattle, I can do anything and be anything I want; anything. If I'm fucking a hipster five years older than Johnny, my parents are OK with it. If I come home at 3AM stoned out of my fucking mind, it's cool. I can go to university and fuck off in clubs every night at their expense. No problem. It's all good. There's just one thing. I can't be KJ. I can have everything I ever wanted; all I have to do is kill KJ."

"Oh God," Anna says, "I didn't mean to hurt you!"

Anna runs her hand over KJ's hair. KJ grabs her arm. Her gloved right hand is wrapped around Anna's wrist; not tight, but Anna would have to use force to break the grip. If KJ squeezed hard Anna might not be able to escape.

"You had to ask me," KJ says, "You didn't cause this wound in me, Anna, they did. Every time someone is amazed that I exist, or reminds me that I'm one in a billion, it hurts me. Deep. It tells me that someday my own

baby will be born in a world that wants him dead. You don't hurt me. Johnny doesn't hurt me, none of you hurt me. My parents and traitors like them gave me this pain. They showed me how alone I am and shoved my face in it every time I felt like giving up. They love this body but they fucking hate KJ."

She lets go of Anna's arm. Anna sits down beside her.

"You're not alone anymore," Anna says. "You have us and you have Johnny."

KJ looks at Anna and flashes an ephemeral smile.

"Yeah," she says.

For a short while there is silence. Outside, the wind returns to the trees. It's stronger than before. Anna's prediction is coming true. When the wind reaches the garage it whistles and moans. The noise is sinister and baleful, like the lamentation of some ancient phantom. Both young ladies can feel the tingle of suspense in their spines. KJ wishes the wind away and then realizes her error. After the wind departs, the heat and extreme humidity return.

KJ draws the sole of her right boot across the ground. She notices that Anna is scrutinizing the surrounding forest. There is no visible movement; only the incessant chirping of a band of sparrows that have taken refuge in the lower vegetation. The pressure and wind make flying a difficult proposition. KJ looks back at her boots and the floor.

"The other day my mother offered to send me back to Seattle," KJ says, "She said that I could stay with my cousin in her apartment, and eventually I might become a songwriter or some shit like that. And guess what? All I have to do is renounce my beliefs. I guess she thought she could tempt me into betraying everything that's right in my life."

Anna takes KJ's hand.

"That was mean, wasn't it?" she says, "She must know you liked it there."

"There were a lot of nice things," KJ says, "There's a lot of bad, too. Really, fucked-up bad. But you know, even if that was paradise I'd still be happy we left. Otherwise, I wouldn't have met you or Johnny. Maybe I wouldn't have drawn the right conclusions or realized the whole truth. I'd like to believe that I'd still be me, but I don't know. I can't know."

"I think you'd still be KJ," Anna says, "But we would have missed you. I can't help but wonder why your parents left. From what I know, Seattle sounds like the perfect place for them."

"Mom left with her boss," says KJ, who still looks down at her boots, "He was going to open his own law firm in Pennsylvania, because they

have an equivalent bar or some shit like that. She told my father to find a teaching position in western Pennsylvania and the only opening was in the Uniontown area. So here I am," she says and shrugs.

"Do you like it here?" asks Anna, "The region, not just Coalsack."

"It's beautiful," KJ says, "The place where we went camping is as nice as anywhere I've ever been. It's just different. There's good and bad of course. People's attitudes are better though, especially in Pennsylvania, though I don't think very many of them will say shit in the open. Back in Seattle, being anti-white is a badge of honor. Maybe they'll change their minds when they're overrun by non-whites, but I doubt it. It's a fucking cult like Jonestown."

"There are a lot of traitors here, too," Anna says.

"I know," KJ says, "Except it permeates everything out there. Trust me, if Johnny and I took a trip to Seattle or Tacoma and some nigger jumped us, most whites would blame Johnny even if he didn't do shit. If it was just me and the monster hurt or raped me, the media would say I was attacked by a "male" or a "youth". They'd never tell you his race if he's non-white. Most whites out there don't even care about the extinction of their race and they sure as hell won't help whites like us. They live in their little bubble, far from Atlanta and Detroit." KJ stops for a minute. She takes a deep breath and wipes the sweat from her forehead. "Speaking of bubbles," she says, "If it gets any more fucking humid I'm going to start blowing bubbles. I'm not a fucking fish! You could drown in this shit." She emphasizes her speech with her gloved hands, and her frustration with the high humidity shows in her words and body language. "There, I found it, something that's worse here than there. Summer here fucking sucks! When it gets this humid it's supposed to rain all day, not fucking torture us with 90 degrees and sunshine! I mean, what the fuck?"

Anna laughs, amused by KJ's drama.

"Alright, summer can suck, I'll give you that," she says as she rises to her feet. KJ stands up as well. "Let's get some water before we go back to the range," Anna says.

KJ nods in agreement. The two pause near the shower and splash their faces before entering the cabin.

The sun blazes above Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Its rays pound the earth and heat the soupy atmosphere. The torrid air will fuel some impressive thunderstorms should the instability rise.

The interior of the Long Hall is comfortable, thanks to central air. None other than Cristian O'Toole installed the unit. Now he sits with a group of men who have decided that words alone are not enough to save

their race from extinction. Their tea break extended to the meeting room and for some time the men discussed unrelated memories and events. Bill mentions the walleye that Jimmy Ford caught last spring. It fell short of the state record by exactly one pound. It's the first time that Garret's heard of the triumph. There are remarks about the impending stormy weather and Bowen expresses his hope that the ladies will be back by the time it breaks. The others know it's more worry than hope.

Garret stands and speaks, ending the unrelated conversations.

"I'll begin the final part of our gathering by saying what we are not," he says, "We are not a militia. We are not a vanguard. We are not a revolutionary army. We will not make conditions nor do we issue manifests. We do not bargain. We do not compromise with the enemy. We do not strike deals and we do not accept ceasefires. This war is personal. If your skin and features are white, then you are the enemy of the various powers that profit from and seek our extinction as a race. Because of them, and traitors and tools and hostile minorities, we can no longer have a white homeland or a place of refuge. The anti-white war rages at all times, and in all places. It surrounds us and those we love. Only a fool makes a bargain with such wicked and ruthless enemies. We do not bargain."

Johnny nods, his green eyes alternating between the window and the doorway. Meanwhile, Bill watches Garret's every movement as the young man speaks.

"My brothers in race and now in war," Garret says, "We shall administer just punishment upon those who participate in the denigration, harming and extinction of our white peoples. We are not powerful but we shall be relentless. We cannot administer justice upon all or even most of the enemy. Someday they and their allies will suffer retribution for attempted genocide. We will remind them that such a day is not as far off as they think, and that the price for aiding our genocide is death."

"What are your thoughts on targets?" Cristi asks, "Big names? Peons? I know we talked about this before, but where do we stand now?"

"First of all," Garret says, "these are my thoughts on the nature of targets. White traitors will have priority. Non-whites who use the system to accelerate our genocide will also rank highly. Low-to-mid level types are best. They're easier to eliminate with less risk. The additional advantage is that powerful traitors have a lot to gain by their treason, and I doubt we'll make any of them renounce. An anti-white professor who makes 70 grand might not be willing to remain in the anti-white crowd if it could cost him his life. Odds are it won't. But some of them will die for their crimes, and he can't be sure that he won't be next in the crosshairs."

Garret pauses to take a deep breath and address any concerns from the men. They await his further thoughts on the matter.

"We must avoid the killing or harming of innocents," he says, "There is one exception. If there is a choice between the life of a shooter and the life of an intruder, whether the circumstances are accidental or otherwise, we will put down the intruder. The role of the sentinel will be to protect his shooter at all times and at all costs. He alone will make the decision to kill intruders and he alone must bear the weight of that decision. This is a good time to mention mission objectives. The cancellation of a mission is always preferable to heightened risk. We all know that there will be risks but we have to minimize them as much as possible."

"Who makes the decision about specific targets?" Cristi asks.

"I would welcome discussions," Garret says, "but the final decision will rest in the hands of the cell's intelligence operative. He will do the research and have the final word on target selection. Then the cell members will discuss the mission, with each member having the right to air differences and concerns or perhaps even cancel a mission if there is good reason. The intelligence operative will choose the target, however, and by the end of this meeting we will know who they are."

"We're not after the big names then," Boyle says, "We're after the little fuckers."

"Mostly," Garret says, "If the opportunity arises, we might consider going after a big name traitor or enemy. But we'll never increase our risk in order to claim such a target. When it comes down to it, a cell's most important mission is to strike the enemy and to survive. The enemy cannot destroy our race with only a few big name criminals. It takes a multitude of small ones. They're just as guilty of harming our people as the Foxman's and the Bush's. It's time we treat the little traitors like the murderers that they are."

"I agree with that," Cristi says, "We can't just target big names and we can't be a one-coast phenomenon or the little fucks that drive our extinction won't start to fear retribution. You and I have talked about me relocating. I'd be happy to have a hand in the Midwest Theater of Operations. Do you have an idea when the others will know about this, so we can get an idea of who's going to be in each cell?"

"This summer," Garret says, "As I see it now, there will be three active cells and one binary cell. Members of two of the active cells as well as members of the binary cell will maintain shadow lives. The members of the other active cell will not have that luxury."

"Who's going out west?" John Boyle asks.

John Boyle has a particular interest in the area. He has a relative who came to the States and settled in Salem, Oregon.

"Garret," Bill says, "I believe it's time to tell the men the names of the cells."

"Andromeda Cell will be located somewhere in the far west," Garret says, "Actually, John, I was hoping you'd be the man to lead it."

"California," Boyle says, "Where the fuckin' streets are paved with gold."

"The Midwest will have Carina Cell," Garret says, "Carina will require more time to build and prepare. For the better part of a year or two, training will be Carina's focus. Cristian, I believe you'd be best for the task."

"Carina it is," Cristian says.

"The binary cell will support the remaining active cell and will, if possible, aid the other cells," Garret says, "James, I believe you are the man for Orion Cell."

Johnny Bowen hasn't said a word. He keeps a vigilant watch on the outside world.

"Before we discuss the final cell," Garret says, "Let us ask Bill to share whatever information he believes prudent. Please, Bill, if you can enlighten us as to your plan of action."

"We're sworn to keep our secrets," Bill says, "to the grave and beyond if necessary. As much as I could, I've renewed old acquaintances in the mother country. This madness that threatens the survival of our children and our descendants will fall upon Ireland as surely as it's fallen upon white America. My white Irish people must be prepared to resist. I will try my best to open their eyes. My closest friends and relations will join me. I can move in certain militant circles, and if it doesn't get me killed, I'm hoping I can sway at least some of our fighting men as well. I owe it to Sinead and my lost son, and I owe it to you and your sons. To whoever might have the ability to help save our race, be it through the Mantra or other methods, it is an obligation for us to do so. I shall maintain my contacts and efforts at raising support in the motherland."

"Thank you, Bill," Johnny says.

Bill nods and the men look toward Garret, who speaks of the final cell.

"The final cell is my own," Garret says, "It shall also be the home of John Bowen, should he accept the offer of being a sentinel. Our cell is Capricorn Cell, and her members will not be able to have a shadow life. Even when we're not in the field we will be active in some capacity."

"Of course I'll be there with you," Johnny says.

“Good,” Garret says.

“You mentioned Orion being a binary cell,” Jimmy says, “How does that work?”

“You’ll be putting your mechanical and electrical skills to good use,” Garret says, “You’ll make deliveries and purchases and all of the other necessary functions that keep an army in the field. I hope you’ll never have to be near a combat operation, you or any who might join you. If so, Capricorn Cell will assist you. Orion may work with Carina and Andromeda if feasible, since active cooperation between the cells is not something we should rule out. Keep in mind, gentlemen, John Boyle will make the final decisions for Andromeda Cell and Cristian O’Toole will do the same for Carina Cell.”

“Who makes the decisions for Capricorn?” O’Toole asks.

“Garret,” John Bowen says.

Schools in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, are closed on Monday, but as KJ walks from the range to the cabin she feels little relief. She won’t be able to escape the Campbell House and she can’t risk a call to Johnny or Anna. He’s told her not to text, and she concurs, since the time spent sending a simple message is just as risky in the Campbell House as a quick verbal message of love. KJ’s always hated communicating with him in that manner anyway. She cannot hear his voice, and – especially disappointing to him – he cannot hear hers. Inside the cabin, KJ hunts down the rifle cleaning kits and begins cleaning her Remington.

Anna enters the cabin after she gathers and stores the extra ear plugs and other items of utility. The wind is increasing in strength and the sky is showing definite signs of an approaching storm front. Anna takes a seat beside KJ and opens the second cleaning kit. Thus far Anna has not offered to show KJ the pictures from her prom. She’s shown about everyone else.

Anna has a feeling that KJ did not go. She wonders if she should show her moody, defiant sister. Even though she is by far the most beautiful girl at Uniontown High, no one dared ask KJ to the prom and Anna worries that KJ will relive the pain and ostracism should she view images from the Laurel Highlands prom. But there is another potential problem. If Anna does not show KJ and someone mentions the pictures, KJ will feel a little further away from the only people who care about her as a white human being. She’s bound to feel excluded. That’s worse to Anna than reminding KJ that she’s alone at school. Anna can’t do anything about that, but she can let KJ know that she’s not alone as long as she’s with her redheaded sister – or Johnny Bowen.

"Hey," Anna says as she lays the clean rifle on the table next to KJ's, "You wanna see my prom pictures?"

"Yeah!" KJ says, her eyes wide as she draws out the word to mean "of course."

Anna smiles and jumps to her feet. She jogs out to her Subaru and returns with her iPhone. She brings up the photo album and hands the phone to KJ.

"Look at you!" KJ says, "Your dress is to fucking die for!"

"Sarah did the alterations," Anna says.

"Nice," KJ says. She looks up for a moment. "Have you heard anything from her?"

"Yeah, actually," Anna says, "She called yesterday. I'm sorry I forgot to mention it. Shit, I forgot to tell Garret. But anyway, they're doing good."

"Who's the dude?" KJ asks when she returns to the pictures.

"That's Elijah," Anna says, "He's a good guy. Not awake yet, but he could come through."

"Sweet," KJ says, "I bet it was nice."

"Yeah," Anna says.

Anna expects to hear KJ sigh or show some sign of sadness, however faint. She, too, is beginning to read KJ's highly nuanced emotions. To Anna's surprise and joy, KJ does not seem to be upset.

"The boys of Uniontown were too scared to ask a Nazi like me to the prom," KJ says.

KJ continues looking at the pictures, stopping at the one with Anna standing beside Gary before she left for the prom.

"I'm sorry, KJ," Anna says.

"It's cool," KJ says, looking up for a brief moment, "Johnny saved the day."

"No shit?" Anna says, "What did he do?"

KJ shakes her head and smiles.

"Stupid question, huh?" Anna says.

"It's alright," KJ says, "It's just, that was for me and him, and nobody else."

"It's getting serious," Anna says, "Isn't it?"

"Yeah," KJ says, "It's real serious." KJ looks toward the closed door and then back at Anna. "How are you and Garret getting along?"

Anna smiles.

"It's getting serious," Anna says, "and I'm more worried about him than ever."

"I hear you," KJ says, "That's how it is right now, huh?"

Anna nods.

"Someday I might have to watch him leave," Anna says, "and he may never come back." Anna laughs a little from the pain and shakes her head. "You dream that it won't come to this," she says. Her eyes look down to KJ's rifle. "You hope and pray that maybe there's a place where you can live with him in peace and your children will live in peace, too, you know? But there's no place like that, not in Seattle, not in Uniontown or West Virginia. We can't even have a restaurant all to ourselves anymore."

KJ, who was looking in Anna's eyes, looks down as well.

"I'd like to have a little place, with wildflowers in the spring," KJ says, "There'd be trees everywhere and rocks like in the mountains, and a stream; a little stream close enough and clean enough that we could get cold water from it, but it'd be far enough that it wouldn't flood our cabin. And it'd be cloudy. A lot. All the time if I had my way." She gets a sad little smile for just a second or two, and then sighs. "And Johnny and I could have a life together."

KJ ceases looking at the vision in her head and stares into Anna's blue eyes.

"Do you know why the commercial that I want to see will never get made?" KJ asks, "Because none of the big companies will pay for it. It's beautiful and it's right, but that doesn't mean anything to them. Those who hate us would raise fucking hell if a young white woman showed that she loves her white husband, especially if he's the one who comes home and she's waiting for him. Just imagine if she had supper ready. They'd go fucking insane. The company that made an ad like that would have to give big money to whatever kike or feminist group that screamed the loudest, or else those groups would trump-up lawsuits on behalf of sympathetic employees. That shit's been going on for years; a lot longer than we've been alive."

"It's a propaganda war," Anna says, "There's no doubt about it. I can't even watch movies anymore."

"Directors don't make those films for free," KJ says, "Upper management pays them to make anti-white and anti-male ads and those assholes are eager to respond. They don't even try to hide it. They throw it right in our fucking faces. We're supposed to whoop and cheer like fucking monkeys, and at what? The sight of our people degraded and humiliated? It's everywhere, Anna. Seattle, Uniontown, even fucking Parsons. Watch any movie. It'll be there. Even the most white-friendly movie will have obligatory anti-white scenes. Other races have made it clear that they won't stand for it. Our ancestors played by the rules and the compa-

nies learned that they could abuse us without paying a price. Men and women become traitors because it pays or because it's their religion to hate other whites, but they remain traitors because no one ever suffers for doing that to us."

KJ picks up her rifle and begins to wipe the exterior now that the innards are clean.

"I might be a crazy bitch from Kirkland," KJ says, "but I'll make them pay for killing our fucking dreams."

The first storm of the evening vents its fury outside the Long Hall. At one point, the gale is so powerful and the rain so hard it's impossible to see beyond the front of Jimmy Ford's Ram Charger.

"Fucking tornado," Johnny Bowen says. Garret watches him. Johnny isn't distracted for long. "We're all in this together," Johnny says, "We all need to know everything that's going on before we start. Bill, James, I killed Mark Strader. The rest of you already know."

Ford raises his eyebrows. Bill thinks for a moment and then nods.

"There's shit we need to work on," Bowen says, "Shit that could be improved. But overall, it was a success."

"He deserved it," Jimmy says, "Sleazy prick. But still, why'd you choose him?"

"He was touchable," Johnny says, "and the risks were minimal for this kind of operation. We won't have those advantages very often. Strader was part of a disgusting industry with a lot of criminal interactions. I don't think the authorities will see the bigger picture, not yet at least. They won't realize the real reason I killed Strader, because he was helping our white sisters destroy themselves. I doubt they'll come to that conclusion."

"OK," Jimmy says.

"I'd like to say a few words," Garret says, "First, we must be careful to limit casualties. Kill the mark and only the mark if possible. The exception will be when our lives are in jeopardy. That supersedes caution. If someone jeopardizes a cell member, especially a shooter, put him or her down. And second, I understand that we have different views and opinions. Fine. But one thing that will destroy the harmony between us is tolerance of sexual outrages like assault and rape. I know none of you men will betray yourselves or your race and engage in those types of vile acts. That being said, we may make alliances on very rare occasions. Unlikely, but the door is open. These alliances will be according to the wisdom given to us by Bill. Any ally who engages in rape of any sort will be an enemy. Are we in agreement on that?"

The men are unanimous in their support.

“Excellent,” Garret says, “Now to wrap up our meeting, a few items of importance. Cristian, John Boyle, you both will have to establish safe houses. Whoever chooses this life when the opportunity arises will be assigned according to their abilities. Prepare yourselves and secure your base, and then engage the enemy. Carina will require more time, I’m sure. Capricorn will pick up the pace while Carina and Andromeda are preparing. Should we fall, you will be our ghost.”

“Who decides where to send someone?” Cristi asks, “To which cell, I mean?”

“Bill,” Garret says, “and Bill alone.”

“That’s fair,” Cristi says.

“You may be wandering about medical support,” Garret says, “Tom and Sarah have agreed to help us if possible. You will each receive a number to call. Each number is distinct for each cell. Tom will not answer the phone and you should call only when it’s absolutely necessary.” Garret looks at each face. “That includes triage. Don’t call if someone has an obviously fatal wound, or if the wound can be treated through routine first aid. Again, do not expect an answer. Based on the phone number Tom receives he’ll know where to go. They may not make it in time, but at least they give us hope for surgical intervention. Please, I implore you; never call unless it’s safe for Tom to come.”

“Agreed,” Boyle says, “I’ll fucking die before I fuck over a good man like Tom.”

Bowen points at Boyle and nods.

“Gentlemen,” Bill asks, “Are there any further questions?”

“One,” Cristi says, “What became of Aaron? I used to have a drink with him on Fridays. Is he OK? I can’t believe he’d run out on us.”

“I’m glad you asked,” Garret says, “Aaron is fine and he definitely did not forsake our struggle. He is definitely on our side, and that is all that I can say. If anyone else should ask, please do not reveal what I have told you, not until they’ve decided and then only reveal the information to a trusted cell member, and only if it is important to do so.”

“I didn’t think he left us,” Cristi says, “Thank you, Garret.”

The men wait for the first storm to pass before going their separate ways. Bowen has to drive for Snyder Transportation tomorrow and Garret will be at Terradox, working on his final project with Gerry Fiorentino. Jimmy Ford will begin tearing apart the engine in Bill Caltuna’s old Ford. Cristian O’Toole will begin the installation of a central air conditioning unit at a home in Carmichaels. John Boyle will try his luck at fly fishing. Bill has

work to do at the garage in Waynesburg. For now, their thoughts return to loved ones and the tribulations of their antebellum lives.

"I thought you drove a white Chevrolet?" Erica asks before KJ can close the front door.

Erica's dressed in her sexless pajamas. It's what Gene gets when she's upset with him.

"Bill asked if I'd mind driving the Jeep," KJ says as she removes her boots, "They needed the pickup."

Erica doesn't ask her about her day at work. One reason, in addition to her not really caring, is that KJ changed from her camouflaged gear into jeans and a t-shirt before returning to the Campbell House.

"Finish the stuffed peppers when you're done in the shower," Erica says.

"I can make something," KJ says.

"Finish those," Erica says, "You waste enough around here."

Erica can be a phenomenal cook when she wants to be. If she prepares a meal for her coworkers or her bosses, it will rival anything KJ's ever eaten in her life, including meals at 5-star restaurants in Seattle. These peppers were for Gene. They will be bland. One taste confirms KJ's assumption. Hunger compels her to finish them.

When KJ returns home from the grocery, she considers asking if she can study with Anna. It's early and she'd like to spend the entire day with her sister. She decides not to take the risk. Anna may be busy, and this Friday is KJ's second date with Johnny Bowen. Erica watches KJ store the groceries and then tells her to clean the basement and garage. KJ knows better than to resist. Actually, she doesn't mind. It will keep her away from Erica.

The cleaning goes as well as can be expected. KJ splits her time between cleaning, exercising and lifting weights. She does crunches and cardio.

In the late afternoon, she opens a box containing mementos of her youth. Most such items have disappeared. Aside from a few objects that she holds dear because they're part of her story, there is another object that catches her eye: a slingshot that her uncle bought for her. Erica could have killed him. KJ tests the little weapon. It's not rotten. She gets a wicked idea and takes off her sweaty tee. Underneath, she's wearing a tube bra. KJ puts on the button-down shirt she hoped to wear after her cool-down, but leaves the front unbuttoned of course. It might irritate Erica for KJ to wear an unbuttoned shirt and tube bra around the house, but it's not unheard of, particularly when Erica turns up the thermostat on the air

conditioning. KJ rolls her t-shirt around the slingshot and carries it upstairs.

Tuesday at school there is a large table outside Weems's office. Seated at the table are several members of the senior class. Jamie Irwin is there as is Molly Hildebrant. Both are attractive but forgettable girls, neither of which ever had much to do with KJ, either out of jealousy in the case of Hildebrant or antipathy in the case of Irwin, whose social clique contrasts sharply with KJ's unorthodox style. Hildebrant's boyfriend Zach Peterson, the top-scoring white basketball player and current prom king, is also present at the table.

For several years, Uniontown High has sponsored a "sister" school in Uganda. The students collect items, preferably prom dresses that the seniors will never wear again. Uniontown High will send the money raised by the sale of these dresses to the school in Uganda, ostensibly for books and computers.

It's the end of the day when KJ walks by the table. She does not look at those seated. Weems's office is closed at the moment. KJ is glad she kept her backpack with her. Before KJ can clear the area, Jamie Irwin decides to address her.

"Hey, Kaylee," Irwin says, "Wait!"

KJ stops. This should be humorous, she figures.

"We're collecting used prom dresses," Irwin says, "Would you like to donate your...? Oh, wait, you don't have one. My bad!"

KJ walks over to the table. She leans on it with both palms, right in front of Irwin, who begins to get nervous. Surely KJ won't lift a finger. Weems would expel her. She'd go to juvie or boot camp. But what if KJ doesn't care anymore? Irwin looks at KJ's arms, whose impressive size is apparent through her tight t-shirt. They're even bigger than Jamie remembered. KJ's gloves and the wild, aggressive look in her eyes are beginning to unsettle the skinny and unimpressive Irwin. The smirk disappears from her face. Why, Irwin wonders, did she think this was a good idea?

"I have a question for you, Jamie," KJ says, "Why don't you sell that crap and give the money to a poor school in West Virginia? Hmm?" KJ's eyes never cease staring into Jamie Irwin's eyes, though Irwin looks away several times. "Oh, that's right, I forgot" KJ says, "You're an anti-white piece of shit. My bad!"

Zach rises from his seat. Jamie feels a little safer when he does.

"Go away, Kaylee," he says, "Nobody cares what you think."

KJ looks at him and stands up from her leaning position. She lifts her backpack and shoulders it before leaving.

KJ is waiting in the blue Jeep when Johnny Bowen pulls into the parking lot at the Long Hall. She's out of her vehicle before he can park and when he gets close she wraps her arms around him. Once he opens the door to the hall, he sweeps her off her feet and carries her inside. She laughs and showers his cheek in kisses. It's a prelude to the passionate kiss they share when he sets her on her feet. They embrace a final time before beginning self-defense training.

"How was school?" Johnny asks, "Tolerable, I hope."

She smiles.

"It was OK," KJ says, "I couldn't wait to get here, though."

KJ is focused and her strikes are powerful. The divide between her life with Johnny and her life with Erica and Gene is growing. She feels her old life falling into an abyss. It is a lovely sensation.

On Thursday evening, there's another group meeting scheduled at the Long Hall. After some more self-defense practice, KJ gets dressed and, arm-in-arm with Johnny Bowen walks into the meeting room. Bill and Megan Donnelly are next to arrive. Until the others trickle in, the Donnelly's sit with Johnny and KJ. Johnny asks them about the family. Sinead's quite happy and Michael's in high spirits and excellent health. The Donnelly patriarch seems at peace with his family's fate. He's trimmed a little; not from unhealthy weight loss, but as a result of increased physical activity. Megan's summer dress is blue with tiny white flowers across its surface. KJ wonders how she'd look in a similar dress, sized for her gorgeous young body.

The Fox Brothers are next to arrive. Like Bill, John has lost a little weight. He, too, looks healthier and must have hit the gym pretty hard. His mustachioed brother is as wiry and strong-looking as ever. Just behind them is Garret, who opens the door for Anna and Gary. He picked the Murphy's up after work. As Bowen greets the men, KJ and Anna embrace. Each compliments each other's appearance. It's polite but genuine. Anna's hair is free to lie on both sides of her strong diver's shoulders. Her top, tucked into her jeans, is quite elegant, and Gary is also dressed a little more formal than usual. The three may have plans for the evening.

Austin Kelly, whose facial hair is returning, and Cristian O'Toole arrive just before Jimmy Ford. Soon after, big Robert McKenna drives up with his Ford Fiesta. He wastes no time entering the hall. KJ notices that Bill seems quite glad – perhaps relieved – to see McKenna. Robert approaches Bowen and Garret. They rise and shake hands. He greets the ladies and Gary as well.

"It's good to see you, Rob," Garret says.

Aside from Van Dyke, Sinead and the Neely's, everyone appears in due course. Jesse and Rian are last to cross the threshold. Jesse just completed a biochemistry exam and she and Rian raced to Bill's place as soon as he picked her up from Pitt. Though she didn't have time to change, her casual attire does nothing to diminish her beauty. If Sinead were present, the four young ladies would provide an ideal showcase of white beauty.

The meeting begins and progresses as usual; at least as KJ has grown accustomed to seeing it progress. Then the moment arrives. Bill says something that silences Austin Kelly and Kevin Toomey.

"What was that, Bill?" Cristi asks.

The others become quiet.

"Harry, Bobby and Seamus," Bill says, "Someone asked the old IRA man James what he'd wanted most to accomplish for the cause. We all had notions of a unified Ireland or rights for Catholics, being young bucks and fools to the core. Just the look on his face told us we were wrong, though the lot of us had different guesses as to why. Finally he says, I want Harry, Bobby and Seamus to come home. Now James was no pacifist, though he longed for peace. He was an uncompromising warrior when he was in the fight and a hater of war when he was outside of it. He knew there'd be no changing Harry, Bobby or Seamus if they came home, and he didn't want to. They'd go back and he'd be the last to stop them, so long as there was a need to fight. But they had a value to him far beyond abstract rights or a border that needed erasing. To James, Harry, Bobby and Seamus had worth just for being good young men. James told me a little later he'd give the rest of his life if he could have convinced Seamus to listen to his inner voice. As a leader, it was Seamus' decision to go forward or to walk away. There was something young Seamus didn't like about the next mission. Unfortunately, James couldn't be there when the decision was made to proceed. The call to battle can be enticing, and for Seamus it was too great to resist. The three young men went forward into the night and they did not come home. James never told a lad to walk away from the war. He told many lads to walk away from a fight. He'd told Harry, Bobby and Seamus to walk away, at least once before. They weren't the only young lads he'd warned."

Megan looks at Bill with a loving and knowing glance.

"This is a time of darkness," Bill says, "It's also a time of fire and light. It's time to fight for our people, our race, as well as we can and in the best way that we can. You, my beloved friends, are the flames. It's the fire that will bring light to the darkness, but without the flames there is only dark-

ness. You have a value, each of you, as great as everything you're trying to save. Fight, but come home."

The others are silent. Only after Bill begins some small talk do the others begin to converse, and they do so after what seems like a long while. KJ feels Bowen's hand touch the back of her head and rub her neck. She notices that Garret's hand is on top of Anna's. Both are on the table. After a little while Gary begins talking to Garret about a new laptop, and what suggestions the young man might have since Hannah is looking to buy one for her kids. A couple of times KJ looks down, a tiny but nonetheless wild smile on her face. She's thinking about her second date with Johnny Bowen.

As the gathering draws to an end, Johnny touches KJ's cheek and she turns toward him.

"I'll pick you up here tomorrow," Johnny says.

"Please," KJ says and smiles.

The Fox Brothers are talking to Bill over by the doorway. Austin Kelly's getting a second hard cider from the cooler that Cristi brought.

"You know," Johnny says, "We used to meet like this at the Celtic Society. Bill would mostly just listen. We used to have a lot more laughs. It's gotten more sentimental, but I think that's a sign of the times."

"I wish I could have joined the Celtic Society," KJ says, "Still, though, I like it here. Sentimental is good."

KJ and Johnny are the last to leave from the parking lot outside the hall. The night is pleasant. The humidity and air temperature have fallen in the wake of last night's storms. Johnny holds KJ by her shoulders and, in a fake Irish accent, tells "the young lass" she'd best be going. When she backs out, she stops and blows him a kiss through the open driver's-side window. Tomorrow is payday for Johnny Bowen, but he won't stay to receive his check. He'll pick it up on Monday.

The next day, KJ must temper her anticipation with caution. It is easy to miss a small sign or ignore an intuition. These innocent mistakes can be devastating. Just before lunch, her vigilance rewards her. She notices the skulking figure of Nathan Yoder, one of the white seniors at Uniontown High who shares no classes with KJ. He glances at her several times, and seems to be weaving through other students to get closer to her. She turns to confront him, should it become a necessity. She will not allow him to get too close. If he insists, she'll flee. Though not athletic, he is quite strong from lifting weights and from intense physical high jinks with friends. He must notice her aloofness. It appears he's interesting in talking rather than a confrontation.

Yoder has been one of her classmates since KJ left Kirkland. Tall and attractive, his look is ubiquitous though his blue eyes are enchanting. His light brown hair would look much better if it were not modeled on the Justin Bieber bowl cut, and his face could use some years to replace its boyish features with more masculine ones. KJ has never considered him an antagonist nor does she believe that he is racially awake.

"Hey, Kaylee," Yoder says, "Hey, can we talk somewhere?"

"What about?" she asks.

KJ does not want to damage the chance for Nathan to awaken. Neither will she compromise herself or her relationship with Johnny Bowen.

"I don't know," he says, "Just stuff, I guess."

The hall clears and the two are alone.

"OK," she says, "Nobody's here."

"I've known you for a while," he says, "Not like we've been buds, I know, but I can't help but notice that things haven't been cool for a while. How are you doin', Kaylee? I mean, what's eating you up like this?"

"That's sweet of you, Nathan," she says, "But I have to go."

"Wait, please," he says.

She turns back around.

"You must be lonely," he says, "There are people who care about you."

"Yeah?" she says, "Like who?"

"Well," he says, "I do, for one. You know, I think I could fill that void in your life."

She sighs sharply and shakes her head.

"I was thinking," he says, "You know, maybe we could hook up."

KJ turns and begins to leave.

"What?" he says, "You should thank me! Nobody else is gonna give a fuck!" KJ keeps walking. "Stuck-up bitch!"

KJ hears but pays no attention to the insult.

In the cafeteria, KJ looks up at the ceiling. The piece of butter that one of the sophomores flung up there two days ago still clings to a ceiling panel.

The rest of the school day is uneventful, though KJ feels more and more nervous as the clock edges toward three. Her nervousness reaches climax as she drives to the Long Hall. She chastises herself for being this way. She sees Johnny almost every day. He's a powerful refuge from discomfort and pain. This is different, however. Although they kiss and touch and embrace every day that they meet, this is a formal date. In short, KJ

does not want to do something stupid, especially during an event that is all about their relationship.

In the bathroom of the hall KJ takes a long shower. Once she's dried off, she puts on one of her black thong bottoms and then dresses in a t-shirt and a tight pair of jeans. Folded with care, her clothes for the date are in a tote bag beside the dresser. She'll change into these just before supper.

Johnny Bowen enters the hall as KJ finishes her shower. He's glad that she locked the door behind her. When she emerges from the dressing room, the joy on her face at seeing him is obvious. She throws her arms around him and they kiss. She's glad he's in jeans rather than something very formal. She's also pleased with his shirt - a short-sleeved button-down in a dark shade of red. The vibe she's always gotten from him is close and personal, and his clothes today are very clean and well-managed though not formal. Still, this date means a great deal to him and she feels it. His shirts and jeans are usually a little loose. These are tighter, and show his body's form and his chest and arm strength. She notices immediately and is very glad he chose to wear such clothes for her.

"Don't worry, sweetheart," KJ says, her arms around his neck, "I'm going to change into something you'll like even better."

"I like the sound of that," Johnny says and they kiss again.

The two lovers leave the hall and walk, hand-in-hand, to Johnny's Rubicon. KJ carries the tote bag with her clothes on her right forearm.

When KJ climbs into Johnny's Rubicon, she notices an object on the dash. She leans over and opens his door before returning her attention to the object. Through the green paper wrapping she can see a single red rose.

"Is that for me?" she asks, knowing full well that it is but feeling that it's crude of her to assume.

"Yeah," he says, "Do you like roses?"

"Yeah, I do," she says.

KJ takes the rose into her gloved hands.

"I know the tradition's fading away," he says.

"Not for me it's not!" she says, holding the rose close to her chest.

"Do you know what a single red rose means?" he asks.

"Yeah," she says, her breath louder than her voice, "It's so sweet, Johnny, thank you." She touches his cheek. Her gloved hand is smooth and warm. "I love you too."

The trip to Markleysburg runs through the beautiful countryside of Chalk Hill and Farmington, Pennsylvania. To KJ's pleasure, the sky is

nearly overcast and the sun never manages to cut through the thick cloud deck. Johnny pulls up next to the garage of his little Pennsylvania home and parks the Jeep.

"Would you like to go somewhere else?" Johnny asks before exiting, "This is your last chance."

"Hell no!" KJ says, "I want to see what we can do together."

The two lovers enjoy every minute in the little kitchen. Often, Johnny grabs her around the belly while she laughs and plays and teases him with spoonfuls of unfinished dessert. She throws an arm around him while he's busy with other preparations. Dedicated and careful enough to create a wonderful meal, the two nonetheless make merry and act the fool as soon as the opportunity arises. This, of course, makes the precious time fly. When there's nothing left to do but serve the meal, KJ excuses herself. Johnny feels the anticipation of seeing her dressed for their date. Since it's just the two of them, he guesses she'll dress in something sexy. She's about to prove him right.

"OK, angel," he says, "Dinner is served."

There is a bottle of quality red burgundy and two glasses on the little table. On each plate is a portion of kidney Bolognese. The sides are pasta with crême fraîche and porcini salad. For dessert, there are four raspberry turnovers drizzled with chocolate, waiting their turn in the kitchen.

When KJ enters the room Johnny finds himself at a loss for words. She's donned a snug black-and-orange sleeveless top that fits her so well it adheres to every beautiful curve of her upper body. If she were to reach skyward the bottom of her shirt would lift just enough to show her waist and the bottom of her belly. She wears tight black gloves as usual and her strong, smooth white arms are uncovered. Johnny adores the sight, but there is something even more compelling that is drawing his attention. From her midsection down she's wearing shiny black leggings that adhere to the perfect form of her legs and lower torso. Though they cover every millimeter of skin from her waist to beneath her calf-high assault boots, her leggings are as tight as a new layer of skin over the gorgeous and sensual shape of her posterior and her legs. Even the boots stir his desire. They're one of the pairs of assault boots that he spent hours finding and quite a bit of money purchasing. The snug boots cover her from the soles of her feet to the upper bulge of her strong calves and put the finishing touch on a very sexy ensemble.

"Is this OK?" KJ says, "I was hoping you'd appreciate the look." She looks down and shrugs. "The boots at least?"

"It's more than OK, angel," he says, "Goddamn, you look amazing."

He steps closer to her and admires her from head to toe. She turns around to complete his view. When she's facing him again she closes her eyes and laughs a little. For a few seconds she covers her face with her hands. She shows her bashful side, which is very endearing to John Bowen. It's another facet of her personality that makes him love her even more.

KJ smiles and looks into his eyes. "So you like it?" she asks.

He touches her cheek and nods. Johnny walks back to the little dining table and pulls out a seat for her. When she takes her place he runs his hand over her head and down the back of her neck.

"If you want something other than wine, please don't hesitate to tell me," Johnny says.

"No, it's fine," she says, "I'd like a glass."

Johnny pours her a glass of the red burgundy and then one for himself.

"You really think I look good?" she asks, "I know that guys...men. I mean men. Men don't like to answer that because a woman will get all schizo on them, but you know I won't do that, right? I won't, I promise, I won't..." She shakes her head.

"You're nervous right now," he says as he takes his seat. "That's fine, angel. It's OK to be nervous. This means a lot to you. It means a lot to me, too."

"I want it to be perfect," she says, "I just don't want to fuck things up."

"That's the last thing you'll do," he says, "Oh, and by the way, you look fucking awesome in that. Seriously, angel."

She smiles.

"Thank you," she says, her lips speaking more than her words.

"Bon appétit, Angelique," he says.

The two lovers savor and discuss the food, which is as good as they expected. A question about the living room allows KJ to express her appreciation for the little Markleysburg home.

"It might need to be larger someday," she says, "if little feet are going to be running around inside this place."

Diamond Crossing comes up again, and Johnny adds a little color to the story. The idea came up after one of the "beer sessions" at the Celtic Society's private little bar. Johnny was about to get inside his Jeep, the one that he sold before he met KJ. He'd taken out his iPod when Garret – who was designated driver for that evening – asked him about his playlist. The song playing at the time was "(We Are) The Road Crew" from

Motorhead. Once thing led to another, and a conversation about music genres led to Johnny asking “wouldn’t it be great if someone opened a white-friendly metal or punk club?”

“I know money’s not important,” KJ says, “but has Diamond ever broken even?”

“Not even close,” Johnny says.

“You do so much for us,” she says.

“I’m not under fire five days a week like you,” he says.

A warm little smile forms on her face. Once they finish their dinners, Johnny brings out the dessert.

“I know you said that I won’t fuck things up,” she says, “That’s such a weight off my lungs. God, I hope you’re right.” She sighs. “The other day I asked Anna if you’d ever had a girlfriend. It wasn’t anything malicious, I swear to God. I just wondered what girl gives a chance like that away. Unless something really bad happened, which if it did, I’m so sorry, Johnny. I don’t want to open old wounds. It was really foolish to ask, I know. I guess I do that a lot.”

“I’ve had two girlfriends before you flew into my life,” he says, “And don’t question what you’re worth, angel. You can ask anything you like, anything that’s on your mind. The only time I’ll keep something from you is if it endangers you to know it.”

“Or you,” she says, “Please don’t tell me if that’s the case.”

“OK, angel,” he says.

Strader comes to mind. He wasn’t going to tell her yet, because of the first reason. She’d have stopped him from telling her because of the second.

“Back to your question,” he says, “I’ve had two other girlfriends. The first was in high school, and that one cheated on me. Actually, she was doing me a big favor in the long run. The dude virtually went into hiding when he found out I knew. Funny thing, I wasn’t going to hurt him, not even at the time. He can have the betrayer.”

“I’m sorry,” she says.

“I’m not,” he says and smiles.

“I’m not either,” she says, “I mean, I’m sorry you went through that but it’s her loss. And my gain.”

She wrinkles her nose for a second as she says the last part.

He smiles a little and looks at her. She sees his hunger, too. Then he continues his story.

“People buy that bullshit about ‘Game’ but you know what?” he says, “It’s degrading. Not just to women, but to men, also. It’s fucking degrad-

ing. I could be what they call 'Alpha' and always go after a score, but what the fuck kind of life is that? What about the spiritual? Do we just flush away all the things that make us human, better than all the mud races that rut around and never give a fuck about the soul of their women? Seriously, if I couldn't find a loyal, passionate and intimate woman who gives a fuck about her race, I'd prefer to be alone. It'd suck, but it wouldn't be a lie."

KJ looks down for a moment and gets a very brief smile on her face. She can guess what he'll say in the end and it touches her deeply.

"After I met Anna and Jesse, I figured the odds, well..." Johnny stops and shakes his head. She looks up at him. The little smile comes back to her face. "No way you can bet on those odds. But I was wrong. I underestimated our beautiful white sisters. The angel flew in, and goddamn if she isn't the greatest of them all."

"Thank you, Johnny!" she says, "Thank you so much."

"Angel," he says and smiles, "I'm so fucking glad it didn't work out with those other two girls. I never really had high hopes for either of them, and I'm damn glad I didn't settle for what they had to offer. My third girlfriend, though, she's different. I have to admit I have very high hopes for her."

KJ smiles and looks down for a moment. She takes the final bite of her chocolate-raspberry turnover. Her blue eyes are bright and look at him with intense affection as well as powerful desire. He stares into them until she smiles again and looks down. The nuance of embarrassment that flashes across her face is just as endearing to his soul as the hungry look that creeps back into her expression in the minutes that follow.

Johnny clears the table and stops her from helping him. When he's finished, the two return to the living room. He puts on *The Fountain*. They sit on the couch and KJ moves very close to him. He sees her put her boots up on the couch and then quickly take them off.

"No, go on," he says, "It's good. Go ahead and get comfortable."

She smiles and her boots return to the couch. She rubs his leg and curls up beside him.

"It's so hard to find a decent movie anymore," he says as the FBI warning and the studio ID flash across the screen. "Actually it's almost impossible to find one that doesn't insult you."

He kisses her head. Her massive mane of hair smells so nice; the fragrance of the shampoo has faded, though the strands are very clean.

"There's so much that degrades us," KJ says, "I think about the future and it really fucking hurts. What's going to happen to white children when there aren't enough of us left to fight for them?"

"They won't hurt your children, angel," Johnny says, "You're too strong for them."

"You help me stay strong," KJ says and smiles.

She touches his cheek with her gloved hand. He pulls her closer and kisses her. They're still kissing when the movie begins.

After the film, Johnny puts on some music and they return to the couch. The playlist is softer and more somber than usual, with tunes like *Sirenia's* "Glades of Summer" and "Fade into You" by *Mazzy Star*, among other Goth metal and alternative tunes. Johnny asks her about the songs she's written, which leads to questions about her singing lessons. He can see it's a bittersweet subject for her. It's one of the few experiences of her earlier life that she'd like to have kept. He can see in her subtle gestures and far-away look that her parents really hurt her when they ended her would-be musical career. That she didn't cave in to their demands shows her inner strength and conviction.

"I heard you in the Jeep," he says, "You're really, really good." He rubs her left shoulder. "KJ," he says. She looks into his eyes. "You didn't beg for forgiveness for saying a word, and you didn't give up your love for your race; for who you are. You knew it would cost you. I'm sure they'd have sent you back to singing lessons; shit, maybe back to Washington, but you told them to fuck off. You didn't swallow their poison."

"They told me they'd send me back," she says, "All I had to do was renounce my beliefs. All I had to do was die inside."

He touches strands of her luxurious hair with his finger.

"You're precious beyond words," he says. She cuddles up to him again, and rubs her head against his body. She is warm and firm and smooth. "I hate more than anything that I can't be there for you," he says.

"So do I," she says, "There's so much that's wrong. We don't even know if we can be together." She looks down. Johnny sees the wounded little smile that comes and goes. It is a smile of regret. "You know what almost happened with Justin," she says, "At least I still have that to give."

Suddenly she looks up and into his eyes. He can see that she's thinking about saying something, but she does not speak at first. Finally she does, though probably doesn't say everything that's on her mind.

"Thank you for waiting," she says.

As she put on her leggings, just for a moment, she worried that she would be tempting him far beyond what she should. She figured he would not take her, and that he must not; they do not yet know if this can last forever. Then another thought replaced that one. This one was selfish, though born of pure love and affection. He'll figure out a way. How can

fate be so cruel after all this pain and defiance, to finally give her someone to truly love and then to rip him from her arms? Maybe they can't be together, but then, maybe she won't want someone else, so maybe it's the same thing in the end. She purged the dangerous thought but now it's back, and it's so strong. Now she admires this handsome and very powerful man who sits beside her, and who loves her as well. She reaches over and touches his right bicep. It feels so good through her glove and she begins to caress him.

KJ looks into his eyes and smiles. Then she touches his cheek and he takes her hand, kissing it several times. These gloves go up to her elbows and he loves them.

"Dance with me," Johnny says.

They rise and he takes her hand. He checks the iPod and clicks forward twice. "Be My Angel" from *Mazzy Star* begins to play. He knows the title might seem a little lame in light of his name for her, but he enjoys the song and it fits the mood. He looks into her eyes and she puts her arms around him, her hands on his back.

"I shouldn't rub your back yet, huh?" he says.

"I think it's back to normal," she says, "But maybe it's best not to, just for now."

She steps into him and lays her head on his chest.

He reaches around her and puts his hands on the lowest part of her back, just above her shiny, smooth, and perfect behind.

"How's that?" he asks.

"That's good," she says, glancing up at him with a smile on her face before she returns to his chest.

They slow dance to the tune and the next one as well. One of his hands comes up the back of her head, but on occasion it and the other will return to her lower back. She nuzzles his chest, a show of affection she loves to display and also believes to be necessary. Johnny hadn't much thought about it before she came, but from the first time she did it to him, he's fallen madly in love with the simple little display. KJ moves back just a little to look at him again.

She reaches up to pull him to her. They stop their slow rhythm and she kisses him. His grip on her gets a little tighter, and then relaxes a bit.

The touching, rubbing, kissing and other acts of love continue for a while. Her somber beauty is becoming more mischievous. Johnny initiates another round of passionate kissing and she reciprocates. Then she draws him close and touches her forehead to his. She reveals her uncertainties and the wonderful lack of experience that popular culture would

belittle her for; the innocence that a strong man like Johnny Bowen finds so powerful and attractive, for it means that his angel has not succumbed to the temptations of the flesh.

"Please tell me if I'm going too far," KJ says, "I don't want to frustrate you. That's so easy for a girl to do."

Johnny sees the genuine concern on her face. Again, she is closing her eyes and inching forward into deeper water. He has never forced himself on a woman and this will certainly not be the first. If he is ever to ruin a relationship, it will not be this one.

"We're good, angel," he says, "I'm in control."

He kisses her as deep and passionately as ever. They continue their dance and her head finds its favorite place against him.

"Hold me forever," she says.

"Questions in a World of Blue" fades away and Johnny pulls her back to look at her gorgeous face. There's no makeup, only a little lipstick, and even that is discrete. He notices that she hasn't put on any blue eye shadow. Her eyes alone are blue enough to make it unnecessary.

"My angel," he says, and kisses her head, "I've done some bad shit in my life. A lot of people won't rest until I'm dead."

"They'd want me to die, too," she says, her eyes never looking away from him, "Not for something I've done, but for who I am and for not giving up what I believe. Fuck them, Johnny. Fuck all of them."

"I don't want you to get hurt because of me," he says.

She embraces him again and squeezes him very tight, tighter than he thought she could even with those strong arms of hers. The two stop dancing but remain on their feet, KJ wrapped tight in Johnny's embrace. *Entwine's* "Frozen by the Sun" begins to play, softly, adding its mournful sound but not overpowering the two lovers' words.

"I read something yesterday," she says in her soul-stirring voice, "Someone shot a strip club owner with a high powered rifle. I thought about it last night. I know it might have been over drugs or the owner might have borrowed too much money from the wrong people, it could have been that. But, maybe there's a man who cares so much about white women that he's willing to risk his life for us. He could have been in the club flirting with the skanks up on the stage, and I have no doubt that any of them would love to fuck him. But he wasn't. If I'm right, and that's why he did it, then that man probably just saved a few girls from a loveless and meaningless life. They may never know it and they'll never fucking thank him even if they do, but he risked his life for us. Now the police will try to kill him and everyone will call him a criminal."

KJ kisses his chest and looks into his green eyes.

"We always kill our heroes," she says.

He takes her by the back of her head and smells and kisses her hair. Then she looks into his eyes again.

"I'm in this, Johnny," she says, "for the rest of my life. I'll never run from this fight, and I'll never, ever run from you."

They kiss and then Johnny touches her nose. She looks down and smiles. It's a sweet little smile, born of the deep affection that is rising within her, together with an intense passion and desire.

"I'll get us a drink," he says, "Do you like black cherry?"

"Yeah," she says and continues to smile.

In the kitchen Johnny adds a little homemade cherry syrup to some carbonated water and pours two glasses full. He returns to find KJ seated on the couch. Johnny sets the drinks on the coffee table and takes a seat beside her. She rises and climbs on his lap. Once the glasses are empty she leans back on him so that her left cheek is close to his right.

"How are things going at Coalsack?" he asks.

"Good," she says, "It's really nice that Anna can come over."

He kisses her cheek.

"Have you tried the fifty?" he asks.

"Yeah," she says.

"How'd it go?" he asks.

"It's just a start right now," she says, "but I think I'm doing pretty well."

"Has John said anything about it?" Johnny asks.

"He called me Roisin," she says, "I'm not sure what that fuck that means, but I think it's good."

"It sure as hell is," Johnny says, "I could tell you have a gift. I knew the first time I watched you shoot. It wasn't beginner's luck, you know."

"If I can help you..." she says.

"Just be careful," he says and kisses her cheek again.

She turns and nuzzles him.

"You, too," she says, "And if you have to run from the law, get word to me, alright? Just as long as it doesn't endanger you. I'll be there for my man. I don't care if we have to run together."

"Shh..." he says, "Let's worry about that some other day."

"OK," she says and smiles.

KJ turns and leans back again, her body lying upon his. He feels her warmth and the smooth leggings on his right forearm and hand. Then he feels her take a deep breath and rub her bottom ever so slightly against him. He surrenders a little to the passions and reaches under the lower

front of her shirt. Her belly is smooth and warm and neither quivers nor recoils at his touch. Though the muscle inside is firm, her stomach is neither flat nor grotesquely developed in the least; there is still a belly there to rub, a round and beautiful belly, and he caresses it with gentle strokes.

"Damn," Johnny says, "That's so nice, angel! Tight, but not all fucking gross and hard. Just a tight, smooth, warm little belly."

He kisses her shoulder as he speaks and she feels the passions rise from his caress. The feral angel is mischievous and unfettered. It is euphoria for them both.

"I have something else that's nice and tight," she says.

"Hello!" he says.

She gasps in fake outrage.

"I meant my biceps!" she says.

"Yeah," he says, "Sure you did." He rubs her belly again. "So, when are you going to show me your tat?"

"Next week," she says, "I think it's already healed, but I want it to be perfect the first time you see it."

"Paddy did it," Johnny says, "I'm sure it's amazing. I can't wait."

He kisses her neck. She turns her body to face him and straddles him as he half-sits, half-lies on the couch. Then she kisses him on the mouth.

"Is that nice?" she asks.

"Yeah," he says, "It's nice."

He slides his right hand down to her lower back. She smiles and rubs her nose against his. The smile is gone in an instant. It's not a typically ephemeral smile of hers; her thoughts wipe this one away, replacing it with a hint of sadness and pain. She closes her eyes.

"I want our life," she whispers.

He hears the pain in her voice and sees it begin to creep into her expression.

"Shh..." he says, "Angel, don't cry."

She recovers and looks into his eyes.

"OK," she says, "I love you."

He squeezes her left arm.

"I love you, too," he says.

Johnny nuzzles and smells her hair, which seems to be everywhere. If he were weaker inside, it would render him incoherent with desire.

"They say you're supposed to think I'm a pussy for wanting to be close like this," he says "I'm supposed to be after your body, and that's it."

She sits down on his lap again.

"They say I'm crazy," KJ says, "but I'm not crazy like the dykes and fucking losers who say shit like that. I'm not interested in any kind of pussy, Johnny, male or female. I'm interested in a man." She gets that wild look and kisses him on the lips. "My man. Do any of those fuckers have something nice and warm on top of them tonight? Even if they do, it's not this nice and warm."

If Johnny Bowen were weaker inside, her words and her feral look would push him over the edge of self-control.

"Fuck no," he says, "Not anywhere near this fucking nice and warm."

She snuggles him and kisses him all over the face and neck. When she's finished, which takes some time, she looks at him with a wicked little grin on her face. Then she slides off of his lap, making sure her gloved hand runs down the length of his thigh, and she jumps to her feet. KJ backs up to the table, watching him the entire time before she turns and begins scrolling his iPod. Her back is to him, and in the light of the living room lamp he scrutinizes the rear of her body. He always knew that she was built as perfectly as he can imagine a woman being built. Now the tight black leggings reveal the full shape of her legs and behind, which surpasses even his idea of the perfect posterior. He'd checked her out before, and seen her in tight jeans and other form-hugging clothing but nothing was ever this nice on her, or revealed this much. He feels the greatest desire he's ever felt for a woman in all his 25 years.

As soon as KJ presses play, "Dogs in a Cage" from *Angelfish* begins to play over the speakers. KJ begins making vibrant, energetic moves. Her hair swirls around her as she shakes her head side to side. Then she stops. She bites her lip and looks up at him, her blue eyes staring through innumerable strands of hair.

"You waiting for someone?" Johnny asks.

She nods and he sees her take a deep breath. Johnny jumps to his feet and walks up to her.

KJ is full of boundless energy and her dance is unrestrained. She struts and gyrates, her body rising and falling in rapid succession with the beat of the music. She has a wild look on her face and her hair whips around her as she moves. Sometimes it seems as though she's submerged in a sea of hair. After a short while she turns to face the opposite wall so that Johnny can see her wag her rear to the left and right. The motion is not the vulgar shaking popularized by corpulent hip-hop dancers. It is fluid and timed to coincide with her body's motions which make it a natural part of the dance. Often she's in close proximity to Johnny and sometimes they end up facing the same direction. More than once she

steps or hops back and touches him with her gloved hands, and sometimes she backs toward him and touches him with her rear. The next time she touches him in this provocative manner he takes her around the waist and puts his hands on her stomach. He slides his right hand under her top and caresses her belly again. His fingers go no higher than just above her navel and no lower than the waistband of the leggings.

Near the end of *GZR's* song "Misfits," KJ finds herself several paces ahead of him, with her back in his direction. In a flash she turns to face him. Her eyes stare through a halo of profuse brunette hair that drapes over her face. She steps up to him and he takes her in his arms. He kisses her again. The duration lasts at least as long as any kiss they've ever shared. Once their lips separate, she grabs him by the hand and leads him to the couch.

KJ sits close beside her man and turns to face him. She rubs his cheeks and then the place on his jaw where she hit him.

"I'm so sorry..." she says.

"Shh..." he says, his brow furrowed as he does.

She kisses him on the cheek and then the lips. The magnetism they both feel is intense. Another *Angelfish* song – "Suffocate Me" – begins to play on the iPod. KJ climbs up on the couch so that she is standing on her knees. Johnny glances down at the glossy leggings that cling to her body. She sees him look down at her waste and below, and gets a wicked look on her face. As always, her hair is everywhere and she looks wild and hungry.

KJ takes his shirt and pushes him so that he falls back almost horizontal. He does not offer much resistance. It's a little surprising to her that he's not taking the lead, but perhaps it's his style. He may smolder for a while and then burst into an inferno. That'd be cool, too, she thinks.

It's not long before she's lying on top of him. They kiss several times, the pause between each so short it's more like one long and sensual make-out session. The temptation for John Bowen to move his hand from her lower back to her spectacular rear must be intense, especially since he must know that she will not object. The tight leggings are not much of a barrier to the touch – or the eye; they are so tight, in fact, that he can see the form of the thong she's wearing. Johnny kisses her on the neck and then nuzzles her hair. His hands, however, remain in their position above her ass. KJ grabs his leg and begins pulling it up on the couch, and then jumps to her feet so that he might complete the motion and lie with both legs on top of the cushions. Then she climbs on again, very careful not to put a knee in his crotch or her boots on his shins.

KJ quickly finds her place again at his chest and face. She kisses him with wild abandon and he takes hold of her. He's heating up even more; she can tell from his breathing. KJ looks into his eyes and gets a wicked little smile. She thinks about reaching down and checking exactly how much he's getting into it. She does not, though she finds the thought amusing. Everything just feels so nice; everything feels so right. She belongs to him. This isn't like the time with Justin. She loves Johnny with all her heart and soul and, finally, here is a man who gives her powerful reasons to love him. She's not running from any pain. She's not trying to escape. It is possible that he won't be able to remain with her. But then again, maybe he can. Somehow he'll find a way. She loves him. She is his. He's the only one who shall ever receive all of her gifts – her body and her love. She's all around him, from her hair to her boots. Like her posterior her legs are strong and intensely beautiful. Their form, revealed by the tight leggings, is perfection. Her legs are on either side of his. She imagines how tight those legs would squeeze him, if only they had more space than a damned couch. She rises a little and looks down at his chest. Her right hand, which had been resting on his left shoulder, begins to unbutton his shirt.

"There are better places for this," she says.

KJ begins to slide down his body. She stops a little further down, where she can reach his pants, and she removes his belt. Then she unbuttons his waist. Johnny caresses her strong arms and she returns to him. She kisses him again, with full passion and intensity, holding absolutely nothing back from her mouth. He feels her body tighten. She presses and rubs her lower body to his. Johnny's hands finally move from her lower back. In one continuous motion he slides his thumb between the waist of the leggings and the black thong underneath. With gentle force he pulls the waist of the leggings upward. He holds them there for a few seconds. KJ kisses his chest while he holds on to the leggings. At first she thinks he's being playful and lifting them up a little into her ass. But then he lets go and his hands retreat to her upper back. She stops kissing him for a moment. Something's amiss. His hands slide down to her hips. She can feel him grip her body and lift her so that she's not so tight against him.

"OK, angel," he says, "Let's move back a little."

She realizes what's happening as the words exit his mouth. She's going too far. Her wild look vanishes in an instant. She inhales and exhales heavily. Then she backs off quickly and sits up on the other end of the couch, still looking into his eyes.

For a moment her emotions rise and she feels like weeping. She regains control.

“Oh shit,” KJ says, still inhaling and exhaling heavily, “I’m so fucking stupid. I’m sorry Johnny! I’m so fucking sorry!” She looks down and feels like weeping again. Once more she resists. “Please forgive me....” she says, “I didn’t want to do that to you.”

She opens her mouth to say something else but doesn’t know what words to use.

“Shh...” he says. “It’s OK, angel.” He slides over and kisses her head several times. She touches her forehead to his. “It’s OK,” he says, “Nothing’s wrong. We can wait for this. We have to.”

He nuzzles the hair on the top of her head and she presses her forehead to his face. Then they look into each other’s eyes.

She starts to apologize again but he stops her.

“You know, I’d like another slow dance,” he says, “What do you think?” He winks.

She nods and a little smile returns. This one is a little less wicked, but full of love.

“I’d really like that,” she says.

KJ and Johnny spend the rest of the evening dancing, conversing and sharing their affection for one another. During the slow dance he repeats his earlier question about her tattoo and where it’s best to put his hands. She laughs and once more his hands find their way to her lower back. This time it’s her head and arms that she presses tight against his body.

Near the end of their second date Johnny is seated on the living room chair with KJ on his lap. Her arms, wrapped around his shoulders, squeeze him tight and she kisses his cheek.

“I love you, Johnny,” she says.

“I love you too,” he says.

He has no compunction about telling the truth; neither does she.

KJ rises and heads to the bathroom to change. Only when she’s in the bathroom do the leggings come off. She’ll probably have to answer a few of Erica’s questions when she returns. If she’s wearing the leggings, she’ll have to answer a whole lot more. When Johnny sees her a few minutes later, she’s wearing the jeans and tee that she wore earlier.

“Thank you for everything you did tonight,” she says as she squeezes him tight, “I swear to God, my love, I’ll be worth it in the end.”

He kisses her on the head. They leave the little home and emerge into the starry night.

Johnny drives her back to the Long Hall and the blue Jeep. The night is dark and almost cloudless. The young lovers laugh and listen to some music during the return trip. KJ's rose is in a bottle of water in the cup holder of the Rubicon; her leggings and top are in the tote bag in back.

"I'll see you tomorrow," Johnny says as they stand outside the Long Hall.

KJ smiles and grips his hand. They kiss one last time before she drives away.

Chapter XIV

The Wings of an Angel

On Saturday morning, KJ arrives early at the Long Hall. Bowen's already there. She exits the Jeep and runs to him, leaving her backpack and his breakfast in the blue Jeep. The material things can wait. The two embrace and share a kiss.

After another simple yet delicious breakfast that includes a slice of banana and oatmeal bread, KJ and Johnny set off for Coalsack. She's already wearing a snug pair of camouflage pants and a similar t-shirt. Erica must not have been awake when she left the Campbell House. During the trip, they talk and listen to music.

KJ wants to mention the previous night but she hesitates, lest he get the wrong impression. The date was beautiful to her and it ended very well, and he seems to be in very good spirits right now. In spite of his reassurances, she's still desperately worried that she's made some terrible mistake. Last night is on his mind, too, though for him it is a topic for the return trip.

Johnny does not exit his Jeep when they arrive at the cabin. Anna hasn't arrived, though a light in the window means Boyle is around.

"I'm sorry, angel," Johnny says, "I have to run. I'll meet you at the usual time."

"OK, Johnny," KJ says, "Be careful." She touches him on the cheek with her gloved hand, and mouths "I love you."

He smiles and promises that he will. And then he kisses her hand. KJ blows him a kiss as the Rubicon drives off.

KJ and Johnny Bowen aren't the only ones who arrive early at their destination. Garret waits on Johnny Bowen beside a lonely road on Chestnut Ridge, among the still-pristine but threatened Coopers Rock State Forest. Garret feels relief when Bowen's Rubicon appears. The relief is greater when he's sure that no unwanted guests are following Johnny. Johnny parks next to Garret in the gravel lot beside a picturesque

mountain pond. The two greet and shake hands. Garret holds Bowen by the forearm until they walk near a boardwalk over the pond.

"It's beautiful here in the fall," Johnny says, "I imagine KJ's parents never brought her up here." He sighs. "Or anywhere else this nice, not since she woke up."

"You're probably right," Garret says.

He looks at Johnny, who stares at the woods and the water. Small trout, still too young to fear being seen, flash their silver scales in the growing daylight.

"I knew you'd fall in love with her," Garret says, "When we considered inviting her for the first time that was my only hesitation. I worried about you. I still do, but not for that reason. She proved my initial concern to be unfounded."

"What are you getting at?" Johnny asks, "Just ask me, even if it's harsh."

"Are you sure you can fight by her side?" Garret asks, "What if she's not there? I'd have gladly given you more time if we had it. But we had to come to a decision."

"Did I leave?" Johnny asks, "No. Then why ask? Life happens. But don't ask me to create distance. That I will not do."

"You act like you don't know me," Garret says, "When the hell would I have asked you to do such a terrible thing?"

"Fine," Johnny says, "It was just a thought. Look, I was in agreement at the meeting. If I can't be there with her, I'll know it has to be that way. But if she's there then no one can keep me from being her sentinel. I will still fight if she's not there, but we owe her a chance to live as a proud white woman. I'll fight for that chance even if I never see her again."

As a man who loves his race and desires to see it survive and prosper, Garret Fogarty is touched by Johnny Bowen's sentiments. Years of dedication and risk prove his words to be true. As a leader of men, Garret cannot show his compassion; at least not now.

"I trust you, John," he says.

A pair of grackle hops through the plantain and clover along the bank, looking for breakfast.

"You love her," Garret says, "and I love Anna. I've never told you that before, but you probably realized it. Someday we may have to tell them goodbye."

Johnny nods.

"We'll keep going," Johnny says. He watches the water striders near the shore. "But none of this is right."

"No, it's not," Garret says, "Our generation chose to pass this on to KJ, Anna and Mason. They're refusing to repeat the crime. We owe them the chance to have a better life, even at the cost of our own."

"We owe them everything," Johnny says, "KJ has such beautiful dreams. Her life should be those dreams, but they've taken everything away from her, except for the most important thing. They can't take away who she is." Johnny looks into Garret's eyes. "She won't let them take that."

"They can't take you away from her, either," Garret says, "Not yet. Every minute she has with you is a godsend."

Johnny looks back at the water.

"As long as they don't hurt her because of me," he says.

"If she chooses to fight," Garret says.

"If!" Johnny interrupts.

"If she chooses," Garret repeats, "Our enemies will try to kill her. They may succeed, John. It's not your fault if they do. They'll kill her because she's white, she's awake and she's beautiful. She's strong and resilient and she can fight. She loves her race and she laments the division between white men and women. KJ and Anna are the most powerful among us because their example could convince other young white women. You'll give your life to save KJ; I'd give mine to save Anna. If they die, we have to console ourselves with the knowledge that they died as noble white women."

"I know, Garret," Johnny says, "Thank you for reminding me."

A breeze sends ripples across the pond.

"One of them might choose not to fight," Garret says, "As remote as it seems, it's a possibility I must consider."

"Then what?" Johnny asks.

"They can spread the Mantra," Garret says, "and provide material support and information."

"What if one of them can't kill a person?" Johnny says, "Or after killing an enemy, she doesn't think she can do it again? It's not like a god-damned shit movie. It affects you deep inside. I'm more concerned with that happening."

"If the person in question is in Capricorn Cell," Garret says, "then she'll become a sort-of attached auxiliary. She won't have to kill again. We can use a scout, a person who can collect information or even help a sentinel observe the enemy."

"OK," Johnny says, "That's a solid plan. But what about pregnancy? You know that Anna and KJ both want families."

"We'll try to send her and her husband to Elysium," Garret says, "I will never condemn a white couple for having a child. Before departing, we'll have Tom or Sarah check the health of the unborn baby. Before any of this happens, anyone in an established relationship will have to take precautions until we can safely rotate personnel. Then we can send married couples to Elysium, so that they can become training personnel and have families in peace, whatever peace a white couple can have in this world. I'm not being a fool, either, I know there will come a time a woman will want to have a child and she'll leave precautions aside. That's why it's up to us. We'll buy the best condoms on the market to try and be sure that nothing unexpected happens. Anyway, none of our women are going to take toxic hormones. We'll take the precautions and that way we won't have to worry about toxic pills or a deliberate lack of preparation."

"Thank you, Garret," Johnny says.

"Thank me when you can hold her," Garret says, "All those rubbers might end up being water balloons. We don't know..."

Garret's cell rings. He looks at the number. When he recognizes it as O'Toole's, he opens the phone. Garret gestures for Johnny to wait.

"Is he OK?" Garret asks. His first words pry Bowen's attention away from the lake. Garret shows no emotion. It comes as no surprise to Bowen who knows his friend is neither cold nor distant. He can block emotion until a crisis is understood or avoided.

"They have him, then," Garret says, "OK, call me when you find out more. Thanks, Cristian."

Johnny doesn't need to ask. His intense stare is all that is needed to prompt Garret to explain.

"David Hill's been shot," Garret says.

On Friday evening, as KJ and Johnny danced and Anna and Gary practiced at Bill's indoor range, *Chironex* was taking advantage of the rare opportunity to play at a club other than Diamond Crossing. The show, in Syracuse, New York, took place at the smallish club called *Blake Effect*. Unlike most clubs, *Blake Effect* occasionally featured punk and hardcore bands. Its owners booked *Chironex* for a Friday night show. Their decision had much more to do with the band's talent than with its beliefs. In fact, the owners issued a disclaimer in the university newspaper. A gig is a gig, and Hill and the men were unafraid to face a potentially hostile audience.

Friday night's audience was indeed volatile. The slim majority were either *Chironex* fans or free speech advocates as well as lovers of superior hardcore music. Others were hecklers and rabble-rousers. A few were professional protestors. Most of those came at the request of anti-white

university professors. Due to the aggressive and belligerent nature of the *Chironex* supporters and the high level of security that night, anything worse than a noisy and obnoxious interruption was unlikely.

Unfortunately, a certain Braylon Fischer decided to attend the show. In his two years at Syracuse, Fischer became well known to the staff of *Blake Effect*. When security saw him coming they knew he came to cause a commotion. Tall, thin with brown hair and light brown eyes, Fischer looked white to all who viewed him. His father was a half-Jewish accountant from Albany. His mother was a Catholic of Irish extraction. Steve, his father, converted to Catholicism before marrying Braylon's mother. As the years rolled by and Fischer became a militant atheist and antifa, he began to despise his father for betraying one-half of his ancestry.

Fischer had heard of *Chironex* and no doubt hated them for their opinions. That alone wasn't enough to send him to *Blake Effect* with a gun in his jacket. A few weeks previous, he'd made a harmless but misinterpreted remark about a popular homosexual actor. Fischer, who was mentally ill enough to wonder sometimes if he might be a homosexual, would never have intentionally insulted a member of a protected – and privileged – class. Profuse apologies failed to regain his lost reputation among the other anti-whites and leftists in his little clique. What was worse, the self-avowed Marxist female who he desired to bed would no longer speak to him. Desperate, he searched for some dramatic way to prove himself to her and the others. When Dr. Ardon, professor of humanities, informed the class that it was their civic duty to protest the racist band *Chironex*, Fischer found his method of rehabilitation.

Roxanne Hill gave birth to David Hill twenty-four years and eleven days previous. For the first four years of his life, David spent his days in Otsego County, New York, until his father Drew found employment at a packing company in Utica. In school, David was noted for his keen intellect as well as his mischievous streak. The latter combined with the former gained him notoriety in middle school. To her eternal credit, his mother refused to put him on mind-neutering ADD drugs.

Around the age of 12, David's musical hobbies evolved into passions. His father could play guitar and had once been a part-time member of a local hard rock outfit. When the creative spark ignited young David's soul, he begged his father for a guitar, which he helped to pay for by working odd jobs all summer long. Hill learned the art of writing music and at the age of 13 had written his first rock song. That was also the year that a friend – Cliff Collyer – gave Hill a copy of *Battery's* "Whatever it Takes." David became enamored with hardcore and never looked back.

During Hill's sophomore year in high school, he and Collyer formed their first band. The other two members did not last the year. At first, most of their songs were covers of other hardcore and punk tunes. As time went by, the band – renamed *X39* – spent more and more time on their own songs. It was a great learning experience, though at times frustrating and painful. At the age of 17, after their bassist left the band, David Hill approached Collyer with an idea for a new band. This one would be pure hardcore. It would also feature politically incorrect themes.

Both Hill and Collyer were strong supporters of free speech. Even in the days of *X39*, non-PC lyrics crept into the songs. The new band, which the men named *Chironex*, would plunge into controversial themes from the first practice session. Those who might listen to a random *Chironex* song might confuse them for any of a myriad of leftist hardcore bands. Hill often raged against the government and authorities as well as big business and big polluters. But a sharp difference emerged; instead of the anti-white lyrics that infected so many hardcore and punk songs, Hill's lyrics usually attacked outsourcing, the hiring of illegals and any other corporate schemes that hurt the white working class.

For their courage, Hill and company would have to defend themselves from several physical attacks and would have no choice but to withdraw from college. The bassist and drummer left the band rather than face the escalating violence and lack of work. It seemed that, in spite of Hill's utter refusal to abandon his principles, *Chironex* would never play again.

At that time, bassist Tom Gillen, guitarist Keith Smith and drummer Kevin Buchholz of the hardcore outfit *Cereal Don* were hoping to form a new band. *Cereal Don* was on the verge of breaking up due to a tempestuous lead singer. Gillen and the men had had enough. These three were polished musicians. Any one of them was better at his art than either Hill or Collyer, but they had heard *Chironex* and were impressed by the band's insight and ferocity. One of the reasons for the bad blood in *Cereal Don* was Gillen's insistence on playing non-PC songs. The lead singer and other guitarist were adamant in their opposition. They wanted a more mainstream sound and the financial success that often comes with such compromises. Smith and Buchholz tended to agree with Gillen. When *Chironex* opened for *Cereal Don* at a club in Buffalo, the three disgruntled members of *Don* were impressed with Hill's courage in the face of a very hostile crowd. They also witnessed an assault on Hill after the show. When *Cereal Don* finally died, Gillen contacted Hill. Little did he know that *Chironex* was moribund. After a short conversation among the soon-to-

be-former members of *Cereal Don*, the three were unanimous in their decision: They would join Hill and Collyer. *Chironex* was reborn.

There was one ironclad rule that each member had to accept: the band would never alter its lyrics or purge its discography. For a while, things went quite well. Hill and Collyer were relentless in sharpening their skills. Both would come close to collapsing from exhaustion, and Hill threw up on occasion after a practice session. The results paid off. In spite of their highly controversial lyrics and an unfortunate decline in the popularity of hardcore in general, *Chironex* caught the ear of aficionados and for a short while the band actually had offers to play.

The so-called good times came to an end during a show in New York City. Near the end of the third song, a large group of anti-white “antifas”, who had entered with the express desire to crash the show, accomplished their goal via screaming and acts of violence. Hill and company did not escape unscathed, though the five had learned to fight out of a desire for self-preservation fueled by their own rowdiness. They gave as good as they got, yet it was *Chironex* that was no longer welcome at any of the clubs in New York City.

For six months, not one invitation came for the band nor did any club return their emails. *Chironex* was now a pariah and likely to disappear forever. Then, out of the darkness, an interesting email arrived. A new club in Pennsylvania was interested in paying *Chironex* to play a weekend gig. The offer was very attractive and the members of the band committed to the event. In time, the new club, Diamond Crossing, would host *Chironex* on numerous occasions.

Hill’s fault lay in his blind desire to appear at any venue in order to challenge the limits of free speech. It is an admirable fault, but one that can get a young man killed if he does not choose wisely. The security at Diamond Crossing is superb. Security put down the only protest that threatened to disrupt their first show, and the miscreants responsible wound up banned and bruised. At Syracuse, the security not only allowed several known troublemakers to enter the club, they failed to provide an adequate and safe departure route for the band. The group that attempted to silence *Chironex* failed in their goal. After the show, however, Hill would have to cross two streets devoid of security personnel in order to board the band’s makeshift “bus.” Braylon Fischer, who cased the club during the performance, noted the lapse of security and planned to ambush the band as they crossed the first street.

For much of his life, Braylon Fischer had voiced his opposition to the right to bear arms. As with most antifas and anti-whites in general, that

opposition did not apply to him. Fischer's bloody magnum opus required that he obtain and use such a weapon. He stole a .38 caliber revolver from his mother's cousin. He knew he could not become proficient within a week and planned on firing as many bullets as possible before fleeing. If caught, he'd play the victim card. He would tell the police that fear got the better of him. In spite of his straight, light brown hair and light-colored hazel eyes, he would proclaim his Jewish ancestry put him at risk in a crowd of frenzied anti-Semites. At heart, Fischer was no martyr or defiant soldier. His method of attack, he hoped, would enable a clean escape.

For over an hour Fischer lurked in the shadows of 2nd Street. He paced and began to sweat. His hands became wet and he came close to panic when the gun slipped from his grasp and struck the ground. Fortunately for him, he was alone on the street at the time. When he picked up the weapon his nerve began to fail. He turned to leave. A sudden quiet stopped him cold and he turned back toward the club. This wasn't the end of the show; not yet. Fischer steeled his nerve and waited. At 2 AM, the rear double door of the club swung open and a few individuals exited. These were fans and acquaintances known personally by the band. Fischer had no idea who they were. He scrutinized the crowd for one face. A few minutes later he saw what he was looking for.

Braylon Fischer drew the gun and fired five shots in the direction of David Hill. Saving one bullet in case of emergency, he fled without observing the effects of his attack.

The first bullet struck longtime fan Jerry Veilleux, a young white man from Niagara who was more interested in the music than the message. The bullet entered his spine from the rear and rendered him paraplegic. The second shot missed high. The third struck Hill in the lower right shoulder. Had Fisher fired a second later and a hair lower, he'd have struck Hill in the heart. The fourth shot struck a parked car. The fifth and final bullet travelled beyond the little crowd. It did not strike an intended target, but it did find a human mark. The wayward bullet struck fifteen year old Victoria Cooley in the side of the head. She was out late with friends and was returning home from an all-night fast food joint. Though bystanders were sure she was killed, she would survive the terrible wound.

Police apprehended Fischer at 7 AM the next morning. When he drew his gun, he lost his apartment keys. The police found him sitting outside his apartment, unable to decide on any other course of action.

When asked in the hospital, David Hill told his band mates not to cancel any of the upcoming shows at Diamond Crossing.

In spite of the bad news, Johnny Bowen maintains his composure.

"How bad was he hit?" Johnny asks Garret.

"According to Cristian it isn't life-threatening," Garret says, "He doesn't know the exact reason for the shooting, but you can guess. He also said the police have made an arrest, and that there were other shots fired and other injuries but he doesn't know any of the details."

Johnny shakes his head.

"Son of a bitch," he says, "We fucking knew this would happen. I fucking called it."

"The more that racially-conscious whites are demonized in the media, the worse it will get," Garret says, "Get ready for some ugly days."

"Oh, I'm ready," Johnny says, "I hope that all of us are."

The crack of rifle fire echoes among the Clay County hills. Anna shouts with joy when her white sister strikes a bull's-eye at the far end of the range, and repeats the feat in rapid succession. Anna looks around for Boyle, who will no doubt reprimand her for the outburst. Instead, he just stands with his lips shut tight. He's been reticent today, even more than usual. He's not even curt. He stands there silent and watches as the two warriors practice with their rifles. "Irish John" stays in the background when they begin more countersniper and range exercises. When he does speak, he informs them how to perform an exercise or he tells them to take a break or change positions. He does not test their emotions.

There are breaks in the sky, but none of them allow the sun to shine through. Still, the shady and sheltered conditions and shooting stations around Coalsack are much welcome to the blue-eyed ladies. Boyle never cared whether it was sunny or not, though today he lurks in the shadows almost as much as the two pale white shooters.

The ladies begin to wonder if something is wrong. An hour or so later, they find out what's on his mind. About a half hour before their normal end time, he breaks his own silence. Boyle calls Anna and KJ over to the cabin and has them sit on the porch.

"Fools will think that you two are athletes," Boyle says, "That you're members of a rifle team or some shooting club. They have no idea that you even think of yourselves as white. They can't imagine you're here because you fear for the future of your race and you're willing to fight, and to kill, to protect your people. It's altruistic and it warms the heart just thinking about it, but it's not the only reason you'll fight. There's a cold calculation and feminine selection that compels you to choose this life. You two are far ahead of the stupid cunts that use white men and fuck up their own futures. If you two can get through the perils of this war, your children will get a chance for a good life; a life that's much better than the poor

babes of those worthless race-deniers and race-traitors. Garret and Johnny know that part of the reason you'll fight is purely rational. They're not fools. Now before you get cross, we're damn glad it's that way. Altruism can make you fight but knowing it's right and good for your own children will make you fight like devils. You'll kill for your unborn babies with a mother's fury. And being true to a man will make him fight like that for you, like a fucking force of nature."

John Boyle's long, thin form casts a spindle-shaped shadow on the boards of the porch. It's somewhat of a frightening shadow, if seen without its master who can be frightening enough.

"Speaking for myself," Boyle says, "I'd use those other slags for a bit of fun. You two aren't like them. I think you've made excellent choices with your sexual lives, which is amazing considering your age. But don't fuck it up. It's easy for a woman to fuck up affairs of the heart. You should be thinking about this anyway, but especially since your men are about to go to war, it's vital that you consider how you feel and what you'll do when the moment arrives for you to choose. Those men don't need any stupid shite from their women. They're going to war with or without you. Don't fuck them over and don't fuck yourselves over by trying to be better friends than your men. When one of you is with her man, the other one of you should not get in the way." He looks at Anna. "If Johnny wants to take KJ, it's between him and her to say where and when."

Anna gasps.

"You think I'm a cockblocker?" she asks, "Jesus Christ, John!"

"See that you aren't," Boyle says, "not even by accident. This is vital if you choose a life of war and principle. If you're out for a good time and a little excitement, I don't care what the fuck you do. If you two choose this life, it's likely to be just you and your men for long periods of time. Don't deny them when they desire you. If you'd do that, go the fuck home and never come back. Go find that obnoxious prick who cares more about nigger sports than the survival of his goddamned race. Let Garret and Johnny suffer now rather than having to live with a frigid, cold-hearted cocktease cunt. If this is to be your life, they will need you and your bodies and, don't fool yourselves, you will need them too."

"No shit, John!" Anna says, "I know we will! I know that!"

John Boyle ignores her cry.

"If you can't give to them when they're in need," he says, "if you can only take when you're in need, then fuck off now and let them have peace. The role of a sentinel will be very hard on them. Very fucking hard. They'll have to do things that torture a man's soul at night for all of his life. If you

can't truly be one fucking body with your man, then let him know right fucking now. It's better to be alone than have your fucking soul shredded by an egocentric cunt."

He sees the hurt on Anna's face. KJ looks at him but gives no sigh of pleasure or pain.

"You might be wondering," Boyle says, "Why's he goin' off like this? What business is it of his? I have a stake in this war. I want my race to survive. I want our women to be like the two of you, if I've judged you right. And if I am right, all I can tell you is this: do not fuck things up. Now, if I'm wrong, and either of you can't abide being the fair sex with your man, or you can't give him everything you have when he comes for you, then it's time to stop this nonsense and go live like the other fucking girls."

His stare is severe.

"You're right, John," KJ says, "You're right about everything. It's not just because of war, though. When there's peace we should still be loyal, and we should reward loyalty. We should love without fetters. It's so fucking maddening that we've fallen for the enemy's bullshit. A man and his wife aren't supposed to be fucking enemies. They're supposed to share everything they have, mind, body and soul." KJ looks away as she says the last part, but returns her powerful blue stare to Boyle's wolfish blue eyes. "I'm bonded to Johnny. I'll say it, why the fuck not? He's the one man who will have me. I don't need a piece of fucking paper from the enemy. I don't need a fucking blood diamond. If he asks me to be his wife, then I'll be his, forever. He can take me whenever he desires."

Anna looks at KJ. She gets a little smile on her face, which begins to show great sympathy. She hugs KJ, who takes Anna's hand.

"The two of you will face a grave decision," Boyle says, "It will come sooner than you may think. Think of everything now, before you decide. There's no going back once you do."

Before Bowen arrives, KJ and Anna take turns at the water basin by the shower. Boyle is inside making his supper. It will be a simple meal, but the fried crappie and dumplings will be delicious.

"Sometimes he's a little hard to take," Anna says as KJ removes her gloves and washes her hands and face, "But he's right. We're a lot more than just shooters. You know, when we talk like this it makes me wish Garret was here. I don't show stuff quite like you do, but it's there."

"I know it is," KJ says after she towels off, "You're not the only one who notices that kind of thing."

"KJ, tell me, please," Anna says as she wipes her hands with a towel, "I'm not a cockblocker, am I? I try not to interfere with you and Johnny."

Please, tell me if I ever do. I never want to do that to either of you. Jesus Christ, I don't want to do that!"

"You never have," KJ says.

"I try not to," Anna says, "That's something that's easy for a woman to do and it's so damn wrong."

"It's OK, Anna, you don't," KJ says, "I won't, either."

Bowen's Jeep enters through the gate. KJ looks at the Rubicon as it approaches.

"I wouldn't worry about it," KJ says, "No one can get between me and my man."

Johnny chooses a beautiful place along WV Route 4 and parks the Jeep. He and KJ have dinner inside the vehicle. It's dark outside and the woodland mosquitoes would maul anyone foolish enough to sit still for more than a few minutes. Inside, with the air and the music on low, KJ and Johnny share a lovely supper. While they dine on wild turkey and cranberry sauce, KJ doesn't mention what's on her mind and Bowen doesn't tell her about David Hill. At the end of the meal, he removes a fruit salad from the bag and proceeds to feed it to her, piece by piece. When he's finished she squeezes his hand and forearm.

As Johnny reaches to shift the Jeep into first gear, KJ stops him.

"Johnny," she says, "can we stay a little longer?"

"Sure, angel," he says, "What's on your mind?"

He knew she was thinking about something. He has a guess as to what. She looks into his eyes.

"About last night," she says, "I hope I didn't fuck things up. Everything was so nice. I know I started to go too far and I'm so sorry, Johnny. I hope I didn't hurt what we have. That's the last thing I wanted to do."

"Do you regret last night?" he asks.

"No, I don't," she says, "It wasn't like the time I was with Justin. It didn't feel wrong with you. I wasn't running or hiding and I wasn't, like, hurt or anything. I was just hoping I didn't mess things up or hurt you somehow. I know you're a man, but a woman can really hurt a man, even a strong man. Why would I do that to any decent man, especially the man I love and who loves me? I'd never fucking do that." She breathes fast for a moment, and closes her eyes. Then she looks at him again. "I don't regret what we did last night," she says, "I'll never regret being that close to you." They both go silent. He waits for her to say what she's thinking. "Or closer," she says.

Bowen puts his hand on her knee.

"You didn't hurt anything, angel," Johnny says, "If you were my wife, I would have taken you last night. Right now, it's just not the time. The gift of your body is for the man who can be with you, who can take you as his wife. We don't know who that is yet."

"I want it to be you," KJ says.

She feels the urge to weep but it does not overcome her. She thinks he didn't see the little sign on her face, but he did.

"So do I," he says, "but this is a war, a goddamned war. It's hard to believe and most white people won't believe it, but we're at war."

"I know you have to fight," she says, "Fuck, we both do, for our race and our children's future. I don't know how, but we have to fight. I don't know what's going on behind the scenes and I don't want to know unless you have to tell me. Whatever is happening, though, maybe you could tell them that I can help you. I can fight by your side. If I'm not good enough, that's fine. I can be an extra pair of eyes for you. Fuck, I'll bring you water when you're thirsty; whatever I can do to help you, I'll do it. Maybe, you could like, ask if I can be there with you?"

She gets a painful little half-smile and shrugs her shoulder. Johnny touches her cheek and she closes her eyes.

"Whoever stays and whoever goes won't be my decision to make," he says "but I will obey it. Emotion can't be a part of this, angel. I've looked at men down the barrel of a gun and I've pulled the trigger. I've seen men die because of my decisions. I've had their blood all over me. Leaving now would be the most difficult decision I have ever made in my entire life. But for you and your children I will go if I have to. Last night was beautiful, angel. It's the closest I've ever been to feeling real, deep-down joy. I know we walked a line we can't cross unless we know we can be together, but even then we'll do it right. I won't give in and hurt you like that, even if we both want it. Every time a woman gives herself to a man who is not her husband she damages her ability to bond to another man, and with each partner she strangles her affection and her raw passion. It just goes to shit. Until I know we can be together, I'm not going to do that to you. You mean far, far too much to me, angel. You're not a one night conquest. With you it has to be forever."

She looks at him with longing and affection on her face. She feels the intense desire to weep again, but this time not out of fear or pain or frantic nervousness. He has touched her deeply, and her crying pain comes from love rather than loss.

"You're so fucking noble," she says, "When I hear that, it's like all the principles I believe in come to life. I know they're true, but you never see

or hear it, so it all remains abstract, like a fucking dream you can't remember. No one wants to risk their life for an abstraction. But here you are, and you're so fucking real. You're like how I dreamt a man could be, and you're right here beside me."

"I know exactly what you're saying," Johnny says.

KJ looks down and laughs a little, and then she wipes the corners of her eyes.

Near the Pennsylvania-West Virginia border, Johnny Bowen stops at a Sheets convenience store to buy a couple of drinks. He picks up a pair of cherry-flavored waters and hurries back to the Jeep.

"Here, sweetheart," he says as he hands a bottle to KJ, "They didn't have blackberry."

"Cherry's fine," she says, "Thank you Johnny."

He looks at her hair, which drapes her shoulders and flows down her back. He can't resist reaching over to touch her mane. She takes a drink and smiles at him.

"I always feel so beautiful when I'm with you," she says.

"Well you are, sweetheart," he says, "We have a handsome little group, don't we? Of course our young women are just incredible."

"Don't underestimate the men," she says and shows him that shy little smile.

He laughs.

"Yeah, we're not bad," he says. The gaiety ebbs. "You know, as lovely as the other ladies are, there's just something that puts you above the rest. I mean, physically, you're a match for Anna, who is an incredibly beautiful young woman. Don't get me wrong. And Sinead and Jesse are gorgeous too, fucking drop-dead gorgeous. Whichever one's most beautiful is going to depend on personal opinion rather than any physical trait." He strokes her hair again. "But honest-to-God, you're above them," he says, "It's one of those things you just can't describe. But it's real. It's in your body language and the way you smile and don't smile. It's in your voice, not just the way you talk but the sound of it. It's in the smell of your hair and that wild flame in your eyes. That kind of thing stirs a man on a deep and powerful level. I can't tell you how deep it goes. It runs right through the soul."

KJ grasps his hand and kisses it.

"Thank you so much," she whispers, "You find ways to touch me no one else ever could. I love you so fucking much."

"I love you too, angel," he says.

Johnny starts the Jeep and drives up to the road.

"Oh yeah," Johnny says, "Don't put away the leggings. They look pretty awesome on you."

KJ gets a little smile and looks down for a moment.

"I wouldn't think of putting them away," she says, and looks him over from his flat stomach to his handsome, expressive face. "I know you like that kind of thing."

At the hall, Johnny and KJ hold each other and kiss before she has to leave. He rubs her lower back and she squeezes him tight. Johnny doesn't tell her about Hill. He'll do that tomorrow morning; let her have a peaceful night, he reckons.

"Be careful, OK?" he says and hugs her again, "I'm glad school ends tomorrow, it's a big fucking relief."

"I'll be careful, Johnny," she says.

They end their embrace. KJ steps back and then rushes forward. She throws her arms around him and kisses his mouth. Then she bites her lip and looks at him with hunger as she backs away. After a few steps she trips on a stone. Johnny snaps his body, ready to rush to her aid, but she never comes close to falling.

"Hey!" he says, "I said be careful!"

"OK," she says, a smile on her face. She looks up at him and the smile disappears. "I love you, Johnny."

"I love you too, angel," he says, "Goodnight."

When KJ enters the blue Jeep she looks down at the water bottle in the cup holder. Bowen's rose is there.

Sunrise on Sunday morning is brilliant red. Taken as an independent phenomenon, it is a portrait of heavenly beauty. As a weather sign, it means the wet and stormy weather will continue into June.

When Bowen arrives at the turn-off of Old Braddock Road, he can see KJ bathed in the crimson light. She bends her arm and waves. She's wearing gloves as usual, which he's grown to adore. KJ also wears a new pair of camo pants that Johnny bought for her. He can tell because these have a tiger-stripe pattern.

KJ doesn't wait for him to exit the Rubicon. She runs over and kisses him through the open window. Then she rubs his hair. It's too short to go out of place, though she tries. The playful look on her face arouses both his sympathies and his deepest desires. How he wishes he knew that she could be his. He's tempted not to tell her about David Hill, but she has an emotional stake in these events. Any escalation of violence against pro-whites has implications for her as well. Johnny exits the Jeep and enters her lively embrace.

"KJ, sweetheart," Johnny says as she puts her head to his chest. He rubs the back of her head. His other hand is on her lower back. "Look here, honey."

KJ looks up into his eyes. Her look becomes serious, even worried.

"David Hill's been shot," he says.

"What?" she says, and then looks down.

"He'll be OK," he says, "I talked to Cristi last night. They extracted the bullet from his shoulder. He's already taking about the show on the 28th."

KJ buries her head in Johnny's chest.

"I'm so glad he's alright," she says, "Was anyone else hurt?"

"An acquaintance was shot," Johnny says, "He's in bad shape. So is a girl who happened to be walking by. She might not make it."

"Who did it?" KJ asks.

"Some quarter-Jew antifa," Johnny says, "He's trying to say that he felt threatened by the lyrics and feared for his life."

"Why wouldn't he?" she asks. KJ steps back to look at Johnny. "All he needs is one kike on the jury, or even a fucking white traitor. It'll be hung even though he's just fucking admitted it. Fuck, it's getting worse and worse. They killed that protestor and now this." She shakes her head and Johnny puts his other hand on her hand. "All they have to do is call us racist. They dehumanize us to the point that violence against men like you is considered humorous. Violence against white men is violence against me. No one thinks a white woman will realize that, but I do. I won't follow their fucking rules. You know what? It'd be so satisfying to shoot that motherfucker before he could hurt any more of us."

"I know, angel," Johnny says.

He steps forward and takes her into his arms again, kissing her head several times. Then he lets her go so that she can stomp and rage.

"What will our children face?" she says. The frustration is obvious in her body language. "Constant dehumanizing and hatred between white men and women?" she says, "How the fuck can anyone say that we're not facing genocide? I could cry right now, Johnny, when I think about what's going to happen, I just feel like crying."

"Your children will have peace, angel," Johnny says. He puts both hands on her cheeks. "No one's going to degrade them. That's the world we'll give your white children and we will kill anyone who tries to stop us."

His fierce green eyes never look away from her untamed, passionate blue ones; neither do hers look away from his.

"There was a time when words like that would have scared me," she says, "but not anymore. You comfort me when you talk like that."

Johnny kisses her head. She closes her eyes as he holds her tight.

Today it's KJ's turn to be reticent around Anna and John Boyle. Her mood is not cold or unfriendly, but she cannot help being quiet. Her performance speaks for her. Despite the emotional ups and downs of the last few days, her shooting progresses even further. At medium range she is lethal with the .30-06. She's well on her way with the .50 caliber. Anna now sees what Boyle and Bowen suspected; KJ is a prodigy, a killer angel should she choose to be.

"You're gonna need a name," Anna says, "I am too. After all the traitors and heebes have done to our race they need to fear our wrath, and we'll need names so that they remember what we do to them."

The night will bring more thunder. The late afternoon sky swelters in the thick air that will fuel the coming maelstroms and there's more than enough instability to give birth to some fierce electrical storms. KJ and Anna suffer in the torrid, soupy atmosphere even though clouds shield them from the sun. John Boyle decides to put them through a grueling test. They'll need to be able to shoot under such uncomfortable conditions. He walks down the length of the range until he arrives at a few plastic balls he's suspended from adjacent trees. He calls to the ladies on a short-range walkie-talkie radio. Anna groans as she gets up from her seat on the porch and answers his call.

"Anna," says Irish John, "Turn this up so KJ can hear. I want both of you to get over to the range. There are balls hung in the trees. I want both of you to target these balls. Anna, yours are yellow; KJ, yours are red. When I give the order you are to fire, one shot each and only one shot. I'll yell loud enough for you to hear over the plugs. If you wait more than three seconds to fire, I will consider it a failure. Now get off your lazy asses and get the fuck to the range."

The two obey his command. The young warriors observe the balls hanging in the trees and think that this is too easy. They both know that Irish John is up to something. The two put in their earplugs.

"Now, aim," Boyle says.

Seconds turn to minutes. Sweat begins to roll. Boyle watches from the left. They know he's watching. If either girl does more than blink, he will ask for a shot.

Twenty minutes later he yells into the radio. Two near-simultaneous shots ring out. Both find their targets. There is no respite after the shot. Boyle orders them to aim again. This continues until each of them has fired five shots, with intervals between aiming and firing lasting between one and fifteen minutes. All of the shots strike home.

The echo of the final shot bounces off the thick air and the surrounding hills and gullies. The two young women look at one another. As sweaty as Anna's become, KJ is worse off. Her hair's not in a ponytail and it's even thicker than Anna's. The oppressive heat, coupled with intense concentration and her natural warmth douse her with perspiration. Her high-strung nature doesn't help, either.

"You look like you got dunked," Anna says.

"I feel like it," KJ says.

As usual, Boyle does not commend them. He tells them what they'll be doing next week.

"Praise from John," Anna whispers, after he's well out of earshot, "We're allowed to come back next week."

The first storm breaks as KJ and Johnny drive down the trail to WV Route 16. It is a small and isolated storm – mostly heat lightning and an occasional whisper of thunder – but further north the thunderstorms will be plentiful and more powerful.

Johnny will bring supper on Sundays. Lately, KJ has urged him not to, since she arrives home earlier than on Saturdays. When he insists, however, she does not force the issue. KJ bides her time for the day when she can make both breakfast and supper for the two of them. As her culinary skills progress, so too does the joy and the pride of making an excellent meal. Erica always loved to cook, in spite of what her feminist mouth spouted, and she had a fierce desire to learn the proper relationships between foods, spices and other ingredients, both on a practical and theoretical level. In time, however, she began to use her vast knowledge and considerable talent to impress or humiliate others. KJ has learned much of what Erica could teach, mostly by observing and through dogged persistence, but instead of impressing others she practices the art in order to better herself and to witness the satisfaction and contentment of those dear to her, like Johnny Bowen.

Today the program is somewhat unusual. Johnny wanted to bring supper but could not. A greater need arose, and he, Cristi, Garret and Austin Kelly were able to practice self-defense at Kelly's place near Addison, Pennsylvania. Johnny sees KJ as he pulls up near the porch. Although she's washed her face and hands, she planned on showering at home and Johnny can see that she's suffered from the unforgiving heat. Johnny would prefer that KJ be able to shower and go to bed rather than make supper at home and have to put up with Erica all the while. Near Frametown, West Virginia, there's a small restaurant that's open on Sunday afternoon and evening. Johnny doesn't ask if she'd like to stop.

"I didn't have time for supper," Johnny says, "I fucking hate not bringing something for us."

"It's cool, Johnny," she says, "You have shit to do, I understand."

"Oh, I know," he says, "It's just fun to do it. It's nice to have dinner with you."

KJ smiles. She gets a surprised look when he signals to turn into the little restaurant. She says nothing, instead rubbing his shoulder with a few slow strokes of her hand. He's saying "I love you" with an act rather than a sentence.

Johnny parks facing the highway. A quartet of cement trucks passes by the entrance of the restaurant. The driver of the last truck waves at them.

"Do you know that guy?" KJ asks.

"I don't think so," Johnny says.

Johnny opens his door and looks at KJ before stepping out.

"This place isn't bad, really," he says, "I'll grab us something and be right back."

KJ doesn't protest, even out of a desire to save him money. There are better ways to show appreciation.

Johnny returns with two meals – a couple of steaks with collard greens and a salad, together with two iced teas. The food is quite good for a simple roadside meal. Still, he's peeved at having to buy supper on these rare occasions when he can give something substantial, crafted with his own hands, to the woman he loves.

"I wish I had time to make something," he says, "As good as this is, I always prefer something I made with my own hands. Or with yours."

"This is good, Johnny, thanks for thinking of me," she says, "It's nice to be surprised sometimes."

Johnny ordered her steak done medium-rare, since he wasn't certain how she likes it. She prefers rare. KJ doesn't say a word about it. He caresses her shoulder, and then slides his hand a little under the sleeve of her camouflaged t-shirt.

"I'm pretty nasty right now," she says.

"Nah," he says.

The bright flashes in the distance are as yet inaudible. The sign is unmistakable, however: an electrical storm is bearing down on central West Virginia. As soon as they finish supper, Johnny and KJ beat a hasty departure from Frametown.

Near Weston, the sky brightens and the clouds are less intimidating. The relative calm would fool the unwary. Night will usher in a powerful

squall line. Further north, the heavens do not lie. Around Morgantown, the sky is dark and ominous. Unlike the distant flashes of lighting that gave supper a thrilling ambiance, these are a menacing show of might. When the rain appears it beats down hard upon the windshield.

South of Fairchance, Pennsylvania, the lack of visibility forces Bowen to pull over.

"It's a little scary, isn't it?" KJ says.

Johnny reaches over and rubs her shoulder.

"It feels good in here," he says.

KJ smiles and nods. Now's a good time to ask.

"Do you remember when I asked you what you thought about piercings?" she asks.

"Yeah," he says, "You want to get one, huh?"

"Yeah," she says.

"OK," he says.

He trusts she will not do anything to degrade her intense beauty, but rather will opt for a discrete little stud, perhaps on the side of her nose or below her bottom lip.

"If you have a problem with it," she says, "I won't get one. We're together, at least for now, and your thoughts matter to me."

"Sweetheart," he says, "As long as it doesn't fuck up your look or damage your body, it'll be alright. I can tell you've thought about this for a while. How long have you wanted one?"

"Since I was twelve or thirteen," she says, "A little one, right here."

She touches the space just below her lower lip. He looks at her for a few moments before speaking.

"I don't mind those, to be honest," he says, "but there is a risk, you know. It'll be easier to get an infection."

"We wouldn't be able to French kiss for about six weeks," she says, "I don't want to deny you, Johnny."

"Why do you want it?" he asks, "Just 'cause it'll look good?"

"No," she says, "I mean, that's part of it, but that's not the only reason. I really like how that little silver ball would look on me and I refuse to surrender that kind of thing to dykes and anti-white punks. It's about time a racist white punk had one."

He laughs.

"It's your call," he says, "You know that I won't turn you away if you get one. A little stud below your lip is not a big deal, but, seriously, think about it. An infection can be a big fucking deal, especially in your mouth or on your face. OK?"

"I will," KJ says, "and I have, too, seriously. I found a place that's really clean and has all five-star ratings. I'll go and talk to them and see what they say." She looks down and shrugs. "I'll think about it." Her frustration begins to show. "Fuck, I hate letting them have every symbol and cool look. But out at Coalsack it could get dirty. Goddamn it, I could see that happening, and with my luck.... And then when I fight...Fuck!"

"You'll have to consider all that," Johnny says.

KJ nods, still looking down. Then a wicked grin comes to her face and she looks up at him. The cabin light bathes her, illuminating her beauty, which is extraordinary in spite of the sweat and the somewhat tired look she has right now.

"I can still torture my father with the idea," KJ says, "even if I decide not to get one."

Johnny laughs.

"My fucking angel," he says, "Did I tell you I love you?"

She smiles and the tired look goes away for a little while. She rubs his cheek with her gloved hand.

For all their fury, the storms pass by in a rush. There's a remnant shower over the hall when KJ and Bowen arrive. She rushes out into the rain and he follows. He sees her there, her eyes closed and her face to the sky. The air is cool from the storms and the rain is gentle and invigorating. KJ must hear or sense him somehow; when Johnny gets close to her, she opens her eyes and embraces him.

The kisses they share are passionate and last longer than the rain.

Monday, the 3rd of June, is the last day of classes at Uniontown and Laurel Highlands High Schools. For Anna Murphy, it is the end of her high school years. This evening is the commencement ceremony. It is commencement at Uniontown as well. If not for her confrontation with Epstein and the class time she missed, KJ would have graduated as well. Her grades, though poor, would have enabled her to squeak by. Instead, she must ostensibly attend another semester in the fall. Since she's not graduating and her parents will not allow her to stay home, KJ will have to spend the day at Uniontown High. Weems asks math teacher James Beal to supervise KJ. She's not allowed to listen to music, sleep or text. Although Beal allows her to go to the library for a book, Weems sees her pass his office and runs into the hall to accost her. She tells him the truth in vain; he sends her back to the classroom.

A stunned Mr. Beal asks her why she came back empty-handed. She tells him why, without anger or any other emotion. Excepting lunch, the rest of the day KJ sits in Beal's class and writes music or looks out the

window. There are branches on the lawn from last night's storms. When it's time to go home, she throws away her little songbook.

KJ says nothing during the trip to the Campbell House. Gene is oblivious to the ambush that she's prepared for him. After her usual after-school shower, KJ changes and prepares for battle.

Gene is in the den looking at the TV. He can't concentrate on its cloying stupidity, no matter how hard he tries to force himself. While he stares and tries not to contemplate his so-called family, KJ enters the den. He only becomes aware of her presence when she hops on the couch. The sudden movement startles him and he looks at her with shock and annoyance. She says nothing, instead handing him a piece of paper. It's from a map website and contains directions from Uniontown to a locale in Pittsburgh. He looks at her. She's wearing a clean t-shirt, a different pair of jeans and a pair of tall army boots. Her luxurious hair is all around her. She should be beautiful to him, her father. He should look at her with pride and joy. Her comeliness only deepens the mystery that bedevils him. How could she consider her race special? Doesn't she realize that there is no white race? Whites enslave and abuse the other races. They're racists. He's white of course, but he considers himself one of the few who is not racist, in spite of his unquestioning hatred of his own race. He considers himself better than them. If KJ wasn't his daughter, he would want her to be punished. For a moment he wonders if she should be nonetheless.

"Do you remember Mackenzie Zuckerman?", KJ asks.

Gene nods, clears his throat, and then says "Yes". His voice and body language are weak in spite of his decent size and somewhat impressive physical strength. He wonders what this is all about. His fear grows.

"She called me white trash," KJ says, "I didn't even insult her and I didn't lay a finger on that bitch."

"Maybe if..." he begins to say.

"I'm not finished" she says.

He feels the warmth of anger but says nothing. He hopes this won't escalate.

"We both know the school won't punish her," KJ says, "You can insult whitey all you want. Just don't say 'nigger' even if they assault you. But I digress. Anyway, here's your part."

He waits in horror for her demands. Will she ask him to talk to Principal Weems? To Zuckerman's father? He'll do neither.

"The directions I gave you are to a shop in Pittsburgh. It's clean and highly regarded with over 50 five-star reviews and none less than four. You're either going to take me there and sign the permission slip..."

Gene interrupts, "For what?"

"A piercing," KJ says.

"I will not!" he says.

"Or..." she says quite loud, "Or I will beat Mackenzie Zuckerman until she's ugly for the rest of her life. Do you see how strong my arms have become? Anyway, I thought you'd react before thinking, so I considered other options as well. Mom hasn't had one of those pathetic parties lately, has she? Maybe your 'diverse' colleague will show up, what's his name? Whitehurst, right? If he does I promise you I'll tell him to keep his yellow nigger eyes off of my ass."

"I will not give in to your goddamned threats!" he says.

His face flashes red.

"This is not a threat," she says, "One more thing, by the way, If you tell mom and the both of you try to send me to Juvie or boot camp or that fucking Quaker school, I'll run away, but not before I burn this fucking place to ashes."

"Are you insane?", he asks, "Have you finally gone over the edge?"

"I'm bargaining with you," she says, "Actually, I'm being civil. You destroyed my books and my iPod. You cut off my internet access. You shove poison down my throat to neuter my emotions and you call it anger fucking management."

"It's for your own good!" says Gene.

"How about murdering my brother?" she says, "Was that for my own good?"

Gene sits in stunned silence for a while before he can respond. She waits, staring into his eyes.

"Are you insane?" is all he can mutter.

"It doesn't matter," she says. She jumps to her feet. "I've set up an appointment for Thursday. Are you going to take me or not?"

"What's next?" A car?" he asks, "A million dollars?"

He looks back at the TV. Maybe she'll go away.

"You can choose to believe that this is my only demand," she says, "Or you can try me."

He ignores her. She walks to the foyer then returns carrying a cell phone; his cell phone. He left it on the stand with his keys. He hears her press the buttons.

"Who are you calling?" he asks.

His fear grows again.

"Marty Schillinger," she says.

Schillinger is the principal of Ben Franklin Middle School.

Gene jumps to his feet and tries to snatch the phone. He hears it dial. Schillinger will know who's calling.

"I'll take you!" he says as she dodges his cumbersome attempts to catch her. "Give me the goddamned phone!"

KJ tosses it to him just before Schillinger answers.

"Yes, this is Gene," he says into the phone, "I'm sorry, Marty, I accidentally called your number on redial. Thank you, Marty, bye."

Gene glares at her. She returns his icy stare.

"What the fuck happened to you?" he asks, "How did you end up like this?"

"You're wasting time," she says, "That's the same as refusal to me."

"Since my name's going to be on the permission slip for this stupidity," he says, "I want to know where you're getting pierced."

"My nipples," she says without hesitation.

The look of horror on his face is priceless.

She gets a wicked little smile.

"You like radical and rebellious as long as you pick the target, don't you? You like it as long as I follow your fucking orders," she says. "But when I make the choice, well...not so much, huh? You raised me to express myself and to challenge stereotypes, so what the fuck's the matter when I want to express myself with a fucking nipple piercing?"

There's still horror on his face. KJ looks down and shakes her head before she looks back into his eyes. Her blue stare causes him to look away for a moment.

"I'm not piercing my nipples, OK?" she says, "I'm going to get one below my lip, here, if I decide to get one." She points to the spot right below the center of her lower lip. "I'm going to buy a little silver ball. It's nothing major, alright?"

He swallows hard. She can hear it.

"Thursday at 10 AM," she says, "It's in Pittsburgh. I'll let you know what I decide, and if so, I'm sure you won't mind taking me."

KJ leaves the room. Gene feels like he's been punched in the gut.

Even though KJ has escaped the dangers of Uniontown High, she cannot spend all day at the Donnelly Homestead. Erica would suspect trickery. Even if she did not, she might use labor laws to put Bill in a terrible predicament. KJ must adhere to her old schedule. On Tuesday, she and Johnny practice pistol shooting at the indoor range. They practice intimacy as well. Before she has to leave, she stores more of her clothing in the little interior room. Included among the cut-offs and sleeveless tees are the black snakeskin leggings, which will join the pair she wore on their

date and the other pairs that she's bought over the last year or so. The joy of watching Johnny's face when she wears the snakeskin pair is far greater than the satisfaction of annoying Erica by wearing them at the Campbell House. To KJ, Erica is fading into an ugly shadow.

Once she's back at the Campbell House, KJ makes a quick supper and then drives to the grocery store. A few of the all-natural items that she wanted to buy weren't in stock yesterday, but the manager guaranteed they would be today. By planning her purchases, KJ has time to stop at Panera for a coffee and the use of their Wi-Fi. She checks the website of the piercing studio she plans to visit with Gene. The website says that the parlor opens at 9 AM on weekdays. Gene will take her whether he likes it or not. She clicks on the news link to the left. To her dismay, she learns that the highest-rated artist is on vacation. The person in question is supposed to return on the 11th.

"Fuck," KJ says out loud.

Because of her ear buds the word comes out much louder than she wanted. In an instant KJ realizes what she's done. She looks up to see her worst fears come to life: a white woman with a little boy is looking at her. An angry scowl is on the woman's face.

"I am so sorry," KJ says.

She exhales and closes her eyes. *Nice job, dumbass* she thinks.

That night KJ barricades her bedroom door and calls Johnny Bowen on her cell phone. She's not worried should Erica find the phone- it's in Bill's name, and she can claim it's a work phone. She will, however, be in a very tight spot should Erica catch her talking to her lover. She speaks to Johnny in whispers. He teases her by whispering his replies.

"Stop it!" she whispers just a little louder.

"OK," he whispers.

She laughs. As usual, her body shows it more than any sound.

When KJ arrives at the Long Hall on Wednesday, she sees a familiar Wrangler parked beside the Chevy dump truck. Garret Fogarty must be somewhere on the premises. She leaves an empty space between the blue Jeep and Garret's vehicle. Anna is supposed to come. KJ takes her backpack and walks to the entrance. It's comfortable outside for June, though it's bright enough for her to hurry out of the damaging rays.

KJ, expecting to engage in self-defense training or perhaps target practice, is in a white t-shirt and has on a pair of bike shorts under black sweat pants. She knocks on the door to the hall before she tries her key. It seems rude of her to open the door without announcing her presence, especially since Garret might be inside.

KJ's politeness is not in vain. The door opens to reveal Garret Fogarty. He's wearing jeans and a t-shirt. KJ didn't expect him to be dressed so casual. It's always a surprise to see him dressed like this, despite the logic of it all.

"Hello, KJ," Garret says.

He's letting his hair grow longer. Blond locks climb down his neck and his angelic face doesn't look a day older since she's known him. It is immaculate as usual.

"Hi, Garret," she says.

"Come on in," he says, "We just loaded the fridge. Feel free to take something if you're thirsty."

"Thank you," she says, "Do you and Johnny have plans?"

"Yes we do," he says.

"I guess Anna and I will be at the range," she says.

"Not yet," he says, "Go ahead and take a seat. We'll wait for Johnny and Anna."

KJ pulls a chair from under the little wooden table.

Today there are four chairs in the foyer. Garret disappears into the left-side room and then returns. He takes a seat in the opposite side of the table.

"How have you been?" he asks.

"Good," she says, "I'm, like, really good when I'm here, so it balances out to good, I guess."

"How are things at Coalsack?" he asks.

"Pretty good, I think," she says, "I think I'm making progress."

Garret knows her progress has been phenomenal.

"How's the fifty caliber?" he asks.

She gets a little smile.

"It's big and heavy," she says, "and interesting."

"Do you think you could carry and use one of those?" he asks..

"Yeah," she says, "I could do that."

"Someone else could carry it for a while," he says, "Or the ammunition. I think you could handle the rifle."

"I think so, too," she says, "I'm kind of sure I can carry it. I hope I could use it well enough."

"That's something to find out," he says.

KJ nods.

"You've been frank with me in the past," he says, "and I need that right now. There's no wrong answer, KJ, but I need to know. If a life of honesty and loyalty to your race and your children meant living in a tent like

we did in April, could you live such a life? Most women or men for that matter could not.”

“Would there be a shower?” KJ asks, “Or some way to keep my body clean? I’m white and it’s in our nature to be clean. A lot of us ignore that urge but I don’t.”

“Yes, there’d be a shower,” Garret says, “but no television, computers or iPods.”

“I’d miss the music,” she says.

“Is that a yes?” he asks.

She looks up and into his eyes.

“If it meant that white children can live in peace,” she says, “then yes, anything.”

Garret stares deep into her eyes. She doesn’t avoid his gaze.

“You may have to watch Johnny die,” he says.

“At least he’ll die in the arms of the woman who loves him,” she says, “He’ll know that I’ll be his and only his.”

“If you choose this life,” Garret says, “Remember, it will be harsh and brutal.”

“I have to fight,” she says, “For my race, and for Johnny and for the little life that I hope will grow inside of me someday. I will not abandon them, not even for the beating of my own heart.”

“Thank you, KJ,” he says.

“Thank you for considering me,” she says.

The door opens and Anna enters, followed by Johnny.

“Hi, KJ!” Anna says, “Hello, Garret.”

Garret and KJ arise. Johnny and KJ greet and kiss while Anna and Garret embrace. Her hair is down and Garret runs his hand over her lush red crown.

After the sweetness and smiles and gentle contact that bonds one soul to another, the foursome moves into the left- side room. Johnny asks the ladies to take a seat for the time being. Then he dons the focus mitts and he and Garret square off. Garret practices his strikes on a moving target. His performance surprises KJ, who’s’ come to expect proficiency from these men. She doesn’t know about the Laurel Mountain Sparring Club.

“Nice,” Anna says.

“That’s why he never got his face messed up,” Johnny says, “Cause he’s a fast motherfucker.”

“Not fast enough to avoid broken ribs,” Garret says, “or a bruised one.”

“It could have been broken,” Johnny says, “But I like you, Garret.”

Garret lifts his knee toward Bowen's crotch. He telescopes the hit and doesn't come with power or speed. Bowen turns away and acts like he's going to elbow Garret in the head. It's male tomfoolery at its best.

"Hey!" KJ yells, "Not down there!"

Anna laughs out loud.

"Yeah," Johnny says. He slaps Garret across the very top of his head. "What the hell's the matter with you?"

Garret and John Bowen do not continue for long. It's the ladies' turn to practice. Unlike the men, the ladies do not square off against each other. The heavy bag and focus mittens are their targets. At the end, Bowen emphasizes his most important point.

"Stun and run, ladies," he says, "This isn't Hollywood. Stun and run, and if you can only do one or the other, then run."

The decision to eat after shooting practice is unanimous. Garret leads off when they arrive at the range. He draws his .45 caliber 1911A1 pistol and begins firing. The bullets fly in rapid succession and strike the target. KJ's never seen him shoot like this. The fight club wasn't his only hobby while growing up.

William Donnelly is the proprietor of two automobile repair shops; one in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, and the other in Meyersdale. His full-time workers include Mason Walker and Austin Kelly. On occasion, Cristian O'Toole performs a little after-hours work at the Meyersdale shop. Today is one such day. Cristian, who has the day off from his refrigerator and air conditioner repair job, has been working at Bill's since 6 AM. He and Austin are repairing the transmission in Mr. Steven Tate's Toyota Tacoma. Just before second break arrives at 2 PM, Bill comes around the garage. Cristian uses the opportunity to talk to Bill alone. They walk behind the shop. White cumulus clouds, some threatening to grow into thunderheads, fill the otherwise blue sky.

The two men stop at the bottom of the grassy slope behind the rear storage garage. Bill puts his hand on Cristian's shoulder.

"If our world were a happier place," Bill says, "I'd offer you a job, Cristian. You've gotten quite good at automotive repair and we could always use an air conditioning man."

"I followed in dad's footsteps," Cristian says, "at least with repair work. Radu was a huge help."

Cristian's uncle Radu Moldoveanu runs a repair shop in Resita, Romania. Cristian spent three weeks of every June in Resita, from the start of middle school to the summer he graduated from Southern Garret High.

"Do you ever think of going back?" Bill asks.

"Yes," Cristian says. His bright brown eyes remind Bill of a boy he grew up with in County Tyrone. Like Bill, that boy became an IRA man. "If we get things rolling here I'd like to go back. We have a big fight to win, here and in the mother countries."

Bill nods and smiles. He sees a lot of his youth in this young man.

"I believe you have a question for me," Bill says.

"I do," Cristian says, "Tell me, Bill, why wasn't Johnny chosen to be a leader? He's been in the army. He's actually been to war."

"Garret is a leader," Bill says, "Johnny is a hero. Capricorn needs both."

Garret, Anna and Johnny doddle around in the parking lot outside the hall. It's too nice to spend the entire time indoors. Crickets chirp with less passion than usual. It's a cool night for June. KJ is still inside, taking a brief shower. Johnny Bowen, meanwhile, checks out the blue Jeep. Some time ago, before things got serious, KJ asked him for a wallet-sized picture. He gave her one the next day. Now it sits in the flat space ahead of the cup holders.

"Did she show you yet?" Anna asks Johnny, snapping him out of his trance.

"Hmm?" he says.

"Did she show you her ink?" Anna asks.

"Not yet," Johnny says.

He walks over to the entrance where Anna sits under Garret's right arm.

"John," Garret says, "I've invited Anna to dinner on Friday. We'd be delighted to spend the evening with you and KJ."

"That's a good idea," Johnny says, "When she's done I'll ask her."

"Good," Garret says. He rubs Anna's back and rises to his feet. "Call me tomorrow. We'll go to *Out of the Fire* if you two don't mind."

"Cool," Johnny says, "Any after dinner plans?"

"We'll make it up as we go along," Garret says.

"Nice," Johnny says.

Garret fluffs Anna's hair as he walks by her on his way to the hall.

Inside the bathroom, KJ towels off her perfect white body and looks at her tattoo in the large mirror beside the sink. She can't help but smile. Paddy was right; the final result is more beautiful than she could have imagined. They are no scabs, not even small ones, nor is there the faintest redness. The ink looks like it just appeared there, on her flawless white skin. Her estimate was correct. Friday is the perfect day for the angel to show her wings to the man she loves.

Once she's back in a t-shirt and bike shorts, KJ emerges from the bathroom/dressing room. Johnny is waiting and he hugs her. He's careful to keep his hands from her upper back.

"It's OK now," KJ says. It's his cue to caress her entire back. "Thanks for being patient with me. I hope it's worth the wait."

"It will be," Johnny says, "Hey, Garret and Anna are getting together on Friday. They asked if we'd like to come along."

KJ nods and smiles.

"That'd be nice," she says, "And afterward I'll have something to show you."

He murmurs with delight as he rubs her back.

"You know," she says, "If I do decide to get a stud, we won't be able to kiss like we do, not for a month or two."

"I know," he says, "I'll save them for you."

"Don't do that!" she says and then without thinking too hard, "Kiss me somewhere!"

The clock is the only sound for a little while.

"OK," Johnny says.

Then he begins to laugh. She closes her eyes and exhales. Her expression is one of embarrassment and rebuke.

"I know what you mean, angel," he says after watching her fold her arms.

"I need to be more careful with my words," she says.

"Don't you dare!" he says

She smiles and looks down. She wants to kiss him right now. He takes the initiative and moves closer to her. He kisses her head and her neck, and finishes with her gloved hand. Once he's done, it's her turn, and she takes him by the cheeks and kisses his lips with all the wild passion that burns inside of her.

"That will be the longest six weeks of my life," she says.

She's starting to get doubts about whether the piercing, and what it symbolizes to her, is worth the risks and the sacrifices. There are other ways to show her defiance and indeed she is doing just that.

KJ and Johnny exit the hall to find that they are alone. The darkness of the area around the hall allows the stars to shine in all their intrinsic brilliance. The clouds of earlier today have gone. Since the air is neither hot nor humid, KJ and Johnny sit for a while on the front step of the hall. He puts his strong arm around her.

"How's David?" she asks, "I checked on the internet but I couldn't find any new information."

"Good," Johnny says, "He'll be going home in a few days. Their Facebook says the show for the 28th is still on. You wanna go?"

"Yeah," KJ says, "Hey, about tomorrow, where are we going?"

"*Out of the Fire*," he says, "Over in Donegal. Have you ever been there?"

She shakes her head. Erica and Gene have, but they didn't find out about the place until KJ was awake, and by then they stopped taking her with them.

"We'll come over here afterward so you can change for a walk," he says, "Then we'll go to Ohiopyle, as long as it's not too sunny for my white angel."

He smiles and she looks down and does the same. Then she rubs his chest and looks at him.

"Another date, huh?" she says.

"Yeah," he says.

He squeezes her shoulder and then runs his hand down her hair.

"Thank you, Johnny," she says, "For everything, really." She looks down again, a faint sad expression on her face. "Thank you for ending my isolation."

He kisses her head.

"I'd give you a good life," he says.

"I know," she says, "We'd have a place up in the mountains."

"A lot of assholes look down their noses at a guy like me," he says, "But honestly, driving is a good job. I could take care of a family doing that."

"Fuck those assholes," she says, "You're more decent than all of those pricks. How many of them have a wife like me?" She looks at him. The sorrow is gone, replaced by a wicked little smile. "They go home to their nasty ass wives and empty beds. You'd barely get in the door and I'd be all around you."

He starts to lift the back of her shirt.

"You wearing a bra?" he asks.

"No," she says.

He lowers her top.

"Hey, no peeking!" she says, "You'll see the whole thing on Friday."

"OK," he says.

They sit and talk for a little while longer. The words are somewhat sporadic. Both are content just to be close.

Discipline and tenacity enable KJ to sleep on Thursday night. She manages to stay in bed until 10 AM. She hoped to get one day of rest after

the end of classes, and with the weather being nice and the air conditioner running, she plunges under the covers and sleeps the entire morning. Today she goes downstairs for breakfast before she takes a shower or even changes clothes. Her long evening t-shirt covers her thong but leaves most of her legs bare. Gene's already gone, but KJ noticed on the calendar that Erica is off today. She descends so scantily dressed in order to aggravate the woman who chose to spare her but not her brother.

KJ enters the kitchen with heavier than usual footsteps. Erica snaps her head up from her crepes.

"Your fourth day off from school and you're already half-naked," Erica says.

"Don't worry," KJ says, "I have work. I'm not going out like this."

She looks at Erica.

"I wonder sometimes," says Erica, who gets back to her breakfast. Since she made them for herself, the crepes are lovely and delicious.

KJ gets her wicked little smile.

The sky is deep blue and dotted with an occasional *cumulus humilis*. KJ puts on her sunglasses and Seahawks cap before leaving. She checks the Jeep's gas gauge and is momentarily surprised to see it full. Sometime last night, Johnny must have filled it up. His picture is still beside the emergency brake. KJ looks at it for a moment. There's a slim chance Erica could see it, should she inspect the blue Jeep. KJ shakes her head and mouths the words "fucking bitch." She puts the picture in the glove box, on top of her cloth-covered .45.

The prearranged meeting time is 2 PM. KJ arrives at the Long Hall at one. On the Jeep key ring is a key to the hall, courtesy Johnny Bowen. KJ's added a little blue flashlight to the ring. Once inside, she goes through her clothes and chooses a nice black pair of pants and a short-sleeved top that has a chain motif. She brushes her long mane and ties it in a very thick ponytail. As the hour approaches two, she puts on a little blue eye shadow. That's all the cosmetics she'll wear.

John Bowen is next to arrive. KJ watches to see how he's dressed. She still has time to change if she's misinterpreted his description of the place. When he exits the Rubicon, the sight brings her relief and delight. His clothes – a pair of gray pants and a short-sleeved dress shirt – are similar in formality to her attire. He also looks very good in them. When he arrives at the entrance, he lifts his hand to knock. At that moment KJ opens the door.

"Hey," she says, feeling a little bashful now that she's in front of him.

"You look beautiful, angel," Johnny says.

Johnny enters and takes her into his arms. He can be as hard as iron or gentle and smooth. He's always firm, though. Every time he holds her there are emotions; some born of longing and desire, others of love and affection. Today she feels great warmth and comfort in his arms.

"I like that ponytail," he says, "It's nice to do that every so often."

She nods, a big smile on her face.

Bowen's hair is always short. It's just as thick as ever. He gets it trimmed every other week but never thinned. She'd never want him to.

Garret and Anna arrive in his Wrangler Sport. She's wearing a green summer dress and her hair, like KJ's, is in a ponytail. The dress shows just enough of her sensual swimmer's body to command maximum attention. Garret looks very sharp in his black pants and somewhat longer-sleeved shirt. The four kinsmen and kinswomen share their greetings, with Anna and KJ hugging and complementing each other's appearance.

"Rian couldn't make it," Garret says.

"That sucks," Johnny says.

"Yeah," Garret says, "It would have been nice. It's alright, though, they'll owe us one." He looks at the two young women. "Ladies, shall we depart?"

Garret holds his elbow out for Anna, who places her hand inside. Bowen throws his arm around KJ.

Once the two Jeeps merge onto Highway 119, Johnny turns on the iPod. *Nothingface* begins the playlist.

"What do you think they're listening to?" KJ asks.

"It depends on whose iPod is playing," Johnny says.

"Anna's?" KJ says.

"*Eluvetie* or *My Dying Bride*," he says.

"What about Garret?" she asks.

"Oh, probably Beeth-oven," Johnny says, emphasizing the first syllable.

KJ giggles and shakes her head.

In Connellsville, Johnny points out the road to Normalville.

"That's the way to Falling Water," he says, "Have you ever been there?"

"Yeah," she says, "It was one of the first places we visited when we moved here."

The shadows of passing clouds dot the fields and woodlands around Donegal. Bicycles and vintage convertibles are more plentiful owing to the dry weather. The serenity is a stark contrast to the recent fury of the thunderstorms, but not everything escaped the wrath of the heavens; a ven-

erable sycamore lies across a farm truck in one of the fields near the restaurant.

After Johnny pulls into the parking lot, KJ asks him to cruise around so she can be sure that neither Erica nor Gene is present. The odds are miniscule, but the result would be disastrous. When she's convinced neither her parents nor their close acquaintances are present, KJ sighs in relief. Johnny parks and then he rubs her shoulder.

The quality of the meal is superb and the mood is carefree. Even Garret leaves aside his concerns. He does not observe their interactions and behaviors, as he has done recently when the four were together. Anna can sense the easing of his burdens, which in turn helps her to forget her own worries. Today the four simply enjoy the food and the company. They share stories and questions, both mundane and remarkable, and quite a few laughs. It also becomes clear that Anna will be driving back to the hall. Garret is the only one to drink wine.

After supper is over, Anna takes a picture of KJ and Johnny in front of his Rubicon. KJ returns the favor. Garret and Anna stand to the side of his Jeep, with a field and the blue and white sky in the background. Then the pale beauties flee the sun for the shelter of the Jeeps. Johnny opens the door for KJ, who immediately reaches over and unlocks his door. Garret opens Anna's door, and she says something to him before entering. They laugh and then he touches her cheek. Before he can enter, she, too, unlocks her man's door.

"I hope that they can be together," KJ says as Johnny backs out of the parking spot. "I hope that we..."

She looks down and then back into his eyes.

"We can today," he says, "It's a start."

KJ smiles.

At the hall, KJ and the others change into more suitable attire for a walk in the woods. KJ lets her hair down and Anna dons a Penguins cap. They'll both wear sunglasses and unbuttoned long-sleeve shirts until they enter the relative darkness of the trail. For Anna, a trip to Ohiopyle is a common occurrence. Last year, she and Garret went rafting on the Youghiogheny with Rian Donnelly, Mason Walker and a couple of Mason's cousins. Mason tried to play matchmaker for Johnny Bowen and a waitress at a local pizzeria. It was May and KJ was just a rumor among the core group.

KJ used to frequent Ohiopyle, though for obvious reasons she never went rafting or swimming in the wild river. Before the fighting began between her and Erica, she used to go with school mates and her then-

boyfriend Tyler Marchant. Back then, when cloud cover would protect KJ's skin, she and her friends would ride bicycles down the Yough rail trail or hike the woods and hillsides. She's missed the place and hoped to return as soon as she could. This is her first trip to Ohiopyle in two years.

During their walk, an occasional passer-by will look at the two couples with a less than pleasant expression on his face. Perhaps he disapproves of the age differences, though they are not extreme. Anna couldn't care less. Like Megan Donnelly, her mother was in her late teens when she was married, as was her grandmother. She's heard the advice of so-called marriage experts. She's heard them insult her mother and grandmother by insisting that a self-respecting white woman will wait until she's at least 25 or older. To Anna Murphy, those who would tell her to wait until the good men are gone and her peers are hateful, childless feminists are not interested in her well-being.

Garret Fogarty looks them in the eye. They look away. He is proud that he has won Anna's respect and affection. If she were easy or frivolous, he would not consider it an achievement. He would not be interested in her at all. To Garret, the opinions of those unwilling to defend their race and secure their children's future are unworthy of his consideration.

Johnny Bowen also looks them in the eye. They look away from him as well. A woman can be twenty-five and a fool. To John Ashley Bowen, the opinions of those who would punish KJ for loving her race mean less than nothing. Seventeen-year-old Kaylee Jane Campbell is more woman than their wives and lovers. She is most assuredly stronger and more principled.

KJ doesn't care what they think. She's faced more dangerous and aggressive opponents in her short life, and her own mother has called her a Nazi and a whore. If one of the disapproving pedestrians were to voice his objections, it would be a race between KJ and Johnny to see who could tell them to "fuck off" the fastest.

None of the four allow anyone or anything to disrupt this day of bliss. Though they engage in a simple walk on a common trail, there are no worries and no anguish. Fear and pain have no place here; not today. They feel rejuvenated. A few hours later the two couples return to the parking area near the roaring Youghiogheny, from which they depart. After a short drive to Cucumber Falls, Johnny and KJ park on the hillside and descend the wooded trail down to the little waterfall. Among the rocks and trickling streams, Johnny wraps his arms around KJ. When no one is looking, not even Anna or Garret, he kisses her on the mouth. They weren't the only ones to practice such discretion or such intimacy. Anna and Garret arrived

at the falls while Johnny and KJ waited for a parking spot. For a short while they, too, were alone.

It's still light outside when Johnny parks beside Garret at the Long Hall. In the remaining hour or two before twilight, Johnny and KJ walk to the little workshop that sits in the woods east of the old cow pasture. Once there, he unlocks and opens the doors. KJ expects to see the equipment that filled the structure back in January. Instead there is a 4-wheeled ATV and less than half of the items that were once there.

Johnny starts the ATV and drives out of the structure.

"You ever drive one of these?" he asks.

KJ shakes her head.

"Do you want to try?" he asks.

A smile comes to her face.

"I'd like that," she says.

For the next hour, he teaches her to use the ATV.

"We'll get back to this someday," he says.

Johnny steps back to look at her. She sits atop the vehicle, her hands on the handlebars. She's no longer wearing the helmet.

"Lean forward," he says, "There, like that. Hmm...now there's a picture."

She looks down and shakes her head.

The weathermen are finally right and the night is clear as a bell. The moon has waned to a sliver and even that is unseen. It's a perfect night for stargazing.

"No matter what I've learned about the stars," Garret says, "They've never lost their mystique; their attraction."

"They wait for us," Anna says.

KJ and Johnny are sitting on the long first step of the hall. More accurately, he's on the step and she's on his lap. She leans back into him and he puts his arms around her. He rubs her belly again, this time on the outside of her t-shirt. She feels him sigh, though he stifles the sound.

"Do I tempt you?" she whispers.

Garret and Anna are standing far enough away to not hear her.

"Of course," he whispers. He kisses her shoulder. "But it's OK. Stop worrying about that."

"I love you," she says.

This is loud enough for the other two to hear, though they show no sign of having heard.

"I just don't want anything to go wrong," she says, "I can't help being a little nervous."

"It's all good, angel," Johnny says, "I love you, too."

Johnny looks up at the sky, where Garret just pointed. He may have pointed to Corona Borealis.

"Do you know the constellations?" Johnny asks.

"Yeah, I do," KJ says, "That was one of the subjects I liked to study. Most of the time I taught myself, because I don't think the school ever mentioned it. I had an old astronomy book, and sometimes I'd go outside on a clear night and try to identify what I saw." She sighs. "But then my dad threw it away, along with most of my books."

"What?" Johnny says, "Astronomy was racist, too?"

KJ laughs.

"Actually," she says, "he destroyed my things because his bitch told him to do it. She wanted to break me so she confiscated my iPod, my books and all my artwork. I hid a few books in a place along the wall, but it didn't take long for them to find what was left. They threw every fucking thing away."

She hears him snort and feels his hand rub her belly. She turns and looks into his eyes. A smile grows on her face.

"You gave it all back to me," she says, "And so much more, Johnny, thank you."

She kisses him on the cheek.

"I worry about you every day," he says.

"The time's coming, sweetheart," she says, "If they ever try to stop me from seeing you, I'll leave that same day, alright?"

"OK," he says.

"When I can see Corona Borealis," Garret says, "I always look to the lower left of the crown. There's a star there, you can't see it now, it's called the Blaze Star. You never know when it'll erupt."

"Which one did you say was mine?" Anna asks.

She knows, of course.

"It's not out yet," Garret says.

KJ stands and looks at Johnny.

"Come inside in about five minutes," she says, "I'd like to show you something."

She rubs his head and smiles. It is a sweet and devilish little expression on her face. Anna hears KJ and looks at the two of them. Johnny raises his eyebrows and redirects Anna's attention to the sky.

As Johnny approaches the little interior room where his beloved awaits, he feels a sensation he hasn't felt in some time. He's nervous. When he met KJ, when they went on their dates and when he stopped her

from going too far, there was trepidation and occasional uncertainty but never full-blown nervousness. There is now. He knocks on the door.

“Johnny?” KJ says.

“It’s me, angel,” he says after swallowing.

“Come in,” she says.

He opens the door, his heart in his throat. In his peripheral vision he sees her standing there. He wants to stare once the door’s all the way open. She’s removed her t-shirt and jeans and now wears a green string bikini top and bottom. The bikini is a little on the small side, the bottom especially, and he cannot help but look at how it hugs the contours of her strong and sensual body. She notices his stare and laughs, momentarily touching her mouth with her gloved hand. He looks up at her immaculate face. Her hair flows down her shoulders and over her breasts, all the way to the top of her stomach. That sight alone is more than enough to rob him of any eloquence.

“Are you ready?” she asks.

“One minute,” he says.

Johnny lifts a finger, perhaps unsure if the words are coherent. KJ notices his nervousness and she laughs, a little from embarrassment over being so scantily clad in front of the man she loves, and a little from her adoration of his sweet response to seeing her like this.

“Have I done well with my body?” she asks.

He looks at her smooth stomach. It couldn’t be in better shape. She’s given it great attention, yet it is not a sexless mass of muscle. It’s in fantastic shape and it is still very much a woman’s belly.

“OK, angel,” he says, looking into her blue eyes, “Do you want me to close my eyes?”

“Please do,” she says, and so he does.

She backs up closer to him by about three steps. When she gives the word, he opens his eyes. What he sees leaves him speechless. Adorning her pure white skin are two ornate angel’s wings. Meticulously crafted feathers cover the wings, from her upper back and shoulders down to her lower back. The final elegant and highly detailed feathers curve away from the middle of her back and her butt cheeks, where they dip beneath the waistband of the bikini bottom and end with curved tips on both of her sides, flanking her behind. She holds her hair to the front, or it would obscure the upper part of her ink. The bikini bottom is a bit too small for her rear, and aside from the string of the waist – and the string of the bikini top – he can see every highly ornate feather and every curve of her unforgettable angel wings.

The ink is an absolute work of art. The skin down the middle of her back, as well as her rear and the small of her back is bare of ink, as is the location where another girl might opt for a trashy “tramp stamp.” She chose the image very, very well, and Paddy did not disappoint. In fact, there was no way that either KJ or Johnny Bowen could have expected such an amazing, detailed work of body art. Johnny steps forward and puts his hands on her shoulders. Her skin is warm and smooth and unblemished by the sun.

“My God,” Johnny says, “It’s beautiful.” He looks upon her wings in silence and then he speaks in a soft voice. “Angel.”

“I’ll always be your angel,” KJ says.

He kisses the back of her head and then traces her wings and feathers with his fingers, excepting the final, beautiful feathers that are a bit low on her back for him to put his hands upon them at this time.

“Are they nice?” she asks, knowing the answer.

“They’re amazing,” he says, and comes out of his infatuation just enough to concentrate. “Fuck yes, Jesus Christ yes!” he exclaims, “Paddy really gave you your wings, didn’t he?” He looks at every detail. “My God, they’re beautiful.”

Johnny hugs her from behind and kisses her neck. Then she turns and looks into his eyes.

“You went through a lot for those, didn’t you?” Johnny asks.

“I’d do it all again,” she says, “They’ll remind me of who I am and who I love. They’ll lift me above the pain and sadness, and I won’t become hateful or cynical. I’ll still be KJ, your white angel.”

Johnny puts his hands on the sides of her face. He kisses her forehead and she closes her eyes.

“You’re every one of my hopes and dreams, come to life,” he says.

She touches his face, and her hand goes around his jaw to the place where she hit him. Once again it lingers there, and caresses his skin.

After Johnny exits the little room, he’s soon followed by KJ. She’s wearing her t-shirt and jeans again. In a short while Anna will have to depart. Gary asked that she be home by 11 PM. KJ must leave as well; she’s not the girl her parents hoped she’d be. They’ll look for any excuse to come down hard on her. The four lovers sit on the long first step of the hall, beginning with Johnny and ending to the left with Garret. They share the little remaining time in conversation.

“Anna, dear,” Garret says, “During our camping trip you asked what we would all want if life permitted us to have it. Do you feel like talking about that again?”

Anna looks at him with surprise.

"Oh...OK," she says.

She looks off into the woods. The chirping of the crickets keeps the silence at bay.

"I wouldn't be here," Garret says, "I'd be getting ready for bed. Saturday would be a big day. The children would like to go to Idlewild or Laurel Mountain and there'd be a meeting of the Celtic Society tomorrow afternoon. Once we returned, I'd ask my wife to get something or other, but it'd actually be a ruse. When she gets back I'd surprise her with supper. Rob McKenna wouldn't mind watching the kids for one night, so the evening wouldn't end with just a meal."

Garret rubs Anna's head and runs his hand over her ponytail.

"Your turn, Anna," Johnny says.

"I'd drive to Reese's furniture store," she says, "because my husband asked if I'd check out a living room set. He said not to buy it yet, just check it out, and the cabinets while I'm at it. I'd suspect that he was up to something really nice."

She looks at Garret and then at John Bowen.

"I'd wake up early and my wife would still be sleeping on my chest," Johnny says, "I'd watch her there for a while and maybe she'd feel it, because she'd wake up a few minutes later. She'd ask if she could take the first shower so that she could make breakfast while I'm in the shower. After the meal I'd take her on my lap and hold out the last apple muffin so that she could bite it." He inhales and sighs. "The big Kenworth would be quiet all weekend, but we sure as hell wouldn't."

Johnny looks at KJ.

"Six months later I'd hold your head to my belly," KJ says, "so that you could feel him move."

Anna curls her lip into her mouth and looks away for a minute. She wipes her eyes and then looks back and smiles. The crickets are the only ones to speak. Johnny squeezes KJ and nuzzles her thick mane. Garret takes Anna's hand. He looks up at Virgo. Sometimes the stars seem so far away.

It's just a little mistake, and completely understandable. KJ gave the smallest hint that she's actually happy inside. She's allowed Erica to notice that she does not mind and might actually enjoy going to work. On Saturday morning, Erica watches her daughter walk out the door. KJ is not sulking as she has done so many times in the recent past. She does not hold her head low from the weight of despair. Erica crosses her arms. She watches KJ hop into the blue jeep. She sees her unlock the glove box. KJ

lowers the sun visor and something – the registration perhaps – falls down on to her lap. She then revs the Jeep and takes off. Erica looks at the clock. It's 6:10 AM.

Erica puts on a robe and exits the master bedroom. She shoves the door hard enough to wake Gene. Downstairs, she pours a cup from the coffee that KJ made a little earlier. Erica sits and waits on her husband. When he doesn't arrive within ten minutes, she climbs the steps and fetches him.

There was a time when Gene could hold his own with Erica. He wasn't always a useless stoner or the spineless creature of his later years. His descent began before KJ gave the first indication that she would not accept her parents' beliefs, though it accelerated as his daughter began to rebel. Gene did not want anything disrupting the comfortable world he thought he had. If KJ had run off with some singer or professor twenty years her senior, Gene could have coped. She was always on the wild side and he expected her to rebel. Part of him wanted her to. Indeed, she did rebel; but instead of embracing an acceptable form of rebellion, KJ became racially aware. She became pro-white. When Gene realized he'd gotten what he wished for, he changed from being a deeply flawed, anti-white male, to an overtly anti-white coward.

Gene enters the kitchen with the softest of footsteps. He's wearing a robe and boxers and nothing else. This annoys Erica, but she has something else on her mind, so she lets it pass.

"Sit down," she says as Gene opens the refrigerator. He closes the door and takes a seat. "You can act like a pig later. We still have a major problem on our hands."

"We do?" Gene says.

Erica ignores the question, though it takes considerable energy for her not to snap.

"Your daughter," Erica says, "has rejected our olive branch and our good advice. She seems to enjoy going to work on that farm. I think she's getting paid under the table or shaving some of the money, because she seems too happy for a teenager going to work at 6 AM."

"That's true," Gene says.

He'd really like some orange juice.

"The only offer I'm willing to give to her," Erica says, "is for her to join the military. As long as she has a job and money from God knows where, she won't listen to us. I think it's time we intervene, don't you?"

Gene thinks about wasting his parents' money and hitting on stoner girls, back when he was single.

"Yes," Gene mutters.

Before Johnny Bowen leaves Coalsack, he kisses KJ and rubs her back.

"You could not have made a better choice when you chose the design for your wings," Johnny says, "They're really beautiful, angel."

She touches his cheek and smiles. They kiss and she hugs him tight.

Boyle watches from the door of the cabin. Johnny is just leaving as Anna arrives, and he pulls to the side to let her pass. She stops and says something to him; he nods and waves. After she parks and shoots the shit with KJ, Boyle approaches.

"It's time to be serious," he says, "Let's go, Cockblocker and Cocktease."

Anna starts to laugh. KJ speaks first.

"Is that the best you can do?" KJ asks.

"Probably," he says. The two ladies don't move, so he ushers them with his arms. "Get the hell to the range!"

While Anna and KJ wait for Johnny Bowen at the end of the day, the two sit on the cabin steps and partake of bottled water from Boyle's stash. The thick camo pants and dark t-shirts don't seem as hot in the dry air and shade. A generator keeps Boyle's refrigerator running and the cold water is a godsend. The generator is humming around back of the cabin.

"I won't be seeing you this week," Anna says.

KJ stops chugging her water.

"Why not?" KJ asks.

"I'm going to California," Anna says.

KJ stares at her, incredulous. Then she shakes her head and looks away.

"Fuck you," KJ says.

"I'm serious!" Anna says, "I've been accepted at UC Davis. Honest-to-God!"

KJ looks at her. She's still skeptical.

"I don't lie to God!" Anna says.

"Alright," KJ says, "But you have to admit, that's a hell of a fucking revelation."

KJ stares into the woods and then back at Anna.

"So you're going to school?" KJ asks, "What the fuck's up with that?"

KJ cannot help but feel sucker-punched. Anna gets a disappointed look.

"No, genius, I'm not going to school," Anna says, "Have you ever heard of deception? Plausible deniability?"

“OK!” KJ says, “I get it.” She shakes her head and laughs, and then crosses her eyes when she looks at Anna. “This shit’s, like, hard,” KJ says, exaggerating the final word.

Anna laughs and puts her arm around her sister.

“You didn’t tell me what Johnny said,” Anna says.

“Huh?” KJ asks.

“When Johnny saw your ink,” Anna says, “What did he say? And don’t give me that ‘it’s between us’ bullshit, because I didn’t ask what he did, I asked what he said.”

“That’s personal,” KJ says, looking away.

Anna puts her hands on her hips and looks at KJ, who looks back at her sister-in-race.

“He loves it,” KJ says, “He got all quiet before he spoke, and I was, like, ‘Yes!’”

KJ makes a fist with her gloved hand. Then the smiles fade and quiet follows. The jays and wrens refuse to interrupt the meaningful silence.

“He loves you, you know?” Anna says, “Remind yourself of that, no matter what happens, OK?”

“My wings remind me,” KJ says, “and they’re on there forever.”

When KJ arrives at the Campbell House on Saturday night, she notices the lights are on in the first floor. It’s not terribly late, but she’d hoped that at least Erica would be gone. She’s been parking closer to the house since there’s no longer a risk of Erica or Gene seeing her with Johnny Bowen. Tonight is no exception. It’s another small, understandable mistake.

KJ enters the house through the front door. She wipes her boots on the rug and then walks toward the stairs without taking them off.

“Stop right there,” Erica says from the kitchen, the only dark room downstairs. KJ looks into the open doorway at the image of her mother. “I’m going to need you on Tuesday,” Erica says, “You’d better call off tonight or tomorrow morning.”

“What for?” KJ asks.

“Do as I say!” Erica says. She mollifies herself in an instant. A confrontation won’t get her what she wants. It’s liable to escalate beyond her control. “Don’t always challenge me, Kaylee,” Erica says, “I need you to help us rearrange the den and the upstairs rooms.”

KJ stares at Erica. KJ’s body is still aimed at the stairs.

“Alright,” KJ says.

KJ heads to her room. There, she grabs her sleeping clothes: a black thong and a t-shirt. After she showers, KJ checks a second time to be sure

the bathroom door is locked, and then she admires her wings. At first she was worried they'd turn out poorly or just adequate. There was no need to be anxious. KJ rubs her belly as she looks into the mirror and a little smile comes to her face when she thinks about Johnny rubbing her there. He's done it a lot lately.

Ever since she met Anna and Bill and especially Johnny, KJ has become more comfortable with her beauty. It feels very good to look this nice.

Before KJ leaves on Sunday morning, she creeps down to the garage. She removes her slingshot from its hiding place and packs it with her other things in Bowen's backpack. She senses that Erica is in one of her moods, and might be up to something serious. KJ makes breakfast as quietly and quickly as she can. She staves off the inevitable reduction in quality by keeping it simple. KJ feels anxiety in her gut. Without a word, Erica has made a simple task difficult to perform.

Erica isn't watching as KJ leaves. She doesn't have to; she's already decided on a course of action.

Today is hotter than yesterday but thankfully a light breeze blows and the trees and roof over the shooting stations make the hot summer day more tolerable at the Coalsack site. It is still a long and uncomfortable practice session, as Boyle has the two sisters spend most of their time shooting at the range. The day isn't all tedium, however. Anna brought two salads with fresh vegetables from her Aunt Hannah's garden, and lunch is the highlight of a productive but ordinary training session.

The last hour is the greatest part of the day. Johnny brings some delicious glazed pork belly that goes very well with a fresh pasta salad. The two lovers talk and laugh as they dine inside the Rubicon, with Johnny's iPod providing background music. Johnny sees how KJ looks at him and how she smiles and laughs with greater ease than he's ever seen from her before. It makes him very happy to see her this relaxed.

Late that night, KJ rises from bed fully dressed in jeans and a black long-sleeve t-shirt. Beside her bed is her smallest shoulder bag which contains a few important items. Tonight KJ will engage in another covert mission. She creeps down the stairs wearing only booties, and then slides her feet into the boots she intentionally left by the door. Outside, she waits for a few minutes to make sure she hasn't woken her parents, and then she slinks away toward Farmview Drive.

It does not take very long for young KJ to arrive at her destination. Instead of walking down Farmview and among the houses there, she detours to the north and comes in through a field dotted with copses of

trees. At one of these she finds a hiding place that offers a good view of the second house on the right. It is a large house, worth – according to something Gene once said – over six hundred thousand dollars. Outside the house is an Infiniti EX. Both car and house belong to Nathan Robert Weems.

The distance from KJ's sylvan shelter to Weems' car is a little over 60 yards. It is a difficult shot with the slingshot, but well within range. KJ loads a little steel ball into the would-be weapon, takes careful aim and fires. The ball strikes the rear bumper of the Infiniti, setting off the alarm.

She can see Weems come to his bedroom window. The hour is 3:30 AM. He'll have administrative duties all day tomorrow at the high school. KJ will sleep until around 10 or 11. She sees him scrutinize the area from his window, but he has no chance of seeing her. Then he turns off the alarm with a remote control and heads back to bed.

At 4:04, she repeats her action. Again, the steel pellet strikes the bumper and sets off the alarm. This time Weems emerges from his house. He's wearing his glasses and has thrown on a pair of jeans. He looks at the car but sees nothing amiss. He returns inside, again shaking and rubbing his head.

KJ packs the slingshot in her bag and withdraws from the scene. She is very tempted to shoot the bumper again, but her minor and relatively harmless act, which she would admit to being childish, has given her some satisfaction and a measure of revenge. At the Campbell House, she leaves her boots at the door and returns to her room. She changes into a thong and a sleeveless tee, and puts on a pair of exercise leggings so that her parents cannot see any of her feathers should they bump into her. Then she heads to the bathroom as if she's awoken from a deep sleep, and she washes her hands and face before returning to bed. On the return trip she encounters Gene who really did awaken from a deep sleep.

"It's too hot in here," KJ whispers to him.

"I know," he whispers back.

KJ continues to her bed.

At 8 AM on Monday, Erica is dressed in the casual yet somewhat more formal attire she usually wears around the house. She does not head downstairs to make breakfast. Instead, Erica enters Bill Donnelly's number in her cell and taps her foot as it rings.

Gene enters, still in his night clothes. He sees that Erica is busy and takes a seat at the table. He acts like he's reading the paper.

"Good morning, Mr. Donnelly," Erica says.

"What can I do for you, Ms. Campbell?" Bill asks.

“Kaylee will no longer be an employee of your business, effective the 11th of June,” Erica says as if reading from a script, “You have until tomorrow afternoon to remove any vehicle entrusted to her or I will be forced to have such vehicles towed off of our property. Good day, Mr. Donnelly.”

Bill does not try to get in a word. Erica will just end the call. He closes his “general use” cell phone and climbs inside the big Chevy dump truck. He has work to do, and he cannot help KJ at the moment. Inside the cab he looks at his cell. He’d like to tell Johnny Bowen. Instead he calls Garret Fogarty. The two arrange a meeting for late in the afternoon. They won’t discuss this development on any cell phone.

KJ rises at eleven after a peaceful night’s sleep. She checks to be sure no one’s in the hallway, and then runs to the bathroom. It’s a little thrill to emerge wearing only a bra and a thong, with her wings exposed to the world. Once in the bathroom she scolds herself for taking stupid risks, though she cannot help but chuckle for a moment. She washes her face and checks out her wings before putting on jeans and another t-shirt. She hopes to get her shopping done early today so that she’ll have an hour or two to surf the internet at Panera. She’ll eat lunch there as well.

By 11:30 KJ is off to the grocery. The sky is deep blue with altocumulus sheep meandering in undisciplined flocks. KJ is still ecstatic over last night’s expedition. Weems deserved far more than he got. She imagines Johnny getting hold of him, and then banishes the thought. If she can help it, she’ll never see Weems again, and would never risk her true love for an act of retribution.

KJ returns to the Campbell House at 3 PM. Erica is at work and Gene is at Ben Franklin Middle School. KJ decides to take a soothing bath, something she hasn’t done in some time. She opens the fridge and hides the final muffin she bought at Panera and then goes upstairs. She ties her hair in a ponytail and tries to keep it dry. It’s an impossibility; there’s simply too much of it. She considers saying “fuck it” and sliding under. She used to do that every time she took a bath. She’d stay down for quite a while. She decides against it, since she washed her hair yesterday, and doesn’t want to towel- and air-dry that mass again so soon.

Maybe Johnny will teach her to swim. She’s heard that he’s an excellent swimmer. Anna’s a diver, but learning from Anna wouldn’t be nearly as fun. She resolves to ask him someday soon.

The sun is almost down when Garret meets Bill at the entrance of Old Braddock Road. They exit their vehicles in order to converse from a short distance. Garret is still in his work attire – slacks and a dress shirt, and Bill is still in his – oily suspenders and short sleeves.

Garret just finishes greeting Bill when the older man interrupts the pleasantries.

"We have a problem, Garret," Bill says.

"I know," Garret says, "But let's hear yours first."

Garret is more agitated than usual. On top of his own worries, he must leave on a business trip tomorrow morning, and now Bill's about to bring up another unforeseen bit of trouble.

"Ms. Campbell," Bill says, emphasizing the title to mock the woman, "has just informed me that KJ won't be working for me anymore."

Garret shakes his head. His eyes are ablaze.

"Don't tell Johnny, alright?" Garret says, "Let me tell him."

"She'll call Johnny as soon as she can," Bill says, "She may have already."

"I'll call him as soon as we're finished," Garret says, "If she's contacted him I'll find out what he plans on doing."

"In the end she's going to have to make the move," Bill says.

"She will," Garret says.

"Are you sure of that?" Bill asks.

"I am, Bill," Garret says.

"Where will she go?" Bill asks, "Flight's a big risk. She's still 17."

"John Bowen will take care of it," Garret says, "She'll be safe if she goes to him."

"I trust the two of you," Bill says, "I wish we could spare KJ from going through this, but what choice do we have?"

"I believe she'll wait until she has a decent opportunity to escape," Garret says, "but I don't bet on assumptions and hope. There's a chance things could go badly if we wait. There's a greater chance KJ will bolt and the police will grab her. We'll have to do this right." Garret sighs and shakes his head. "This feels just like the time she beat that little parasite. We had no idea what would happen to her."

Garret shows his anger in his body language. It's a very rare sight.

"It will be up to KJ to make the first move," Bill says, "I suppose we'll find out what she's made of, won't we? We all believe and we hope, but now we learn."

"She'll come to us," Garret says, "It will happen when she thinks it's best. Bill, let me talk to Johnny."

"That's fine," Bill says, "He's in your cell."

"There's something else I need to mention," Garret says, "This pertains to KJ and Johnny, and to me. I don't think you'd be surprised if I told you that I love Anna. If we could be masters of destiny, I'd choose to be

with her always. But if Anna and I have to part ways, I will have to accept that sacrifice and carry on." Garret grits his teeth for a moment. "Bill," he says, "Don't break up Johnny and KJ. They will need each other even more than they do right now. I ask you to place them together."

Bill stares into Garret's blue eyes. Garret does not run and hide.

"Tell me, Garret," Bill says, "Could you stand to see them share their love, when you have no one? If you and Anna have to part, could you live with them, alone, while they have each other?"

"I can stand the pain and the solitude," Garret says, "and I can even stand the loss. But I can't stand knowing we broke them apart."

"Their love is fierce," Bill says, "Don't you worry that it will interfere with the operations of Capricorn? We can't be sentimental. Johnny won't leave her and she won't leave him, even if he dies."

"Then send them both to a cell where they can have a shadow life," Garret says, "Carina or Andromeda."

"You're talking with your heart, my boy," Bill says, "Capricorn needs its leader and its hero. Tell me, without listening to your heart; do you believe Capricorn can work? I know you can tell me with cold reason. That's why you're Capricorn's leader. That's why Johnny chose you."

"We need the female presence," Garret says, "It will tell the enemy that not all white women have forsaken their race. Most of the time a cell composed of two men and two women will not work. In these extraordinary circumstances, I believe it will. I'll wager my life on it."

"And if it does not?" Bill asks.

"I'll take responsibility," Garret says, "Cristian or John Boyle can name the place and I'll be there, alone and unarmed."

"Don't talk like that!" Bill says.

"I will," Garret says, "Our lives and much more will be in the balance. If we fall, at least we lived as white men and women, unconquered and unconquerable. They are my brothers and sisters. I bear full responsibility if I fail them."

Bill looks at him as a brief silence descends.

"I'll consider everything you've said," Bill says.

He puts his hand on Garret's shoulder.

"Thank you, Bill," Garret says.

"Tell Johnny in your own way," Bill says, "I'll talk to Gary. He'll know when and how to tell dear Anna."

Garret seizes and shakes Bill's hand.

"Try to relax on your trip," Bill says, "There won't be much time for relaxation when you're back."

Inside his Jeep, Garret holds his cell but does not call. He contemplates what he might say and what they might do. Any course of action will depend on KJ's decisions.

At the Murphy Home, Anna finishes packing her bags. Tomorrow morning Gary will drive her to Pittsburgh International Airport. Her flight is non-stop to Sacramento. Anna missed out on a scholarship to Stanford and chose UC Davis instead. This is the first time she'll step foot west of the Mississippi. It will most likely be the last.

Bill's work cell rings. Megan Donnelly arrives before the fourth ring and answers the call. She recognizes KJ's voice immediately.

"Hello, KJ," Megan says, "Are you alright, dear?"

She can imagine that KJ is crushed. Maybe KJ has spoken to Johnny and he's given her hope. Megan prays for that to be true.

"Yes, thank you," KJ says, "Hey, could you tell Bill that I won't be in tomorrow? My parents want me to help them with something. I guess I'll see you on Wednesday."

Megan is stunned.

"You'll be here on Wednesday?" she asks.

"I'm sure they won't need me for two days," KJ says, "If so, they can just wait until next Monday."

"Alright, KJ," Megan says, "Take care, sweetheart."

Megan thinks for a moment after KJ closes the call. It becomes clear; Erica hasn't told her yet.

John Bowen is driving home from his weekly trip for groceries when his private cell rings. He pulls over to take the call. He knows the number: it's Garret.

"Hey," Johnny says, "What's going on?"

It is unusual for Garret to call on a Monday.

"Erica Campbell called Bill," Garret says. He continues without hesitation. "She told him that KJ won't be working for him anymore."

Garret expects the silence that follows.

"You knew she'd do this," Johnny finally says, "I did, too."

"What are you thinking about doing?" Garret asks after another brief silence.

"Putting my hands on that cunt's throat," Johnny says.

"If you knew she'd do this," Garret says, "You must have an idea of what we should do about it."

"I'd ask Anna to drop by," Johnny says, "Tell them she needs something, keys or something like that, so we could have contact, but Anna's gone all fucking week. And so are you."

"Don't go to the house," Garret says, "It's too big a risk."

"I know," Johnny says, "Goddamn it, I know!"

"You and I know she'll make a move," Garret says, "She won't wait much longer."

"I'll be ready," Johnny says.

Later that evening, Bill calls Johnny Bowen.

"Erica hasn't told her yet," Bill says, "The storm's coming. Be ready to move. If you're at work, I'll take care of her, so don't worry about that. Go by and pick up her Jeep or they'll have it towed. You might be able to speak with her if you're lucky, but don't press the issue. I'll leave the other details to you."

"It's going to be one of the hardest things in my life not to just take her from there," Johnny says.

"I know, son," Bill says, "We have to let her make the move. Unless she's in danger, we have no choice. She's still 17, Johnny. Old enough to be used by the enemy for sexual propaganda, but according to them she's too young to think for herself, even if her mind is open and sharper than most people I've known in their forties. Nonetheless, she's 17, and the cops would be merciless on you if they found out you took her from there."

"Everything changes if she's in danger," Johnny says.

"Of course," Bill says, "If you talk to her, tell her to keep the cell phone on and talk to us when it's safe."

Johnny closes the call. He looks back at his couch. The feeling of powerlessness that seized him after the Epstein incident comes roaring back, stronger than ever.

Early Tuesday morning, a tow truck from a garage in downtown Uniontown removes the blue Jeep from the Campbell property. KJ doesn't see the unfortunate event. She believes that she's placating her parents by helping Gene rearrange the den. Later, her phone rings. It's in Bowen's backpack, upstairs. She can't carry it for fear of Erica or Gene noticing the vibrations, and in order to conserve the charge she's turned it off. Johnny Bowen closes the call when it sends him directly to the message service.

It's almost noon when KJ and Gene finish dusting and moving the books. There are interesting titles, like cookbooks and great works of fiction as well as books on and in the French language, but the majority are mammoth legal tomes and Gene's unused repair manuals. While KJ jams legal books she'll never open on to overcrowded shelves, John Bowen calls Snyder Transportation. He asks for the week off. They tell him he'll lose his job if he doesn't show up tomorrow.

"Shit happens," Johnny tells his manager.

A little after noon, KJ and Gene begin rearranging the upstairs bedroom. Hardly a word is shared during the entire exercise. Gene makes requests and KJ does most of the work. By 2PM the task is done. Gene yells for Erica. KJ expects some derogatory remark about the quality of her work. She wipes the sweat from her brow with her gloved hands and then dries them on her towel. She does not wipe her glistening arms, whose impressive size is obvious in her sleeveless black t-shirt.

Erica has taken the next three days off from work. She will be home every minute today. Part of the reason is to watch KJ in case she attempts to run away.

Once, that might have been the only reason. As KJ grew more independent-minded and estranged from Erica, a genuine hatred has grown in the mother's heart. There's another nasty aspect to Erica's ruthlessness: she is increasingly jealous of her gorgeous young daughter. She will enjoy watching KJ melt down. The thought has crossed her mind that KJ might strike her. As strong as KJ's gotten, Erica could be in for a lot of pain. She takes the risk. The desire to see KJ put into her place is too great.

"Kaylee," Erica says, "You're not going to work tomorrow."

KJ looks at Erica.

"What?" she says, her face showing her displeasure.

"I've informed your boss that you no longer work for him," Erica says.

KJ stares at her mother. The displeasure on her face becomes a blank expression. Erica expects an outburst of volcanic dimension. Sure, it may begin small, but the eruption is inevitable.

KJ says nothing. She doesn't even look at Gene. Her hopes for a benevolent fatherly intervention are long-dead. Erica is a little unsettled by the lack of a reaction from KJ. Gene stares at both of them in rapid succession. His mouth is open.

"I had that ugly old Jeep towed this morning," Erica says, "I warned your boss that if he didn't come and drive it away I'd have it towed, but no one bothered to come."

This time KJ's face shows her concern. A frightening thought crosses her mind and squeezes her throat. She thinks about the gun in the glove box. The fear passes when she remembers that the gun is in Johnny's name. Even if the tow truck driver violates Bowen's privacy and property rights, they shouldn't be able to cause him any grief. It unnerves her to think of someone looking through their things. Both she and her beloved Johnny have items in the glove box and the interior of the blue

Wrangler. At least the Kindle, her iPod Touch and her self-defense books are in Bowen's backpack in her closet. So is the cell phone, which is all-important now.

In the front pouch of the backpack, wrapped in a handkerchief, is the shank that KJ bought and made.

"I regret that we had to do this," Erica says, "But we're thinking of your future. You rejected our gracious offers, so we have to give you an ultimatum: when you're 18, you will join the armed forces, or you will move out. No daughter of ours is going to work for a mick pig farmer."

Erica, who would be outraged at anyone who uses a racial slur, insults Bill in order to inflame KJ. She wants her daughter to lash out in rage. In Erica's mind, KJ has caused her such inconvenience over these past years that the young woman deserves this treatment. The sadistic side of female supremacist Erica Campbell is hoping to see outrage on KJ's face. She's hoping to see pain. Today is one of Erica's darkest moments.

KJ doesn't say a word. She looks out the window at the empty street below.

At ten after three, Johnny Bowen pulls on to Lindsay Drive. He can see in the distance that the blue Jeep is gone. A thought crosses his mind: perhaps KJ has fled. Maybe she's at the hall, waiting for him. It's a fantasy. She won't jeopardize the only ones who love her for being who she is. Johnny parks at the end of the Campbell's driveway.

Johnny rings the doorbell, not knowing if he wants KJ to answer or not. He's not sure if that will be the best way for her to get through this unfortunate event. She may lose her composure and weep. It's a perfectly normal human response that will incur Erica's wrath. He'll never know; Gene, not KJ, answers the door. John Ashley Bowen glares into the eyes of the human being who fathered Kaylee Jane Campbell. When vengeful non-whites assaulted his daughter, this is the white male who allowed them to escape unscathed. This white male allows his wife to torment his own flesh and blood child.

"I'm here for the Jeep," Johnny says, "Where is it?"

Gene looks around.

"Alone?" he says, "How can you drive two vehicles?"

"Your daughter can follow me to the parking lot," Bowen says. It's worth a try. "I'll drop her off afterward," Johnny says, "If you want, you can come."

Johnny hopes to fool Gene into thinking the Jeep is what matters. He continues to stare into Gene's eyes, and Gene looks away several times.

Johnny does not avert his gaze, not even when he hears rapid footfalls. It's not KJ – she's too graceful to make such a sound.

"I'm afraid you're too late," Erica says, "The Jeep's been towed. You should have come earlier."

"Where are the keys?" asks Bowen.

He takes a small step towards Gene, who retreats. Gene looks at Erica and then back at Bowen but says nothing.

"Wait here," Erica says.

She closes the door. Bowen assumes that they will make him wait, and this is exactly what they do. But he will not leave. Fifteen or more minutes later the door opens. Erica stands alone at the threshold.

"Here," she says.

She tosses the keys to Bowen. He catches them without ever taking his eyes off of her. Bowen leaves without saying another word. When he is seated in the Rubicon he hazards a glance at the Campbell House. The front door is closed. He looks toward the upper floor. His heart must skip a beat when he sees KJ peering out of her bedroom window. She waves and tries to smile. He touches his hand to the window and then starts the Jeep. KJ watches the Rubicon race away.

The call that Johnny Bowen prays will come does so at 4 AM. He's wide awake. KJ's voice is so soft it's almost a breath, yet its power is not diminished.

"Johnny," she says.

"Listen, KJ," he says, "I will not abandon you." He has no idea how long they'll be able to speak before an approaching parent forces her to hide her phone. "I will take you from there and you'll never have to return. Never."

She thinks of the risks and the trouble it would cause him should she run away. Bowen notes the silence and realizes its significance.

"I would go through goddamned hell for you, KJ," he says, "You're why our race has to survive. You woke up in the darkness. Fuck, you were all alone in the dark. I always hoped there'd be a woman like you and then you flew to me, and I will not let them win. They won't humiliate or betray you any longer. Listen, KJ, I will go through the fire for you, so fuck the trouble you cause me because it doesn't scare me. I was born to fight this war and I won't hide when things get ugly. If I have to leave so that your children can have a future I'll have to do it, but not like this. I won't leave you in their world. Leave that fucking hellhole, KJ. Whatever the fuck happens to us at least you'll have your own life. You deserve that more than anyone else."

KJ wipes her eyes.

"I love you, Johnny," she says.

"I love you too, angel," he says, "I'll find a way to get to you."

"OK, Johnny," she says.

She hears him take a deep breath.

"Good night, angel," he says.

"Good night, Johnny," she whispers.

The call ends.

Wednesday morning is cloudy and warm. It will be a humid and uncomfortable day, though the sun will not cut through the deck of clouds. Most of the residents of Kimberley Drive are preparing for the workday. KJ is sitting on the porch of the Campbell House. She stares at the pin oak in the Mancuso yard. When KJ arrived on Friday night, cars filled their driveway and lined the curb in front of their large beige house. Now it seems abandoned.

KJ directs her attention down Kimberly Drive to the largest of the houses, the only one more massive than the Campbell House. Manicured pines circle the gigantic white mansion and obscure KJ's view of the entrance and first floor, though the rest of the house is large enough to be easily visible. In its cavernous interior lives 39-year-old Judy Eisenbarth and, excepting every other weekend, her two children. All three are white. When the Campbell's moved to Uniontown, Judy's husband, a surgeon at Uniontown Hospital, also shared the house with his family. When Judy divorced him, the judge granted her the house and enough of his salary to retain it. To her credit, Judy never seemed to like Erica Campbell, though it may have been out of jealousy over Erica's sex appeal rather than any ideological disagreement. It would be out of the question for Judy Eisenbarth to fight for her son's and daughter's future. She is too comfortable to risk taking a stand for them or their race.

The house to the left is the smallest. It's proximity to the Eisenbarth place emphasizes its unimpressive size. The white-and-black house is the property of Marc and Stephanie Ballard. Both are white, aged 33 and in decent physical shape. Marc works midnight shift at a factory and Stephanie is a receptionist at a local dental office. Their daughter just turned ten; their son is six. There will be no more children between them. Marc had a vasectomy after the birth of their son.

Financially, the couple treads water. They chose to pay more for a newer house and a safer location. The Ballard's are more aware than most families of the dangers of being white in post-racial America. It's one reason they chose a smaller home surrounded by affluent whites rather

than a larger house in the mixed-race neighborhood to the north. With debt threatening their standard of living and two young children under their roof, Marc will not risk their tenuous security by fighting for his race. If the neighborhood becomes unsafe, he and his family will pack their things and flee. The thought reminds KJ of a true story that she read years ago. Once there was a family that had no choice but to cling to a floating roof, lest they all perish in a raging flood. As they swirled and careened, the entire family busied themselves with a heavy trunk. The son, daughter, father and mother – babe in arms – loaded the trunk with whatever possessions they had saved from the raging waters. Before they could finish, a huge whirlpool seized the floating roof and sucked the entire family down into the lethal depths.

Closer than the Eisenbarth place on the same side of the street is the De Luca Household. The large Tudor style house is spotless and the lawn manicured. Behind the place is a large swimming pool with one end deep enough for a diving board. Eric De Luca is an assistant coach for the California Pennsylvania football team. His wife Julie is a math teacher at Ben Franklin Middle School. The De Luca's moved to Uniontown two years before the Campbell's arrived. Their eldest son, fifteen at the time, was KJ's first crush. Tall, strong and handsome, Robert De Luca is a stellar shortstop and has a serious chance of earning a professional baseball contract.

Like most young white men, Robert hopes to find a loving wife and have a family. There is no chance that either he or his father will oppose the media war against white athletes. When comparing De Luca to other, non-white shortstops, sports writers and commentators often describe him as "hard-working" or "blue-collar." One went so far as to call his chiseled physique "surprisingly athletic" and his speed "deceptive." If he rages against the anti-white bias, he will lose whatever chance he has for a professional career. The drive to play and to make a decent living is greater than the desire to spare his white children the difficulty and degradation that he faces. If Robert minds his manners and keeps his mouth shut, he may get his big paycheck. Coach Eric would rather start an inferior black tailback than a superior white one if it means peace in the locker room. Like father, like son; Robert De Luca will not risk his career, let alone his life for unborn white children that he did not father.

To the left of the Campbell House is the Davis place. At this moment, "Dr." Bartholomew Davis is mowing the lawn in front of his house. KJ looks at him. He's still thin as a rail and his gray hair sits beneath a hat more suitable for a man ten to twenty years his junior. It's not surprising that he

tries to look young and “hip” even while cutting his grass. He is a sociology professor at California. As he rounds the corner of his swimming pool, he looks up and sees KJ. He acts as if she’s a stranger. Davis and his wiry, humorless blonde wife usually attend Erica’s parties. He’s known KJ for over five years. He hasn’t spoken to her in three. If the rumors about him are true, her reputation of being a Nazi is the sole reason he hasn’t hit on her yet. The Davis couple does not have children. Obviously he’ll never sacrifice for children that he and his wife couldn’t be bothered to create, much less love. In fact, Professor Davis will continue to preach anti-white sermons in his classroom. His deceitful lectures will continue to create division between white men and women. He will continue criticizing whites who show any racial awareness or who simply want to end non-white immigration, all the while supporting pan-African, pro-Hispanic and Zionist movements. Davis is neither asleep nor in denial. Like most professors, he is a traitor to his race.

From the De Luca father and son to the Eisenbarth divorcee, not one of them is willing to jeopardize their comfort or prosperity for their race and the future of their children. Even those who recognize that something is terribly wrong would rather flee the shadow than hold a candle against its darkness. KJ glances at the smallish Ballard Home. She sees the wife pull out of the garage in her old Honda Civic. Every weekday it’s the same routine. As food and gas prices rise, personal debt soars and jobs become scarce, as whites face increasing violence, the future of Mrs. Ballard’s children is darkening. Whites like her live as if the present will last forever. They act as if they’re the last of their race. She won’t fight for her children. None of them will. None of them will use their voices or their keyboards to spread the Mantra and demand accountability for the genocide of their race – the white race. None of them will risk interrupting the slow death brought about by the status quo.

KJ knows someone who will fight. There is a man who already has. He will continue to fight for all their white children, to the death if necessary, whether they thank him or spit upon his grave. He will fight so that KJ can live her life without degradation and humiliation. This fearless man happens to love and cherish her as a white man loves and cherishes a white woman. KJ looks at the rolling gray sky and the motionless trees. This could be just another June day if she allows it to be. She thinks of the wasted opportunities – all the times that she drove the blue Jeep to Bill’s place on Old Braddock Road. She always left alone. She always wound up in the arms of the fearless man who would fight for her children and who would father them if fate allows the two to remain together. Instead of

staying with her Johnny, KJ always returned to the wretchedness of the Campbell House. There's no recovering the lost chances. There's no excuse for missing the next one. KJ rises from the porch swing and walks inside. Her life at the Campbell House is over. Today or tonight, whenever the inevitable opportunity arises, she will spread her wings and fly away.

Chapter XV

Amblersburg

*“Rape was an insurrectionary act...
It delighted me that I was defying and
trampling upon the white man’s law
...defiling his women.”*

Eldridge Cleaver
Minister of Information, Black Panther Party

“Kaylee!” Erica yells, “Get down here!”

At first KJ ignores her. The backpack that Bowen gave her is mostly full. She double-bagged the iPod and the Kindle and then wrapped them in an additional layer of plastic. She puts the electronics into the backpack. Should she have to drop the backpack in water or mud, the devices should emerge unscathed. The other items in the backpack include clothes and tools and items such as bandages and Polysporin. About a third of her wardrobe remains in the Campbell House, and she packs what she can: the remaining underwear – boy shorts, bikini-type bottoms and thongs, a pair of jeans and three pairs of shorts, plus a few t-shirts and towels. By the time she’s finished loading the backpack, it is quite heavy.

She checks the front. The shank is still there. She slides the backpack over her shoulders. Though it will not be a pleasant task, she’s strong enough to carry its weight. KJ’s already dressed. She expects to see Johnny and wants to wear something she knows he’ll like. All but one of her pairs of tight leggings is at the hall, so she puts on the remaining pair. Then she puts on a thin belt. It’s not for the leggings – they’re more than tight enough to stay put on their own – it’s for her little fanny pack, in which she puts her phone and wallet.

Erica charges up the steps. KJ waits for her, the backpack safely stored in the closet. When Erica enters KJ is putting on a pair of tight-fitting black gloves. KJ looks at Erica with a bored look on her face.

“Come on!” Erica says.

“Where?” KJ asks.

She looks back at her gloves and doesn’t move a millimeter.

“We’re going shopping,” Erica says.

KJ looks up, her eyebrows raised.

“I need you to help me carry packages,” Erica says, “Be outside in five minutes.”

KJ, who’s wearing a black Celtic Frost t-shirt and a pair of snug blue galaxy-print leggings, walks past Erica and down the steps. She doesn’t wait at the door. Once she’s donned her tall, lace-up army boots, she goes outside to the minivan.

Erica eventually appears. She opens the driver’s side door, checks herself in the mirror, fiddles with her handbag, and then unlocks the opposite door for KJ.

At Uniontown Mall, Erica spends over \$300 on clothes and electronics for Stephanie. KJ waits in the van. She sees a trio of her former schoolmates as they enter the cinema complex. At least one of the three girls looks at KJ, but does not wave or even nod. It means nothing to KJ. Her old life is a closed book.

It’s eleven thirty when Erica emerges from the mall, cell phone glued to her ear. She has two huge bags in her arms. Watching her try to juggle the bags as she talks on the cell is a humorous distraction for KJ. No amount of difficulty will force Erica to close this call. She continues talking for fifteen minutes after she arrives at the van.

“Why didn’t you help me?” Erica says after she sits the bags on the second row of seats. “You just sat there on your fat ass!”

“At least I have an ass,” KJ says.

“Two of them, actually,” Erica says.

“Brilliant,” KJ says.

She looks out the passenger side window. Though the wind has yet to blow, heavy altocumulus and altostratus cover the sky.

KJ accompanies Erica into the grocery store, albeit at a distance. George Lang the butcher speaks to KJ, but not to Erica. KJ strikes up a short conversation about the weather. In addition to wanting to talk to George, who has always been decent and respectful, KJ enjoys making Erica feel scorned.

Back at the van, Erica waits for KJ to store the cartful of groceries.

“My boss called,” Erica says, “I’m going to be gone most of the night. You’re to behave while I’m gone. Don’t make any calls and do not leave the house.”

KJ looks at Erica. She can't resist getting in one last insult. This may be the last time she ever speaks to the woman who spared her life but not her brother's.

"What's going on, mom?" KJ says, "Does Dean want a quickie?"

"Get out!" Erica says, "You can walk home."

KJ exits the minivan without closing the door. She hears Erica call her a "fucking bitch" as she leans over to close the door. As Erica drives away, KJ watches the van race down the street and jerk to a halt at the first stop sign. Then it is gone. KJ grins for a second and begins walking toward the Campbell House, one and a half miles away.

Erica Campbell, née Chapman, as jealous and mean-spirited as she is, would not consciously risk KJ's life. There is no doubt that she loathes her daughter, and as she ages, she is more and more jealous of her. The day may come when Erica does not care if she jeopardizes her daughter's well-being; as of Wednesday, June 12th, that moment has not yet arrived. In spite of her foul temperament and anti-white worldview, if Erica could prevent grievous physical harm from befalling KJ, she would do so. There is a dying thread that ties her to her flesh-and-blood daughter. The thread does not mitigate the torment through which she puts Kaylee Jane and the abuse she piles on her daughter is indeed a form of betrayal, although at the present time Erica Campbell would not want to see Kaylee Jane suffer any permanent injury or physical harm.

Erica does not need to wish harm upon her daughter. Her attitudes and actions, together with the attitudes and actions of millions of other race-blind and anti-white citizens have already put KJ in harm's way. Their unanimous condemnation of any white who is considered racist has encouraged non-whites to make accusations of racism against any white who displeases them. This cycle of accusation and destruction in the name of "anti-racism" is the modern American Inquisition. The vilification and dehumanization of KJ for loving her race, and the refusal to punish those who assaulted her, has painted a bright red bull's-eye on her chest.

Markael Yates never knew his biological father and his mother had little to do with him. Janet Yates, Markael's grandmother, adopted and raised him in the Hillside District of Pittsburgh. When he was thirteen, Janet took an office job in Uniontown and grandmother and grandson - with her second husband Floyd - relocated to a house on Emerson Street. Markael's life was not exceptionally difficult. There was no hunger or poverty. There were no threats or beatings aside from the usual schoolyard fights. There was no loss of a breadwinner to a mine calamity or a logging mishap. Neither Janet nor Floyd expressed any virulence toward whites.

Floyd, in fact, was one of the few serious black Republicans, though even he voted for Obama out of racial solidarity. Markael was not a particularly bright or patient adolescent, which led to great difficulties in school. At the same time Yates became a nuisance in the classroom and a terror to his classmates. Although teachers expended tremendous energies on non-white students like Yates, like most of those students he did not respond to the teachers' efforts, and he failed most of his classes. In spite of this he was never held back; teachers would not flunk him for fear of being called racist. They had also begun to fear his increasingly aggressive demeanor.

There were two lessons that young Markael did manage to learn: he could blame racism for any failure or misbehavior on his part, and the color of his skin gave him the right to accuse any white person of being racist. The constant rejection he received from white females who had no interest in his romantic overtures was, according to him, due to white racism. In spite of the fact that many of those females were ignorant enough to sleep with a black male, none were foolish enough to date one as violent as Markael Yates. Many older whites told him that he could excel as well as any of his white peers. They would tell him that race was unimportant, if it existed at all. At the same time, both whites and non-whites blamed racism for any difficulty a non-white like Yates might encounter. Though race did not exist for whites, it most certainly existed for non-whites. In fact, it was of vital importance. Markael Yates learned that his failings were no fault of his own; rather, they were because of whites.

Anti-white whites encouraged Yates to study the words and writings of radical black nationalists. When the administrators of a public swimming pool threatened to fire Yates for stealing from visitors, he accused them of being racists. When attractive white girls denied him sexual gratification he blamed it on racism. When he openly accused the pool administrators of being racists they allowed him to return to work. When he confronted the attractive girls, they would lie about having boyfriends and other commitments, though always with the caveat that they were not in any way, shape or form racist against him.

Before he was fifteen, Yates had committed his first assault. At sixteen he ambushed and severely beat a fourteen year old white male. He accused the boy of calling him a "nigger" and when no witnesses contesting the accusation would come forward, the judge lessened the charges. When Yates watched television or a Hollywood movie, the villains were almost always white males, many of them racists. Whites blamed their own kin for oppressing "brilliant" non-white minds such as his own. When

he didn't excel at football, even after the coach gave him twice as many chances to start as he would a white athlete, Yates accused the coach of racism. This time it didn't stick, though the coach was quick to point out how many blacks were starters on his team.

Why did Yates fail so many exams? White racists designed the curriculum so that blacks could not succeed. If there were no significant differences between the races, as most whites would say, what other explanation could there be? Yates did not invent any of these excuses. Every time he read leftist blogs or forums, watched the major news networks, listened to major politicians from both parties or watched Hollywood productions, whites – or Jews who he thought were white – told him that white racists were to blame for his failures and lack of satisfaction. Now that he's seventeen, Markael Yates is neither the strongest nor the most athletic non-white at Uniontown High School. He is, however, the most violent, surpassing even Darryon Green who stabbed an older black student when he was twelve.

On Wednesday, the 12th of June, Markael is driving with his cohort James Bracey and his acquaintance Willy Gant. Bracey's black father is a supervisor at a nearby factory. The benefit to the company's image among minority advocacy groups gave Mr. Bracey the edge over the other applicants. Bracey's mother is white. As is common with mixed black-white offspring, James looks like a black male who suffered in vitro exposure to toxic chemicals. His skin color and hair texture are off-putting and unnatural to the honest eye. Most mulattoes harbor great resentment for whites; James is no exception. He has nothing to do with his mother's family in spite of their embarrassing attempts to please him. Unlike many mulattoes, James Bracey is not fat or out of shape. He is more athletic than Yates and his physique is sculpted from years of exercise and lifting. Overall, however, he's not as powerful nor is he as willing to engage in violence. His sexual cravings have led him to attach his fate to Markael Yates, who has bedded more (black) women than anyone Bracey has ever known.

William "Willy" Gant is the fish out of water. He's an unmixed black male like Yates, though unlike his brutish companion he has never been prone to violence. Until his high school years, most of his friends were white. He's a skilled basketball player and if discrimination against white athletes ceased to exist, he'd still be good enough to earn a starting position on most college teams. Gant has no great ambition, positive or negative; he'd prefer to "shoot hoops", eat Papa John's pizza, and spend time with his peers.

Gant's life was more or less carefree until he crossed paths with another black male, Vincent "Big June" Holman. Holman's girlfriend wanted to make Big June jealous by flirting with Gant. As a result, Big June attacked Willy on two separate occasions. Markael Yates, who had taken to heart the idea of "not contributing to the death of another brother", took up for Gant. Caught between a bigger male's fists and the volatile nature of his would-be protector, Gant chose the latter. On Wednesday, June 12th, he finds himself in the back seat of James Bracey's black RAV4. Markael Yates is behind the wheel.

One of the few uses that Markael Yates has for whites is the acquisition of pot. The three occupants of the car – Gant included – smoke sizable quantities of the plant. Bracey and Gant know why Yates is driving up Derrick Avenue. An acquaintance, a young white stoner who graduated last year, will be happy to supply their favorite leaf.

Ahead of the Toyota RAV4, a white girl is walking on the sidewalk to the right of the street. Willy is the first to notice. From behind she appears to be young and very attractive. Gant wouldn't mind bedding a white girl; in fact, he'd prefer it. Like most non-whites who admire Caucasian beauty, he wouldn't think twice about the inevitable result should he ever have the opportunity to indulge his lust. He doesn't care that in the process he would drive that beauty to extinction and would destroy the unique genetic inheritance of both his and her descendants. He would never find the mixed-race child of such a union nearly as attractive as a pure white female. Gant would most likely describe himself as generous and kind-hearted. It does not dawn on him that it is evil to destroy that which you admire.

Gant stares at the girl's ass. He looks at the mass of gorgeous hair that flows over her shoulders and down her back. The straight strands are so thick as to be innumerable. Her body is sleek and solid. He looks down her legs, their strength evident from her snug leggings. The army boots she wears are a bit odd to him, but she may be one of those stoner girls who are not averse to betraying her race. Gant decides to draw his mates' attention to the girl, since their silence would seem to indicate that somehow they have failed to notice her. He expects Yates and Bracey to make some lewd comments and perhaps lower the window and express their appreciation in crude language and gestures. Willy doesn't imagine she'll get into the car so he doesn't waste too much time on that fantasy. Truth be known, all he hopes to do is score some weed and then eat lunch. Neither Yates nor Bracey have said much to him after he filled the tank with gas. He wouldn't mind being included in the conversation for once.

Maybe his companions will say something funny or at least entertaining if he draws their attention to the girl.

“Yo, on the right,” Gant says, “Check out that ass!”

Yates and Bracey, who for some reason were looking in the opposite direction, snap their heads to look at the girl.

“Jesus fucking Christ!” Yates says.

He slows Bracey’s vehicle to a crawl.

The distance from the grocery to the Campbell House is little more than a mile and a half. It’s an easy stroll for KJ, although the rising heat and high humidity will make it uncomfortable. The odds are good that both Erica and Gene will be gone when KJ arrives. She’ll grab her backpack, call Bowen and leave behind her old life forever. She catches herself day-dreaming. It’s dangerous to let down her guard. She’s not yet in Johnny’s arms and her .45 pistol is in the blue Jeep.

KJ crosses Morgantown Road and begins her journey. Derrick Avenue runs straight in a NW-SE direction. After a distance it then turns to the north. Houses and an occasional administrative building line both sides of the quiet lane. A few children are playing outside and a large Rottweiler barks at KJ from its enclosure. At the moment the road is free of moving vehicles, though traffic will pick up during the lunch hour.

At a little past noon, KJ passes the Trzeciak place. She glances down the long driveway to the front door. She’d risk her life to awaken decent people like the Trzeciak Family, so that they might see the insidious genocide that their children face. KJ thinks about the enormity of the task and shakes her head. Perhaps Jordan will awaken to racial reality and the growing peril that shall menace her white children. KJ hopes that she will realize before it’s too late. She looks down for a moment, saddened that she rarely broached the subject back when she could still speak to Jordan, and just as saddened that she never thanked Jordan for helping her get through a very dark and lonely time.

KJ wipes a few beads of sweat that emerge from her mass of hair. She hopes she’ll have time to take a shower before Johnny comes and takes her away. If not, she’ll just have to get him all sweaty. The thought makes her get that wicked smile she often gets when she thinks of him.

KJ can see the split-level Rayner home just a few houses down from the Trzeciak’s. She’ll cross the street before arriving at the mailbox. Matt Rayner, the notorious stoner who often annoyed KJ during his high school years, still resides in the recreation room of his parents’ house. Five polite and three less polite rebukes couldn’t convince him to quit hitting on her. She has no desire to see him.

Not far from the point where she hopes to cross, KJ's acute senses trigger an internal alarm. She's learned to take heed of her instincts. She can hear tires rolling over gravel and pebbles. Fear rises up her spine. To the right is an empty lot and the street is devoid of traffic. There's no obvious motive for the driver to slow down. Most people would ignore the warning signs for fear of looking foolish. KJ doesn't care what others think. She glances back and sees a Toyota RAV4. The windows are too dark for her to see the occupants. In the blink of an eye her body begins to enter flight mode.

"What the fuck?" Bracey says, "Why are we followin' this bitch?"

"You don't know who that is?" Yates asks as he edges the vehicle closer to the sidewalk.

As if to answer his question, KJ glances at the RAV4 and all three occupants see her face.

"Fuck me!" Bracey says, "It's that fucking racist cunt! Run that bitch over!"

Yates does the opposite. He stops the RAV4.

Before the wheels of the Toyota can cease moving, KJ bolts to the right.

"Fuck!" Yates yells. He leaps from the vehicle and takes off after her. Bracey thinks about joining Yates. Gant is too shocked to think.

With her head start, speed and agility KJ has a decided advantage in this life-and-death race. Her knowledge of evasion and escape techniques serves her well. As she flies between homes and outbuildings she avoids any angle that will allow her pursuer or pursuers to shorten the distance. At each turn she looks for a weapon or other object that could help her immobilize one of them. For now, running is the best choice.

Yates is dogged in his pursuit. If his prey was anyone other than KJ he might renounce the chase. He continues to follow her like a creature possessed. Over the past three years, many white girls have avoided him. Those who had no choice but interact with him have always rejected his sexual advances. Their aloofness was never a factor in his growing anti-white rage, since they always went out of their way to treat him with ridiculous kindness or acted in a passive manner while in his company. They were aware of his lust for their flesh as well as his hatred of their white identity. Most chose to feel sorry for the dangerous beast. Some even apologized. Kaylee Jane Campbell would not back down from him. She would not declare her hatred for "white racists" and she did not show him undeserved kindness or respect. She did not beg him to forgive her for the sin of being white. When he accosted her in the hallway her face did not

show sympathy or remorse; it was defiant. He knows that she loves and defends her race and has not withered in the face of punishment. To him, she does not know her proper place as a white woman. He feels a loss of power and deep inside that terrifies him. He will show her the proper place for Whitey's woman. Since she will not bow to pressure or threats, he will break her with force. Other white girls won't be so eager to rise from the mud, not if her torn body lies in it.

To the front KJ sees a copse of trees. It becomes her target. She knows these woods from her many hikes and walks. As she approaches the final lane before the woods a car pulls out and begins rolling down the street. It will cross in front of her before she can reach the other side of the lane. She aims for the rear tire and passes just behind the vehicle. On the other side of the street is a woman with a baby and an old man, probably the grandfather. They sit on a little porch swing and try to cool down by generating their own breeze. KJ screams for help as she passes. The three startled witnesses watch her run away at top speed, followed by a large black male. The two adults take the baby inside and lock the door. Out of fear they decide to do nothing. The pretty white girl is just a stranger anyway.

KJ enters the woods well ahead of Yates. If she continues running, she'll arrive at the Campbell House before Yates, but he'll seize her as she unlocks the door. She remembers several locations in the forest where she can hide. She finds a good place that's shielded by hydrangea and a massive black cherry. As luck would have it an old Pepsi bottle is laying nearby. She takes the old bottle in her right hand and a rock in her left. She will attack the first enemy to appear if she thinks that he's seen her. Then she'll continue fleeing. KJ doesn't know that Yates is the sole pursuer, although this knowledge would not alter her course of action.

KJ does not panic when she sees Yates charge into the forest. Her hiding place obscures most of her person. It also allows a rapid resumption of flight. She's crouched behind a furrow of earth and a tangled sea of bracken. If he comes too close he'll get the rock. If he catches up to her while she's fleeing she'll summon all the strength in her arms and strike him with the bottle.

Yates does not scrutinize the forest. He shuffles here and there, trying to search an environment that is alien to him. His face begins to show his frustration. KJ does not look directly at him. His primal instinct might sense the weight of her stare. She uses her excellent peripheral vision to keep him in check. Yates turns to leave and KJ remains motionless. She doesn't even wipe the sweat from her forehead. She suspects that he

hasn't given up, not yet. Her instincts are serving her very well today. Yates makes an abrupt turn and waits for a few minutes. Nothing moves, not even the wind. His pursuit thwarted, he retreats from the forest. She can see his L.A. Lakers shirt disappearing into the outside world.

KJ doesn't move at first. Yates might be circling the woods in anticipation of her emergence. She's already decided to head south, away from the Campbell House. She will continue until she's reasonably sure that he's not on her trail. If he does appear she'll try to lose him in another patch of woods to the east. The soupy atmosphere relents and a gentle breeze stirs the ferns. It is a godsend for a hot and sweaty KJ, though the comfortable wind departs as quickly as it comes and the stifling humidity creeps back into the woods. KJ drops the rock and pushes through the greenery.

Willy Gant doesn't say a word when Markael Yates returns to Derrick Avenue. James Bracey has parked the RAV4 along the sidewalk and now Yates is back in his dominant position behind the wheel. Neither Gant nor Bracey know with precision what Yates planned to accomplish. One look at his face tells them that he was unsuccessful.

"What's up?" Bracey asks as Yates starts the RAV4.

"Nothin'," he says. "I'm gonna get some fuckin' weed from the white boy. You two stay put."

"What?" Bracey says, "I can't go in?"

Yates looks at James Bracey. Bracey shrinks from the fury in Yates' eyes.

"I'm not in the fuckin' mood for your bullshit," Yates says.

His black and yellow eyes shift back and forth like a predator eying up its victim.

"OK, Mark" Bracey says, "It's cool, it's cool."

Yates pulls up to the Rayner House. Gant watches him walk to the basement door. He can barely see the stoner who lets Yates inside. Gant looks at the clock in the RAV4. He's starting to wish he'd never left home today.

UHS Junior Cody Blanchette maintains two Facebook pages. One is typical for a suburban teenage boy. He fills its pages with information about his activities, his favorite bands and popular movies. Many fellow students are his Facebook friends and a few play in his World of Warcraft adventure group. Markael Yates couldn't care less about any of that. Blanchette's other page is a different story. Thanks to years of indoctrination by his anti-white parents, the media, Hollywood and the school system, Cody Blanchette has become an anti-white white. He'd call himself

“anti-racist” even though the only “racists” he ever condemns are white. The only genocide that he would not decry is the one against his own race. Since it’s difficult for him to find any whites with pride in their race, Blanchette relies on anonymous tips and groups such as the Jewish ADL for identifying potential white racists. He hopes that his second page – “United Against Hate” - will prove his credentials as a defender of minority “rights”. He also hopes that it will help his future career as a journalist.

A small number of his allies would say that Cody Blanchette goes too far. In addition to posting strong condemnations of any white who professes a concern for his race, Blanchette reveals the address and personal information – the notorious “dox drop” – of any so-called racist that he can uncover. He calls this information the “Haters’ List”.

The June 10th update to “United Against Hate” included the street address and a Google Earth marker for the Campbell House. In the accompanying text he declares Kaylee Jane Campbell guilty of racism and hate crimes – i.e., the use of the word “nigger”, or as he types it, “the n- word.” Yesterday Markael Yates noted this interesting information. He felt a strong urge to prowl around the Campbell place and, if possible, to ambush KJ. Yesterday it was just a passing desire. Today is different. He came close to claiming what is to him the ultimate prize: a gorgeous white girl who loves her race and wouldn’t dream of having sex with a non-white. If he manages to defile her, he won’t be a simple thug and poser any longer. He would join the ranks of black nationalist heroes like Eldridge Cleaver. Before he leaves the Rayner place, Yates uses the burned-out loser’s computer to verify KJ’s address. Rayner watches as Yates accesses the site but the thought of a dangerous monster writing down a white girl’s personal information doesn’t seem to bother him.

Not far from Kimberly Drive is a field full of shrubs and wild roses. KJ begins crossing the field from its southwest corner. She’s thankful for the overcast sky, which has gotten thicker. It’s hot enough without the sun’s rays. KJ stops near the center of the field. She observes all sides of the large undeveloped lot and then hides behind a huge wall of multiflora roses. There, she removes her cell phone from her fanny pack.

Johnny Bowen did not wish to go. He put the trip off for two days. He hasn’t heard from KJ since yesterday. He has no idea what’s going on in her life and it gnaws and sucks on his soul like lamprey’s teeth. At noon he decides to hazard a trip to Deer Park. The 12-gauge shotgun that he ordered is ready for pick-up at Miller’s Gun Shop. He wants to have it in his Jeep when he takes KJ to her new home in Amblersburg, West Virginia. The pump shotgun will protect her better than a lone pistol. The

trip is a necessity since only John Bowen can sign for the gun. He'll need a photo I.D. and the shop owner knows his face. Right now he's an hour away from Uniontown. He cruised by the Campbell House this morning, but the place seemed deserted. He can only hope that all is well with his beloved KJ.

Bowen's cell phone rings as he passes the cemetery in Deer Park. He hopes the caller is Garret Fogarty. Garret is due to call and Bowen is too far away to help KJ should she need him in a hurry. Though Johnny doesn't know it, Garret is in the middle of a flight from San Francisco to Portland and his phone is turned off. Rather than a cell phone, Koss ear-phones are pressed to his ears. Johnny opens his cell and glances at the display panel. He pulls over to the right where there's a wide shoulder. He knows the number and it makes his throat tighten.

"KJ," he says the second he takes the call.

"Johnny," she responds. He closes his eyes for a moment. "Can you come and get me?" she asks.

The words he's longed to hear come at a time when he's 296,000 feet away from her.

"Of course, angel," he says, "Where are you?"

"Not far from my parents' home," she says.

Though she does not speak in a whisper her voice is soft. Bowen notices.

"Listen, angel," he says, "I'm in Deer Park. It'll take an hour to get there. Do you have Bill's number? Call him, OK? See if he can come, and then call me back, OK angel?"

"OK, Johnny," she says.

KJ enters Bill's number. His, Bowen's and Anna's phone numbers are etched in her memory. Bill answers on the fourth ring. He realizes who it is by the number and the relief in his voice is easy to hear.

"Bill," she says, "Johnny's in Maryland. Like, is there any way you could come and get me?"

He, too, has hoped to hear those words. He prayed that Bowen would call and that KJ would be safe in his arms. Unfortunately, Bill is also far away at the moment.

"I'd be happy to, KJ," he says, "but right now I'm in Meyersdale. I'll leave as soon as I can but it'll take an hour or so."

"Yeah, OK," she says, "Johnny said he'll be here in about an hour. I'm going to call Johnny and tell him to come."

"Alright, KJ," Bill says, "Call me if anything happens. I'm going to leave now anyway. Remember, call me."

“OK, Bill, thank you,” she says.

KJ closes the call. Bill feels more apprehension than relief. He curses himself for not telling Bowen he'd be at the Meyersdale shop all day. Without changing from his oily work clothes he leaves the garage and heads straight for his Cherokee.

“Johnny,” KJ says, “Bill's in Meyersdale.”

“Shit!” Bowen says. A man feels an acute frustration when he cannot help a person he loves. “You won't get hold of Anna,” he says as his mind searches for options that don't exist. “Tell me, angel, can you find a safe place?”

She nods and then replies “Yeah.”

His senses and her soft voice tell him that she's in some kind of trouble. It's like an auger boring into his brain.

“Are you OK?” he asks.

“I'm good,” she says, “Johnny, I don't want you to speed and get pulled over. They might give you more than a citation, OK?”

“You mean more to me than any of that shit,” he says.

“Please,” she whispers.

“What's wrong, angel?” he asks, “Talk to me!”

She sighs. She doesn't want to tell him. She knows he'll throw caution to the wind and race back to the woman he loves. She won't deceive him either; the nature of her trouble could be important to him, and he deserves to know.

“Some big nigger started chasing me,” she says.

She stands and looks at her surroundings. Aside from her, the field is empty. There's a silence over the phone.

“Goddamn it...” he says. “Listen, angel, find a place to hide but do not get trapped. I'll be there as fast as I can.”

He cocks the 1911A1 on his hip.

“No, Johnny,” she says, “Please don't get the cops after you.”

“I'll be there,” he says, “Where can I find you?”

She thinks for a few moments. “I'll be...” she says, “OK, how about the Blue Mountain Motel? I'll be in the woods across US40. Park by the hotel and I'll come to you. Is that good?”

“Perfect,” he says, “You know what? Go there now and wait for me.”

“I have to get my backpack,” she says.

“Fuck that shit!” he says, “I'll replace all of it. Get over there where you'll be safe.”

“It's on the way,” she says, “It'll be five minutes. I promise I won't stay. If anyone's there I'll walk away.”

She doesn't want him to have to replace items that cost hundreds of dollars. She'll run up to her room and then run away, never to return to her personal hell.

"Be careful, KJ," Johnny says.

"I will," she replies, "I love you, Johnny,"

"I love you too," he says, "Take care."

John Bowen can do little more than hope. He assumed he'd greet the news of her leaving the Campbell House with nothing but unfettered joy. Instead he feels powerless. A predatory savage could be stalking the woman he loves, the woman he'd risk his life to protect, and he's an hour away from helping her. He merges into traffic and races toward Uniontown. A customer at Miller's gun shop could see his Rubicon from the window as it turns and heads in the opposite direction.

Yates charges out of Rayner's basement with a bag in his hands. He doesn't try to conceal its contents. His mind is on something else.

"Shit!" Bracey says, "That fool's gonna get us busted!"

He won't say a word of it to Yates' face. Yates throws the bag through the driver's side window. Gant catches it before it can spill.

"What's goin' on?" Bracey asks.

"Change of plans, Tri," Yates says to Bracey, using one of Bracey's nicknames.

He pulls off the curb and when he backs up he nearly strikes a Corolla parked beside the sidewalk.

KJ skulks through the woods that form a border between the field of shrubs and Kimberly Drive. She can see the Campbell House, which appears to be vacant. No one is coming up the lane. KJ walks to the rear of the house. The porch entrance is locked. Once she's inside she locks the door again and walks upstairs. Her boots leave muddy tracks on the steps but she does not care. She'd like to shower and relax but there is no time for either. KJ heads straight for her room.

Near the front entrance of the Campbell House, a black RAV4 rolls to a stop. Its motor is turned off.

KJ pulls her backpack out of the closet and opens the front pouch. She removes the shank. She'll carry it until she's safe in Johnny's arms. She looks in the mirror to the left of the door. She'd like to change clothes. It's best that she not spend another minute in this place of sadness and isolation. KJ shoulders her backpack, grips the shank in her right hand, and walks to the door of her room.

"Get in the driver's seat," Yates says to Bracey. His left leg is already out the door.

"Hmm?" James Bracey says.

"Get in the fuckin' seat," Yates says.

"Why can't Willy?" Bracey asks.

He's figured out what is about to happen and he wants a taste.

"He doesn't have a license," Yates says. Yates removes a switchblade knife from his pocket. "Do you want a fuckin' piece of this?"

Bracey stares into Yates' eyes. They are steeped in death and hate. Bracey swallows and then begins to slide over the stick shift to the driver's seat.

"C'mon, Willy," Yates says. He starts to exit then looks back into Gant's eyes. "Don't slam the door."

Near the Pennsylvania state line Bowen has no choice but to slow down to the speed limit. His radar detector indicates a strong emission up ahead. He feels a terrible weight on his chest and stomach. Bowen doesn't care what the fine would cost. If the cops pulled him over, the time he'd lose could be crucial.

Yates walks up to the front door. If KJ won't answer the doorbell, he'll creep around back and force the rear entrance. He knows a thing or two about Gene and Erica Campbell. The odds that they own a firearm are very low. Before ringing the bell, he tries his luck and turns the door knob. To his utter shock and delight the knob turns and the door moves. When Gene left at 10:45 AM he forgot to lock the front door. Yates motions for Gant to be quiet. Then, knife drawn, Yates enters the Campbell House.

William "Willy" Gant never did hate Kaylee Campbell. He knows that she loves her race. He loves his. He knows she called Duane Carter a nigger. He'd assaulted her. Carter is also a petty thief and a liar. To Gant, he is a "nigger". Gant knows that Kaylee would never be interested in him, or in any other non-white. Though he'd never admit it to anyone but himself, he's actually surprised at the level of hostility that other whites show toward her. She takes up for them and their race. Gant's own race has hundreds if not thousands of benefactors. An ever-growing list of words is now taboo thanks to illogical black outrage and anti-white collaboration. Even the use of innocuous words like "black hole" can destroy a white person's livelihood. He could imagine young black women screaming in anger if they faced half the hostility that KJ faces. In a way, he can sympathize with KJ Campbell. Right now, at the threshold of the Campbell House, he begins to wish he were home. He could turn away. Yates will be inside for some time, and if Gant walks around the back of the house James Bracey won't have any reason to think something is wrong. He could then make his escape. He knows full well what Yates is going to do.

Yates may even kill her. No, he cannot leave; Yates is a violent beast and if Gant abandons him he'll track Willy down and kill him, too.

That is what he'd tell an interrogator. In his heart of hearts there are other reasons that he will not leave. He does not want to look like a pussy in front of his "buds". Though Gant does feel a modicum of sympathy for KJ, Yates is a brother in race. Since he must choose, Gant will help a fellow black even if white KJ has to suffer for it. He would rationalize his decision by pointing to her actions. He does not condemn her for her racial pride or her use of the "special" word. He would blame her for antagonizing Yates. It's fine for her to love her white skin, but she should have kept her mouth shut.

Deep in the recesses of his mind, there is another reason why he'll stay at the door. This is the carnal and most evil of the three reasons, and the one that William Gant would deny with vehemence. It's the kind of terrible desire that a male like Gant wouldn't confess even if his denial would cost him a place in heaven. KJ is a forbidden fruit. She is a true white man's woman, by her own choice. Once Yates is finished with her Gant might risk taking a taste of that fruit. Of course he wouldn't do such a thing by himself, but if Yates has already ravaged her what's the harm if he takes a turn? At least he won't cut or beat her.

Markael Yates points to the kitchen door. Gant advances to the kitchen and stops. Yates nods once and then turns and looks toward the stairs.

KJ exits her room. She steps down the hall, making little noise. At the edge of the stairs she peeks around the edge of the wall. In that instant her blue eyes meet Yates' black ones.

In her mind, KJ has rehearsed the possibility of coming face-to-face with an intruder. Armed only with a shank or a kitchen knife, the possible outcomes gave her chills. Until she abandons this place for the final time she knows that her white brothers and sisters will not be able to help her. She knows that Johnny Bowen cannot protect her as long as she stays in the Campbell House. She hoped to leave the day she turned eighteen. Then, she could tell Erica to "fuck off". She'd walk into Bowen's arms, right in front of her parents, and they'd leave in the blue Jeep. In the meantime KJ had been fooling herself. On a subconscious level, she continued to believe that the loveless Campbell House would offer her some protection. She should have listened to Bowen. She should not have returned to this place.

KJ's reaction time and ability to quickly comprehend a situation have always been excellent. Various speed and agility exercises as well as her

efforts at the range have made her reactions lightning-fast. Before Yates can react, KJ turns and flees to her room. She can hear him charge up the steps as she locks the door. There will be little time to prepare for his entry. KJ looks around. She makes a mental note of everything in the room that she might use against the beast. She sees her 20-pound and 10-pound dumbbells beside the mirror and its stand. She throws her backpack on the bed. She runs to her closet and grabs one of the last remaining items: a long-sleeve flannel shirt. She leaves the shirt and both sleeves unbuttoned and then she rips the right sleeve up toward the elbow.

Yates begins slamming the door, first with his fist and then with his shoulder. It will give very soon. KJ palms the shank, holding the blade's back against her arm. The long sleeve will hide the shank but the tear will allow her to deploy the blade without difficulty. She hears the door crack. In the middle of her room is a small, feather-soft rug that slides easily. Weeks ago she moved it away from her bed so that she won't slip on it during the night. With her left boot she moves it in front of her. Using her peripheral vision to watch the door, KJ awaits her enemy's inevitable entry. She can feel her heart beating. A life and death battle is coming.

The door cannot withstand Yates' lust and fury. Its side splinters and the door flies open.

Only one man who lives will have me, she thinks, and you will not be him.

At first Yates does not enter. He awaits an attack. When none comes, he takes one step and looks inside. Standing to the left of her bed is KJ Campbell. She looks up at him but says nothing. Yates has gone over this scenario time and time again in his disgusting fantasies. He'd force Whitey's woman to bow down. He'd demonstrate his power and dominance over her. Sometimes her husband or boyfriend lies in a pool of blood; at other times he just stands there and watches Yates rape his wife. Then he has to watch her enjoy it. Vicious anti-white fantasies aside, Yates never thought he'd get the opportunity to live one of them. He'd heard the rumors about KJ. He used to believe them; she's a skank or a dyke, a used-up stoner, she's trash. He's starting to think it was all a lie. Why would a skank or a stoner stand up for her race, even though she knows she'll suffer for it? Why would a lesbian stand with white men when homosexuals have everything to gain by destroying straight white men? As he stares at her in silence he convinces himself that the rumors are lies. She's straight and clean. She may even be a virgin. For Markael Yates, the thought of tearing KJ's body in the name of rage and hate and

carnal hunger is pure ecstasy. She looks at the knife in his hand and he notices. It's large for a switchblade and looks wicked sharp, though it's not as long as her shank. She looks into his eyes as he crosses the threshold and stands in front of her. His chest and throat are just out of range.

"You do as I say, bitch," Yates tells her, "and you might walk away from this."

"Please don't hurt me," KJ whispers.

She looks down again. He's still in her peripheral vision. Yates expected some form of defiance. Her passive response is disappointing.

"Shut the fuck up!" he says. "I decide what happens. I decide if you live or die!" he yells.

Downstairs, Willy Gant hears each word. Again Gant wonders whether he should remain. Yates could make this very ugly.

Better her than me, Gant thinks.

Tears began to roll down KJ's face.

"Drop your pants!" Yates says.

KJ grimaces. Still palming the blade, she starts to pull down her leggings. At first she leaves the thong brief in place.

"Both of 'em, cunt!" he yells.

"Please," she whispers.

He does not respond. Real tears join the fake ones. Her pleas, however, are mere deception. In her mind she urges him to make a mistake. She slides her thumbs under the thong's waistband and begins to lower both the briefs and her leggings. With three of her fingers she holds on dearly to the butt of the concealed shank. As she lowers her leggings, revealing to Yates that which he has no right to see, KJ tries to suppress her wrath. She needs to stay sharp. She will get a chance to strike the bastard, even if it costs KJ her life. She keeps her wits but cannot help feeling the intense humiliation. She thinks about her Johnny. This moment was supposed to be beautiful and dear. Once he knew that they could be together, Johnny would be the one to see her like this. The beast has stolen that moment from the both of them. She wishes Johnny were here with his pistol and his knife. He would cap Yates and then skin him alive, and she would watch.

When KJ's leggings and thong reach her knees Yates speaks.

"Alright," he says, "That's enough. I don't give a fuck about your lily-white legs."

The urge to make him suffer before he dies is overwhelming. This beast does not have the right to see her naked body. He groans and smacks his lips and then makes a disgusting comment. He stares at her

intimate region for what seems like forever. In her mind she urges him to move two steps closer.

"Down on all fours," Yates says, waving the knife from side to side, "Go on, bitch! Get down like a fuckin' dog!"

KJ obeys, putting her knees and gloved hands on the soft shag rug. She'd hoped to use the rug to unbalance Yates. Now she'll use it for a different purpose. The long strands of the rug will make it difficult for Yates to see any subtle manipulation of the shank. KJ does not stare at her foe. She keeps him in her peripheral vision. Each time he looks at her body and away from her head or arms she moves the shank a little more.

"Lift your ass!" he says, "You white whores don't know how to please a real man."

Again she obeys. He takes a step to her left. He's still out of reach for a quick strike. If she attempts a long-distance attack, she'll have to stand and move with her leggings halfway down. His retaliation would be quick and deadly.

"You're gonna bleed, bitch," he says.

"Please...", she says in a whisper, "Please don't hurt me."

"Oh, it gonna hurt," he says, "I'm gonna tear you up so hard you won't ever feel no white cock in that cunt of yours."

If he can fulfill his desires, Yates will take away her virginity. He knows that will hurt her more than anything else possibly can. She is proud and defiant. He wants to destroy that pride. More than anything he wants to deflower this beautiful white woman. If he succeeds, KJ will never be able to share her immaculate body with the white man she loves.

"Filthy white pig," he says.

Yates has the big advantage. Though she is strong, very strong for a girl her height, she cannot match his brute strength. He can easily overpower her. He is much more violent and if he rapes her he will do so without mercy or regret. Of all the physical advantages in this life-and-death struggle, she has but one. Yates moves behind her. A pang of fear strikes her soul. She sees him in the mirror beside the closet. He kneels down and starts to unbuckle his pants. The mirror does not help her depth perception but it does allow her to see many of his movements. He edges forward on his knees, coming ever closer to her body.

Yates has never raped a woman before. He's so excited his hands shake a little.

KJ's one advantage is savage desperation. It can be difficult to defend against a person who no longer cares if he survives the battle. KJ fought years of indoctrination and alienation that urged her to give away

the gift of her beautiful body. She was blessed when Justin Harris turned away and left her intact. Though she wanted John Bowen to take her, he did not. He left her pristine for the man who will take her as his wife. That man may very well be him in the end. At that time he will take what is rightfully his. This black defiler, this intruder into a world that is sacred to her and to the one man who will have her, shall not steal that gift from her. She will die before he penetrates her body.

Yates' wants to grab her thigh with both hands and pull her into his body. First he desires to touch her where only one man will ever have the right. Yates puts his knife into one of his belt loops, though KJ cannot see this because her own body blocks that part of the mirror. It doesn't matter. KJ has committed to a course of action. He will not have her, not while she still lives. She lifts her right hand a little and grips the shank in her glove. She sees him look down as he makes sure the knife is secure. This is her chance. She unleashes her fury.

The attack begins with a blur of motion. She throws her body into a spin and launches herself in his direction. Her right arm, now bearing the shank in a striking position, slashes at his head. The blow cannot generate enormous force but it is fast and accurate. John Ashley Bowen could not be there to defend her. Still he has not failed his beloved KJ; he sharpened the excellent steel of the blade into a lethal razor. The blow finds its mark and opens a huge gash on the left side of Yates's face.

KJ gives him no time to recover. She pushes off with her boots and the rug takes her across the floor. She stops in front of the mirror, where she lays the shank on the floor. Yates grabs his face with his left hand and looks at her. He fumbles for his knife with his right. In that instant she throws the 20-pound dumbbell. She's been using it for years to build her arm strength. Now she demonstrates that strength for Yates. The dumbbell slams into his head and stuns him. With her right, KJ grabs the 10-pound dumbbell. She jumps to her feet, pulling up her thong and leggings with her left hand. Yates recovers just in time for KJ to throw the 10-pound weight toward his head. He throws up his right arm to protect himself, and the impact sends his knife flying from his battered arm. KJ grabs the shank from the floor as fast as she can. Yates scrambles after his knife but KJ doesn't give him time to recover.

All things being equal, KJ Campbell could not hope to match Yates in a knife fight. Today all things are far from equal. KJ rushes Yates' battered form and attacks him with the shank. Her movements are fast and savage. She stabs him in the right side. When he reaches back to protect his body she stabs him in the shoulder. He's lucky it does not slice into his

chest. The next strike is so fast he cannot even try and counter it. This time the blade enters the side of his neck. Again luck smiles on the monster; the knife narrowly misses his carotid artery.

Markael Yates is incapacitated; for all KJ knows, he may be dying. In either case he's no longer an immediate threat. Now is the time for her to run. KJ grabs her backpack and flings it over her shoulders. She looks back at Yates, who bleeds and gasps for breath on the floor. Minutes ago he was about to ravage her. All the tears that now wet her cheeks are real. She swallows her rage since it is no longer of use. Now she has to use her head. There is time for one last act of revenge. Before she exits into the hallway KJ spits on her defeated foe.

Gant hears the commotion and takes a few steps toward the front door. He's feeling his regret again. By the sounds of it, Yates is going very hard on the Campbell girl. What exactly did she do to deserve this? Gant shakes his head and returns to his post by the kitchen. Yates is a brute and a potential killer, but Campbell is white and Gant cannot betray his black brother. He stands by the kitchen door and tries not to listen.

KJ moves as fast as possible without making too much noise. She scurries down the stairs. The shank is in her right hand and ready for further use. When Gant sees her descend it's a bolt of lightning in his brain. She appears to be unscathed. Gant has no idea what he's going to do. KJ looks at him for a second and then rounds the bottom of the stairs, keeping as far away from him as she can. He steps toward her, just close enough to catch the very tip of the shank across his chin when she responds to his movement with a rapid slash. Gant stumbles backward. He's not sure what struck him. KJ doesn't press the attack or attempt to appraise the results of her strike. There's no use trying to be quiet now; she runs down the ground-level hallway to the garage door and disappears inside. Gant hears her roll something against the door. He looks at the stairs, too shocked to move. What the hell just happened? He feels a stinging sensation on his chin. When he rubs it he sees blood on his hand.

KJ suspects that Yates came with an entourage. She looks out the windows of the automatic garage door and sees the RAV4. Since their attack was unsuccessful, she figures the attackers will concoct a story in which she is the villain. She's a confirmed white racist. Many whites consider racism to be a worse sin than attempted rape. The authorities will blame her for Yates' wounds. She has to act now. The keys to Erica's Honda Accord are on the dash. KJ climbs in the car and starts the engine. In rapid succession she opens the garage door and guns the engine so that it will not stall when she eases off the clutch. As soon as she can clear

the garage door she accelerates out of the garage and down Kimberly Drive.

Now it's James Bracey's turn to be dumbfounded. He's still upset with Yates for forcing him to miss the fun. Out of the blue, a car flies out of the Campbell House and comes inches from ramming his Toyota. The car, a deep red Honda Accord, zooms down Kimberly and disappears from view. Bracey reaches to turn the keys and then pulls back his hand. He repeats the motion. He doesn't know what he should do. Should he follow her? Did she escape somehow? Where's Gant? Bracey stares at the front door. The silence from the house is ominous. Where the hell is Yates?

KJ manages to concentrate on the road, though she finds it very difficult. The mix of adrenaline, nervousness, fear and revulsion are a formidable hindrance to clear thought. She turns left on to a north-south alley that borders a dense tongue of woodland. She's walked this way many times. Up ahead is a short, winding road that will take her past a fuel depot and into the heart of Uniontown. She decides to head west through the center of the city. KJ knows that she'll have to ditch the car, since her parents and the authorities will consider it stolen. Her right glove still has enough of Yates' blood on the fingers to stain the steering wheel cover.

Once KJ reaches the fuel depot she slows the Honda and turns on to Barton Mill Road. Just after making the turn she looks into the rear-view mirror. Four cars are coming up the adjacent Cinder Road. The final vehicle looks like a dark SUV.

To the right is a little-used road that parallels a railroad track. It's a tempting location for her to abandon the Honda. She's familiar with the area and could easily reach the rendezvous point with Johnny Bowen. She decides against the option. It's too close to the Campbell House. If one of those vehicles is the Black RAV4, Yates' cohorts might be able to trap her when she emerges from the brush. She'll have to call Bowen and change their meeting place.

Beyond the depot and a nearby hotel are avenues full of houses and parked cars. KJ lowers her speed to the legal limit. She cannot afford a confrontation with the police. To them, she's a racist white thief who may also be a violent criminal and perhaps even a murderer.

Houses pass by, each one taking on the appearance of the last in spite of the reds and blues and brick-brown colors. The isolation that KJ once felt returns with a vengeance. No one here will believe her side of the story. If Yates was white and she'd foiled his attempt to rape her, the authorities would shelter and coddle her. She would be a hero and a role-

model for white girls everywhere. The media and the authorities would treat her attacker like the vile creature that he is. But Yates is not white; KJ is. She's not lying in a pool of her own blood. She thwarted his attack. He was going to rape her. He had already forced her to show him the most intimate part of her body. He was going to desecrate that beautiful place. She should be an example of how a white woman might resist a rapist. Instead, those who would praise her will accuse her of being the criminal. She's white and she loves her race and her white brothers, shamelessly and in the open. Some members of the media and the authorities will no doubt wish she had been raped.

Fuck you, she thinks, I'm not alone. I'm loved more than any traitor. Fuck your rules and your conventions. Fuck your hate for who I really am.

KJ forces her concentration back to the mission. She can't ditch the car on West Berkeley Street. She can't bail here, in the center of the city. She can't prognosticate, either. The police may already be at the Campbell House. The black accomplices probably called them to get their story out first. They are learning that law enforcement is becoming more and more anti-white. The police will call Erica or Gene and issue an alert for the stolen Honda. Up ahead, KJ sees the entrance to Route 21 – the McClellandtown Road. As she approaches, she tries to remember a good place to bail out of the Honda. At least the road will take her away from the city.

To the west of Uniontown there are fields and farms. Forests are present but are less prevalent, especially deep ones. A tiny mining town comes and goes but does not provide a good place for KJ to bail. She needs to call Johnny Bowen but until she knows where he can meet her, it would be a waste of their time. He'd have to pull over, lest he risk using the cell while speeding, which he's no doubt doing in spite of her plea.

He is speeding, in fact; though once again his radar detector indicates a speed trap and he must slow down to near the speed limit. He passes Flat Rock in what seems to him to be slow motion.

"Fucking cops what the fuck!" he yells to himself.

It's another punch in the gut. In frustration he wonders why KJ didn't just leave when she had the blue Jeep. He doesn't get angry. The answer comes to him in an instant. She was sacrificing for them; biding her time until she could leave and law enforcement would not follow her. He would have done the same. The more he thinks about the unfolding series of events, the more he convinces himself that she's in danger. When he drives past two parked police cruisers he curses the uniformed servants who are delaying his arrival.

KJ can see a weed-choked field and the thick woodland that is infiltrating it from both sides. It's perfect. She glances in the rear view mirror. The sight makes her gasp and very nearly brings her to tears. A state police car is riding her bumper. The lights are not flashing, but his mere presence prevents her from following through with her plan. She'll have to pass by the field. KJ would like to turn off onto a side road but she's unfamiliar with these rural highways. Should the lights of the cruiser begin to flash, she wants to be in a position to flee. It's a dangerous proposition but the idea of driving down an unknown country road with a cop on her tail terrifies her. She wouldn't have a chance in hell of escaping. If she still had the Jeep she'd try. She could plow into the wilderness if necessary. The Honda would not make it through the weeds and broken ground.

North of Masontown, KJ breathes a sigh of relief. The cop turns left, leaving her to her fate. She knows she's coming close to the Monongahela River and the thick forest to the east. That's where she'll abandon the Honda and call her Johnny. She'll find a good place and hunker down until he can arrive. It may take him a while to find her, but when the nightmare is over no one will mind. She promises to make it up to him.

KJ decides to turn off onto the first road that enters the woods. She begins to feel a little peace. A quick glance in the rear-view mirror kills her nascent tranquility. Four car lengths behind – the driver possibly keeping his distance – is a dark-colored RAV4.

"What?" KJ says out loud, "How the fuck?" She accelerates as soon as she rounds a curve in Route 21. Up ahead she can see the bridge over the Monongahela. To the left is a parallel road. If it's a dead end, she'll flee into the woods. KJ turns on to the road without using a signal. The small rural route heads toward the river and parallels Route 21. KJ can see a water treatment facility on the north-flowing river. Near the treatment plant, the road turns away from Route 21 and begins to run south along the river. If she continues following the road, she'll drive somewhat close to the deep, sluggish Mon. To turn back would mean risking a confrontation with Yates' accomplices. KJ keeps driving down the empty highway.

The road straightens as it heads to the southwest and KJ glances into the rear view mirror. Like a weasel tracking its prey the RAV4 follows in the distance. She knows that it could be a coincidence, but how can she take the risk? She is so close to escaping her old life. KJ's grim determination staves off the tears and she continues to drive onward.

Beyond the treatment plant the road parallels both the river and an active railroad. It passes a few lonely houses and the remains of several coal piles. Finally the road begins a broad turn around a bend in the river.

Near the apex of the bend there are no more houses and the roadway makes an abrupt turn away from the river. Across the rails is a little field that is nearly the same height as the road. There are large shrubs and a copse of trees thick enough to hide a large object. KJ looks into the mirror. The RAV4 is no longer in sight. Just the relief from its disappearance nearly brings her to tears, this time tears of joy. She drives into a field on the left. Several times the bottom of the Honda scrapes roots and rocks, and KJ can see that the best hiding place may be too rugged for the Honda to traverse. It's Erica's car, so KJ forces it over the debris. The car comes to a rest in a spot that is not visible from the road. When KJ exits the vehicle she can see that it will not be able to move from its current location without a tow truck or similar assistance.

KJ wipes the shank on the seat and shoulders her backpack. She takes the shank in her right hand. Somewhere in the forest, to the rear-right, she hears a chainsaw. It's possible that there is a house among the trees. She has to assume that strangers will treat her as a runaway or even a fugitive. By now the police are probably looking for her. She decides to cross the railroad tracks and hide in the woods between the rails and the river. She'll tell Johnny to drive past the treatment facility and then walk the tracks, in the direction that's against the flow of the Mon. When she sees him she'll run up and jump into his arms. Then she can finally leave the misery behind her.

The plan begins without a hitch. Before crossing the railroad, KJ conceals herself among the garlic-mustard and young ailanthus. She wipes her hands on the clover and dandelion to be sure there's no more blood on her gloves and then removes the cell phone from her fanny pack. Since she's programmed Bowen's number she places the call in mere seconds. He is passing the Christmas Store in Chalk Hill when the call arrives. Johnny decides to take a risk and opens the call without stopping his Jeep.

"Angel! Where are you? Are you OK?" he asks in rapid succession.

KJ smiles when she hears him. She wants to lay her head on his chest and feel him breathing.

"I'm OK, Johnny," she says, "I have a lot of shit to tell you when we're together."

"I'm coming, sweetheart," he says, "I'm at Chalk Hill right now. It'll be ten or so minutes."

"Johnny, wait!" she says, "I can't make it to the Blue Mountain."

"What?" he asks.

She knows that she just stunned him with the news.

"I'm fine," KJ says, "We just have to meet somewhere else."

"OK," Johnny says.

He doesn't ask what happened. There will be time for that while she's in his arms and the smell of her hair is all around his face.

John Bowen waits for her to tell him where he can find her. He'd guess she's in the woods near the Campbell House. The idea distresses him. All it would take is a little luck on the part of whoever was pursuing her, and she might end up in their grasp. Bowen accelerates the Rubicon.

"KJ," he says.

"Shhhh..." is the response. It's soft; the sound a mother might make to an upset child, or someone desperate not to be heard. Bowen waits. The sound of the Jeep riding the pavement drills into his skull. Everything is falling apart. He should be beside himself with joy. Instead he feels helpless again.

"Shit," he hears her whisper. He is about to urge her to flee somewhere safe, but he knows the sound of his words will jeopardize her. He can only sit and listen. It is a horrendous torture for Bowen to have to listen to her breathing while some vicious predator may be on her trail and there's not a damn thing he can do to save the one woman who he loves.

If you hurt her, whoever the fuck you are, he thinks, I will fucking gut you alive. I swear to fucking God I will gut you alive.

Bowen descends Chalk Hill and lowers his speed. God knows where she is. He can't even rush to the place where she needs him to be.

Whoever is behind her cannot see her. She hears them talking and tramping through the woods. They sound young. One is white; the other may be black. Even considering the circumstances she isn't afraid of them. However, they seem to be heading for her hiding place. She can't move to the side; the ailanthus is thick and they'll hear her struggle through the myriad stalks and small trunks. She cannot cross the railroad tracks in the open. They'll see her for certain. She cannot stay put. That would be the worst decision. She can't trust that the two men will change direction, not with the skunk-smelling trees blocking movement to the left and right.

KJ considers walking out a little toward the railroad and then paralleling the tracks to the northeast. It's tempting, but she rejects the idea. If the two turn out to be pursuers, they would have an angle on her and might cut her off before she could escape. She looks up thorough the leaves and at the gray sky. Will this horrible day ever end?

KJ makes her decision. To her it's the best of the available options. She gets into a sprinting position and bolts across the tracks, not stopping

until she plunges into the vegetation on the other side. There she hides amidst the thick false nettles and ailanthus.

"What the hell was that?" says the clearly white voice. "Did you see that?"

"I think it was a girl," says the possibly white voice.

"Fuck," whispers KJ. Johnny hears her. He clenches his left fist.

KJ creeps through the woods toward the river. She looks back and sees a man emerging from the brush. He's larger and a little older than she thought he'd be. He's wearing jeans and a tee-shirt and is covered in bits of cut grass and weeds, no doubt from using a brush hog or weed eater. The man climbs the rampart along the rails and looks around. She sees him reach into his pocket and take out a cell phone.

He can't know, she thinks, He must think I'm a runaway. I wish I'd quit fucking things up.

The other man comes into her view. He, too, is white. He's smaller than the first man. He looks around, his hands on his hips, and then accosts his partner.

"To hell with it," he says, "I'd rather be working than wasting fuckin' time around here."

She cannot hear the bigger man's reply but the other man continues talking. The bigger guy turns away from his partner to shield the phone so that he can talk without interruption. When he ends the call he begins crossing the tracks. His frustrated coworker follows. Once they begin descending the berm closest to KJ, it is obvious they're going to search the shoreline. She creeps down the bank of the river, all the way to the water's edge. The river is high. It's over the base of the trees and bushes that grow along the shore. It's not rushing or muddy anymore, having settled from the last round of storms, but the dams both north and south are keeping it high.

KJ looks for a hiding place. The first man may have called the police. If they see her they'll certainly alert the authorities. Even if she has a good story and convinces them that she has not run away from home, they'll still want to cover their asses. She should have run along the tracks. No; with the weight of the backpack lowering her speed, the skinny one may have caught her. She can't leave her possessions behind. There might be information on the Kindle or the iPod Touch that could endanger the man who she loves. KJ hears the men approaching the gentle slope that stretches down to the water. She looks along the bank and then out at the river. There is nothing on the shore that isn't partially submerged. Out in the water is a huge oak. Last month's rains must have weakened its roots.

The oak's girth is so great she could hide behind it. There's a good chance they won't enter the water to search for her. She'll have to duck down until the water touches her chin, but she'll be hidden from their sight. She has little choice; the shore is soft mud and she cannot flee with any speed. They'll just follow her along the bank. The only bushes that she can hide behind are out in the water and she's worried about the depth. She hopes that by wrapping the iPod and Kindle in bags they'll survive being underwater. She steps as quietly as possible into the water, careful to test the depth as she moves forward. As the water rises up past her knees she feels fear; KJ cannot swim.

The water is deeper than she thought, though not over her head. She switches the shank to her left hand and holds the cell phone in her right. Behind the huge oak she does not need to kneel much for the water to touch her chin; it's up to her shoulders. She gets close enough to the oak to put her head against it. KJ holds her right hand and the phone just above the water. She closes her eyes and then ends the call with Johnny. She holds the power button until the phone shuts off. If Bowen calls back he would accidentally reveal her location. It pains her to do this but she sees no other alternative.

John Bowen drives up Kimberly Drive toward the Campbell House. There are two police cars and an ambulance outside. He pulls over at the intersection with Shannon Lane. Johnny looks at the cell – "Call Ended" is the message that greets him. Whatever happened at the Campbell House, it can't be her in need of medical attention. She just now closed the call. *It can't be her*, he tells himself. *She must be hiding somewhere near here*. The arrival of the police must have forced her to end the conversation. Johnny drives down Shannon Lane and turns left on Lindsay. He'll merge on to US 40 and come in through the rear, past the field where he hopes she's still hiding.

Thirteen miles away, KJ Campbell is standing in shoulder-deep water with her head against the trunk of a fallen oak.

Not far from the oak tree, and one reason for its tumble, is a drainage pipe and stream that runs under the railroad and into the Monongahela. This stream is relatively new. The owners of a small trailer park diverted several problematic storm drains and small forest brooks into this piped waterway. The high waters of the river have covered all evidence of the stream and the pipe. Before the recent rains, with the Monongahela at normal levels, the stream cut a small channel along the low riverbank and weakened most of the trees along its brief course. It also eroded shale and undermined the more consistent mud for a distance out to the river.

Water from the drainage pipe has mixed with the mud and silt along the river and has turned the sediment on either side of its path into a form that is more like slurry than consistent mud. In its center it has dug a deep trench in the mud. While the river level was normal the deep trench and the soft, watery mud was visible. So was the muddy ledge over the deep part. Now it is submerged and very difficult to see.

KJ hears the men talking as they observe the flooded bank and waterlogged trees. She feels her left boot sink into the mud. It alarms her but she keeps her eyes closed and her body still. Her left boot stops sinking. After a little while the men turn away.

"She must have taken off," the smaller guy says, "Let's get the fuck out of here. It's too hot for this shit."

No kidding, KJ thinks.

Sweat has already wet her face. She opens her eyes and waits. About ten minutes pass. Then she stands up straight and risks a peek. She seems to be alone. KJ turns on the phone and calls Johnny Bowen.

Bowen's Rubicon is parked along US 40. Johnny listens to his Uniden scanner, while his eyes stare at the cell phone. He hears the deep voice of a police officer come over the scanner. He says that the suspect is "armed." A few minutes later a female officer describes the suspect. Johnny already figures they were talking about KJ. He hears them describe the victim, who is on his way to the hospital. Johnny closes his eyes.

God, please be alright, angel, are the words in his soul.

When he opens his eyes he reaches for the cell phone. He'll call Bill and see if they can alert the other members of the Old Core. He hopes they can find KJ before the enemy does.

When the cell's in his hands it begins to hum. It takes him a little by surprise and he answers without looking at the number.

"KJ?" he asks.

"Yeah," she says, "It's me."

She looks up and sees a turkey vulture in a tree. The silent creature stares at her.

"Are you safe?" he asks.

"I think so," she says, "Johnny..."

"Where are you?" he asks.

"Over by Masontown," she whispers, "Johnny...Help me."

"I'm coming, angel," he says, "Listen up. The fucking pigs are looking for you. Please find somewhere safe to hide."

"I'm afraid, Johnny," she said, "Everything's going wrong. I hear you, and... maybe something will finally go right."

"I'm coming, angel," Johnny says, "Where can I find you?"

KJ exhales, and then closes her eyes and recovers her emotions.

"There's a railroad in front of me," she says, "I followed a road along a water treatment plant and when it turned away from the railroad I ditched Erica's car."

He laughs a little. She does also.

"Is that to the left of Masontown?" he asks.

"Yes," she says, "Going west, it's just before the river."

"OK," he says, "Stay where you are and I'll find you. You're along the tracks, right? Can you see the river?"

"Actually," she says, "I'm kind of in the river."

There is a silence. KJ feels both her boots sink into the mud.

"Find a dry place to hide," Johnny says, "I'll park and walk down the track. Keep watching, OK? I will come to you. Just be sure no cops are around."

"OK, Johnny," she says.

"Be careful, OK?" he says, "The Mon can be fucking deep."

"Yeah, I know," she says, "It's up to my shoulders."

"What?" he says, "Jesus Christ! Be careful, angel! Be very, very careful. The current can fool you. Swim toward the shore and hide somewhere along the railroad, OK?"

"OK," she says.

She doesn't tell him she cannot swim. He can't do anything about that right now and it'll only make him more nervous.

"I'll call you when I'm on dry land," she says.

"Good," he says, "I'm going to call Bill. If he's nearby I'll send him up the opposite side."

"Yeah," she says.

She looks down at the water. A drop of sweat falls into the river and scares a water strider that was hanging around nearby. She sees it skirt the surface of the water. KJ wishes she could do that right now.

"Johnny?" she says.

"Yeah, angel?" he asks.

"Thank you so much," she says.

He tells her to be careful one more time. Then he closes the call.

KJ holds both the shank and her cell in her left hand. She lifts her left leg and begins to turn toward her right so that she might return to the bank from which she came. As soon as she lifts her left, the muck beneath her right boot begins to melt. KJ steps down with her left to try and stabilize herself but instead of finding a firm spot her left boot plunges into the soft

disintegrating mud, throwing her off balance. She holds out her arms and feels a pang of terror as the thought of disappearing under the water and mud flashes in her mind.

KJ is now facing upriver, the tree to her left. Her left boot slides to her rear and she is forced to push forward with her right, lest she slide into the depths. If only she can force herself forward she will find a more solid bottom and she can leave this terror – and the river – behind her. She makes the mistake of moving her legs quickly and very nearly falls forward. The muddy ledge is disintegrating, faster and faster thanks to her physical efforts, and she can barely feel anything beneath either boot. Awkward and off balance, she turns toward the tree and throws her left leg forward. It's now on the disintegrating edge which cannot support her body weight, let alone her and the heavy backpack. The silt slides beneath her foot and she almost goes under. KJ grabs at the oak with her right hand. Her hold on the oak slows her descent but does not stop it. She begins to sink straight down, slow but steady, as the muddy bottom gives way under her weight.

KJ feels the water touch her chin. There is nothing but water beneath her left foot and she kicks down into the void in an effort to keep her head above the surface. Her frantic moves further agitate the failing ledge and accelerate her sinking. She needs to grab the oak with her left hand before she sinks from sight. She has no choice but to drop the shank and the cell phone, which sink into the water and the muck. She grabs the bark with both hands and with her powerful arms tries to pull herself onto the trunk. The bark is rotten and will not support her weight. It comes free in her hands. KJ tries to get a grip on the trunk but her gloves slide on its smooth surface. She feels her right boot touch what's left of the disintegrating mud and she pushes down. She kicks at the mud in desperation and it vanishes beneath her boot.

The water to the left was always well over her head, and now there is no mud to support her. The narrow ledge has collapsed and there is nothing solid beneath her feet. One desperate push with her hands allows her chin to rise several inches above the surface. She takes a deep breath. KJ reaches for the oak with her right hand but again her glove slides off the smooth wood. Her own weight and the wet and heavy backpack conspire to take her down. She stretches her fingers upward in the vain hope that someone – Johnny Bowen – will pull her from the suffocating liquid. She pushes down with her left hand; her legs are now held together, motionless. Her head goes under. She keeps reaching straight up as her struggling body and her baggage pulls her to the bottom. The

sinking is relentless. Her gloved hand, the last visible trace of Kaylee Jane, slides beneath the surface.

A few bubbles come up, marking the spot where KJ submerged.

Johnny Bowen takes a left by the bridge and drives past the water treatment facility. His concern reaches levels of urgency as time slips by and the cell phone remains quiet. He passes the old coal piles and the big isolated house that seems to rise from them. The road follows the curve of the river and so does he. When the road turns its back to the water, he swings the Jeep around. He glances at the phone for an instant. The screen is still dark. Across the railroad track is a small cleared-out area, big enough for a dump truck. Instead of turning with the road, he parks his Jeep in the grassy patch.

When the silt disintegrated beneath her, KJ felt strong pangs of fear. She did not panic, however. Her ability to retain a modicum of control helped save her from drowning at the surface but it was Johnny's backpack that contributed the most. Though it pulled her under it also kept her from flailing and inhaling water as she floundered and sank. The heavy backpack, her increased muscle mass and her inability to swim take her all the way to the bottom of the deep hole. Her boots touch the slimy riverbed, ten feet down. Her eyes closed, KJ reaches back to remove the backpack. What will she do then? She might find it hard to float, and she does not know how to keep her head above the surface. She leaves the backpack on her shoulders. It already seems like she's been underwater for a long time. KJ opens her eyes a little and pushes with her boots against the bottom. She moves a little forward, just out of the small area where the silt ran and visibility is poor. Though the water is murky here, it's still clear enough to see nearby objects. KJ looks around for something to grab. She is strong enough to pull herself out, if only she can find the means. She knows the shore is to her right. She turns to look. The disturbed silt is beginning to rise and spread and obscure her vision.

In her mind, KJ has practiced this unbelievable scenario. She slides the straps and the bulk of the backpack off her shoulders and holds it in her strong arms. The warm water will kill her if she surrenders. KJ keeps her wits and takes several steps forward. It is difficult and unnatural to walk underwater. The backpack keeps her on the bottom and allows her to continue. Her progress is slow as she fights the liquid that completely surrounds her. At least the water is clearer as she trudges forward. The massive oak is above her now. She can't reach it, and even if she could there's nothing she can use to lift herself out of the water. The oak is long enough to lie across this deep trench. KJ cannot try to climb the ledge that

it rests upon. It's too far away and would no doubt collapse. She'd end up on the bottom again, where she would settle into the muck for all time. KJ feels terror at the thought but fights her fear.

With grim determination, she walks forward. She passes under the oak and continues. She stops a moment and looks around in the clearer water, just in case she's missed something closer. There is nothing there to save her. When she turns forward to continue her grim march, her hair obscures her vision. With her right arm she holds the backpack to her body while she moves the hair away from her face with her left hand. Then she blows a stream of bubbles and moves forward, step by step. Exhaling a little at a time helps her fight the urge to breathe. She looks up once and sees the silver bubbles go up to the surface. It seems so damn far away. If only his hand would break the surface and reach down to her. She feels the fear again but she will not surrender.

KJ can see a willow bush through the murky water. It just might be close enough for her to reach its branches before time runs out and she drowns. The high water is over its lower half, which is a submerged mass of twigs and stems. It is ahead and a little to the right. In an instant she heads for it, her progress agonizingly slow. She wants to run but cannot, and if she tries to alter her steady pace she will burn through the remaining air in her lungs. It seems like an eternity before she reaches the bush. KJ tries not to think about anything but the willow; that, and burying her head in Johnny's chest. As soon as she's within reach, she discards the backpack. It no doubt saved her life by keeping her down so that she could walk through the water and slime. Released from its weight, KJ grabs two handfuls of stems. The water here is still well over her head, though it's not quite as deep. KJ pulls herself up and breaks the surface. Just in time; with the water right below her chin, she draws deep breaths, replenishing the spent air in her lungs with fresh oxygen. Hot, humid air never felt so good. KJ was underwater for a little over two minutes. As is always the case, it seemed like a great deal longer.

This hellish nightmare of a day continues to torment the young fighter. The notoriously weak twigs of a willow are prone to breaking. The stems in her right hand snap and KJ slips under for a moment. She holds on with her left and grabs a thicker trunk with her right. When she pulls herself up again she whimpers and almost cries. For several minutes she stays there, eyes closed, her only motion the heaving of her chest as she breathes.

"Please don't fall on me," she says out loud, "Please don't drown me."

Johnny Bowen faces a dilemma. Does he call? It could reveal her location. The scanner is alive with chatter. The police know she's taken her mother's car. It's a matter of time before they appear, thanks to OnStar or some similar tracking device in Erica's car. Johnny grabs an extra t-shirt from the back seat, puts his pistol in the glove box, and takes the cell and a bottle of water. He steps out of the Jeep and sets off down the tracks. His Ka-Bar knife is still on his person. In the hands of a man like Johnny Bowen, a knife can be deadlier than a pistol.

Though her endurance is remarkable, KJ cannot hold herself in this position forever. Her legs still hang down into the water, as does her body. If she lets go now, she'll sink beneath the surface. The willow is normally on a small ledge over the river. It's the steepest part of the shoreline, owing to the now-submerged pipe and the flushing of rainwater that periodically occurs. At present, the high water is above the ledge. To the right the bottom of the river slopes gently upward and the ground is more solid. It's not normally submerged; grass grows on its surface. It runs all the way out of the water, its border with the deep hole being a ledge made of dirt and gravel. There is a risk that it, too, would crumble under KJ's weight. She can see it under the water. It looks bad, but not nearly as bad as the silt that dropped her into the deep. She can just touch it with her right boot. She probes the ledge with her foot but she is too far away to drop down on the part of it that would put her head above the surface. Behind the willow is a tongue of land that is normally ten or so feet above the riverbank. If KJ can climb on to the right-hand slope, she could walk a short distance in ever-shallower water. Then, she could angle behind the willow. Her back to the river that tried to drown her, she could continue all the way up the bank to dry ground. Although she cannot touch the right slope without first going under, she can climb around the willow until the willow's ledge merges with the gravel and dirt ledge on the right. There, she could plant her foot on the edge and climb up to solid footing. There is one major risk: if the vertical face of the willow's ledge were to collapse from her weight, the willow will tumble into the deep hole, taking KJ with it to the soft bottom. Without anything to grip, and with the willow possibly holding her to the bottom, she would surely drown.

KJ opens her eyes and begins working her way around the side of the willow. If she could, she'd pull herself close to its center and climb up on to its ledge. But the life-saving willow is selfish. It's too thick and she cannot get through the tangle of twigs and branches.

Each time a branch bends it frightens KJ, but the willow holds. Her next challenge is to propel her body up the slope that curves to her front

and merges with the willow's ledge. She can see it and finally feels it with the tip of her outstretched boot. Right here the water at the slope is a little over her head. She probes the left side with her other boot. The solid face of the willow's ledge is right there. Again the willow blocks its use. KJ holds on and thinks. She takes several deep breaths, filling her lungs and blood with oxygen. Then she lets go of the willow. KJ disappears in an instant, a tiny splash of water jumping into the air as she vanishes.

This time she does not need the backpack to keep her down. She waves her gloved hands as she takes each step. The progress is even slower than when she walked with the backpack, and if she'd tried this earlier she would have drowned. But here the distance is much shorter and she doesn't even feel the urge to breathe. After ten or so seconds the top of her head emerges from underwater. The rest of her head and neck quickly follow. She continues walking forward, the water level falling from her chest to her waist. As she angles behind the willow, the water is down to her shins. KJ exits the water and walks on to grass and dandelions, hoping to avoid getting more mud on her boots.

She wants to sit on the bank. Now that she seems to be out of danger, she begins to feel the mental stress of this nerve-racking day. She wants to bury her head in her hands and weep. She cannot give in to her emotions, not yet. Her man is out there, looking for her. KJ climbs the bank and crouches among the ailanthus fronds. Her boots and gloves are tight enough that she does not need to drain them of water. Otherwise, she's soaked. She hopes Johnny doesn't mind getting wet, because she will wrap herself around him when he arrives.

Johnny Bowen walks around the big bend in the railroad. The air is thick and oppressive. The smell of creosote from the rail ties mixes with the overbearing perfume of lilacs and honeysuckle. As Johnny advances he holds the bottle of water by its cap. It's warm enough without the heat of his hand. He glances at his cell. No one calls. He hears a police car in the distance and accelerates his pace.

KJ hears it, too. She looks up the tracks and sees a figure rounding the bend. It's a man; a young white man. His pace is increasing. She can see he's wearing a blue shirt with the Royal Crown Cola symbol on the front. Johnny has a shirt like that. She closes her eyes for a moment and tears nearly escape. She looks again at the man. The sight fulfills the greatest of her hopes. It's John Ashley Bowen, come to help her escape from the cage of her old life. She has a powerful urge to cry out and run to him. She has to wait. The police must be looking for her and she must not destroy their chances of escape. Johnny will fight them to protect her,

and they would kill him. She must stay put. She thinks about the moment when he arrives. She wishes she didn't look half-drowned.

Johnny keeps his eyes peeled for any sign of his beloved angel. As he rounds the bend his powers of observation catch an irregularity among the thick ailanthus saplings. Something black crouches there; the figure is wearing black. It's a young woman with pale white skin and long, wet hair. He sees her face. It's KJ. He feels a greater relief than he has ever felt in his entire life. In Iraq, Bowen stalked and killed a highly skilled sniper at Al Hawyah. Three days previous an IED threw his Humvee on its top, and he and two others chased off an ambush by firing from inside the overturned vehicle. He doesn't let the exhilaration blind his faculties. He mentally prepares to help her in case she's injured.

"Johnny!" KJ says just loud enough for him to hear.

"I'm coming, angel," she hears him say.

He hopes she'll remain among the leaves. She does, and he can see the relief in her expression. He leaves the water bottle and other items on a dry spot at the bottom of the railroad embankment and then he pushes through the fronds that separate him from the woman he loves. KJ rises to her feet and throws her arms around his neck. Before he can kiss her, she leaps and wraps her legs around him. He kisses her on the lips and she returns the favor. They sit on the ground and kiss a little while longer.

"I'm so wet and sweaty," she says, "And slimy and smelly."

She looks into his eyes. He pulls her face close to his again.

"It's OK," he says and kisses her. "It's OK," he repeats and kisses her. "Who cares?" he says and kisses her. "You smell fine," he says and kisses her.

"I'm sorry I'm getting you wet," she said.

This time he kisses her forehead.

"It's alright, angel," he says, "You're OK. That's all I care about."

"Hold me a little while," she says.

She slides around to sit on his lap. Time and adrenaline begin to slow a little. She leans her head against him and holds on for dear life. He feels her begin to weep.

"KJ, angel," he says, "Are you OK?" It's really hard for him to ask the question. "Tell me so I can help you. Did someone hurt my beautiful angel?"

A breeze finally stirs the heavy air.

"I'm alright," she whispers.

She repeats her answer in a slightly louder voice. She kisses his cheek, and regains her composure. He looks into her blue eyes and

smiles. She touches his jaw where she hit him, what seems like an eternity ago.

"I brought you some water," Johnny says.

"Thank you, Johnny," KJ says. Her face begins to show a concerned look. "I lost the backpack and all the gifts you gave me."

"You're here," he says, "None of that shit matters."

He rubs her arm with his right hand, all the way down to her glove. Then he stands with her in his arms, squeezes her gently and sets her on her feet. Johnny steps out of the vegetation to fetch the water. Though it's warm, she is desperate for a drink and guzzles most of it. But not all; she offers him the rest.

He smiles and shakes his head.

"I fucking love you, angel," he says.

"I love you too, Johnny," she says.

She finishes the water and rubs his chest. Again Johnny slips through the leaves, this time returning with a dark green t-shirt.

"Here," he says, "Change that wet shirt."

Her back toward him, she removes her long sleeve shirt and the *Celtic Frost* tee. He sees her beautiful angel's wings and the blue strap of her bra.

"I shouldn't leave these," she says, looking at the wet garments.

"No," he says, "Let me have 'em."

Johnny folds the wet shirts and carries them in his left hand. Another police siren becomes audible.

"We have to get out of here," he says. He looks at her. "When we do, tell me everything that happened."

"OK," she says, "I need to tell you."

Johnny leads her in the opposite direction of the sirens, which is also away from his Jeep.

"They tracked the car," he says as they navigate the woods between the tracks and river. "We're going to need some help," he says.

Johnny opens his cell phone.

Bill Donnelly is waiting at the entrance to Old Braddock Road. He's sitting in his Cherokee, still wearing his work clothes. When the cell rings he answers before the second tone.

"Bill," Johnny says, "We need your help."

"Anything, son," Bill says.

He wants to ask about KJ but there is clearly no time for discussion.

"How fast can you get to Masontown with the dump truck?" Johnny asks.

"A half hour, more or less," Bill says.

"There's a road that's north of the railroad, it ends up along the river," Johnny says, "Don't come in on the Masontown side. It's crawling with police. I'm pretty sure the road passes through Uniontown. If you can, bring a blanket and tarp, something like that. Not plastic though. I'll call after we find a good safe place."

"I'll be there," Bill says.

"Watch out for cops," Johnny says, "We can't let them find her."

"Add five minutes," Bill says, "I'll have to find the road in the atlas. Find a place to hide and then call me. I'll be on the road by then."

"Thank you, Bill," Johnny says.

The Cherokee comes to life. Bill closes the call.

Johnny Bowen halts after a third of a mile. He takes KJ by the shoulders.

"This is where we cross," Johnny says, "The woods over there look thick. We have to find the road so Bill can get you out of here."

"What about you?" she asks.

"They're looking for a beautiful white girl," he says and smiles.

She opens her mouth to speak but he touches her lips with his finger.

"Don't worry," he says, "We'll get through this." He hands her his cell phone. "If I tell you to run, take off," he says. "Do as I say, angel, alright?"

"Johnny..." she says. He shakes his head. "OK," she says.

Johnny crosses first. She awaits his signal, and then flies across the berm and the rails. He grabs her on the other side and they enter the forest. The trek through the woods is wearying, though with Johnny in the lead she doesn't have to worry about forcing her way through vines and thick vegetation. Still it's terribly uncomfortable. KJ wishes it would rain. The total time spent in the tangled wood is less than a half hour, though it seems so much longer. She worries that Bill has come and gone. Finally they arrive at the edge of the road. Along this section it's more of a dirt track. The two find a concealed place and disappear among the flora.

"What if Bill can't find the road," KJ whispers, "or if the cops close it?"

"Then we exfiltrate," Johnny says, "We'll get out on foot." He didn't have to explain.

A few minutes pass.

"So," he says, "How'd you get so fuckin' wet? Did you hide underwater?"

She shakes her head.

"I sank," she says.

"What happened?" Johnny asks.

"The mud under my boots started to slide," KJ says, "and I went into a deep hole."

"Jesus..." he says. He squeezes her hand. "That's how you lost your things, huh?" he asks. "You had to throw it off before you could swim out."

Again she shakes her head.

"I can't swim," she says.

"What..." he says, incredulous.

The two had never talked about her inability to swim. Somehow, she never brought it up and Johnny naturally – and erroneously – assumed that she could swim.

"I can't swim," she repeats, this time shaking her head a little as she speaks.

"Oh fuck..." he says, and then he becomes worried. "Did you breathe in any water?" He puts his hands on her shoulders and looks into her blue eyes. "Please, angel, you have to be sure. Tell me if you did. I have to know if you did."

"No, Johnny, it's good," she says, taking his hand, "I didn't breathe in any water, I'm sure of it. I'm absolutely sure." She knows why he's so concerned. In rare cases, inhaling small amounts of water can kill, even hours later. "The weight pulled me down before I could start drowning." She gets a little smile. "I think your backpack saved my life."

"How did you get out?" he asks.

She shrugs.

"I walked," she says.

His eyes open wide in surprise.

"You walked," he says, "Underwater. You walked." He shakes his head and smiles. "I guess wings don't work underwater, do they? My angel," He touches her cheek and wet hair. "I'm going to have to drown-proof you, you know. As soon as we can I'll teach you how to swim."

"That would be so nice," she says, "Sinking kind of sucked."

He laughs.

"I'll come back tomorrow and get your stuff from the river," he says, "Is it close to here?"

"No!" she says as loud as she dares, "It's dangerous! We're together, that's what matters to me. I don't want you to go in that water, Johnny, it's not safe. Don't fucking do that!"

Her emotions rise. She had no intention of asking him to retrieve the backpack. Even if the hole wasn't so dangerous, she wouldn't ask him to dive in after her possessions. Even the best swimmers can drown.

“OK, angel, I won’t,” Johnny says and stares into her eyes. “My God, I could have lost you!” He touches her cheek and her wet hair. She’s sweating again from the heat. “I’ll get you out of this mess, I promise.”

She smiles and looks up into his eyes.

A vehicle is approaching. It sounds larger than a car or a Jeep. After a short while they can see the source of the noise. It’s the white Chevrolet dump truck. Johnny looks around and then steps out on to the dirt road. Bill stops beside him. When KJ stands and Bill sees her rise from the sea of plants, the relief on the old warrior’s face is unmistakable.

“I’d hug you, sweetheart,” Bill says from the cab, “But we’ve got to be going.”

“Bill,” Johnny says, “Act like you’re turning around. Put the bed under the trees.”

Bill nods. Johnny and KJ retreat into the forest as the rear of the truck pushes through the leaves. Johnny opens the gate of the bed and then turns toward KJ. He scoops her off her feet.

KJ smiles as her body lies in his powerful arms.

“My big, strong man,” she whispers and she snuggles his shoulder.

Bill watches through the rear-view mirror. Johnny lifts her up so that she can climb without difficulty into the bed of the truck. There is a blanket and a tarpaulin – one to lie on, the other for concealment.

“KJ,” Johnny says, “Bill’s going to take you to my place in Markleysburg. Take a shower if you like; help yourself to whatever’s in the fridge. You can put on a t-shirt and sweatpants, whatever fits you best. I’ll bring you some clothes.” Johnny tosses the wet shirts into the truck bed. “Hide them under the tarp.”

Before Johnny can close the gate, KJ puts her palms together and mouths “thank you.” She pulls the tarp over her entire body. Johnny walks to the cab and hands the keys to his Markleysburg flat to Bill.

“We’ll meet in Markleysburg,” he says.

Bill nods and salutes Bowen with his right hand. His soul shrugs off an enormous emotional weight. He cannot imagine the weight that must have been upon Johnny Bowen’s soul.

Johnny disappears into the woods as the Chevy truck heads off in the opposite direction.

The trip to Markleysburg takes longer than usual. Bill drives with extra care so as not to jostle KJ in the hard bed. At least she has a blanket to soften the ride. It’s a mixed blessing; the heat of the tarp and the heavy blanket cause her to sweat so much it almost looks like she’s taken the plunge again.

After another eternity in a day full of eternities, KJ arrives at the little home in Markleysburg. Bill backs up very close to the garage. He'll have to open the garage door in order to let KJ out of the truck bed. KJ waits beneath the tarp as the garage door rises and the truck's gate comes open. Then she crawls to the edge of the bed.

Bill helps her down, not out of necessity but out of chivalry and friendship. When she's on *terra firma*, he hugs her tight.

"I'm going to get you all wet!" KJ says.

"Not a concern," he says.

Bill thinks of his lost son. There were days when he thought the news couldn't be true. David would come home. When he realized his son was truly gone, the pain was nigh on unbearable. He started to feel that familiar pain when Johnny called him about KJ. Now she's here in Markleysburgh and she is safe. Before Bill leaves he gives her the keys to the house. He'd stay and keep her company but he has other concerns that require his attention. This will be Johnny's job anyway; sometimes a lover is more appropriate than a father.

In all her life a shower never felt as good as this one. Part of the reason is the heat and humidity. The exertion is another reason. Fighting the sluggish mass of water as she walked on the bottom was a terrifying and difficult experience. Earlier, as Yates chased her, she had no choice but to run at top speed while breathing the stifling summer air. She walked through steaming woodland and knee-high grass. The struggle with the black rapist, while rapid, was intense.

It is true that these efforts were not the most strenuous of her life. She has sweat more and worked harder. Fortunately the clouds shielded her pale skin from the burning sun. Physical exertion and atmospheric conditions are not the only reason the clean water soothes her as much as it does. Her emotions have taken a very heavy beating. She came close to dying. Now that the danger has passed, she can contemplate the twin horrors from which she escaped. If she'd panicked and thrown off the backpack, she would have drowned. If she'd gone left or right she'd have sunk deep into the slime, where her body would remain until pulled out by police divers. This was not the worst of the two horrors, however. Had she not acted out of desperation and sheer rage, Markael Yates would have raped her. She lets the water flow through the mass of her wet hair and down the work of art that is her body.

That body remains immaculate thanks to her unbridled love for her race and her man, as well as her unconquered defiance. She closes her eyes and rubs her arms and shoulders. The tears come again. She wish-

es she had stabbed Yates' eyes out. That would have been just punishment for making her reveal her intimacy.

Johnny Bowen rounds the curve of the railroad and sees a police officer on an ATV who is driving along the right side of the tracks. Further ahead, Johnny can see a police cruiser and a truck. The cruiser must be near his Rubicon.

The cop on the ATV parks near Johnny, who keeps walking. He notes that the cop is a middle-aged, somewhat overweight white male.

"Sir!" says the cop. Johnny looks at him and stops. The guy's helmet seems too small for his head. "Have you seen a white teenage girl along the tracks? She has long brown hair."

"No," Johnny says, "I haven't seen anyone. I heard a splash when I came up this way." Johnny waves his hand in the direction of the bend of the river. "But I figured it was a fuckin' branch or something."

"Thank you, sir," says the cop.

The cop drives off toward the south. Johnny continues the trek toward his Jeep. Two cruisers and the police truck are parked within sight of the Rubicon. A young white officer, this one in better physical condition, asks the same questions as the cop on the four-wheeler. Johnny gives the same answer, though he leaves out "fuck" this time. The cop is bold – or irritating – enough to ask Johnny's reason for being there. Johnny considers telling him to "mind his own fucking business." He keeps in mind that KJ needs him to be with her, not alone in jail.

"Searching for blackberry bushes," Johnny says.

The cop, who isn't looking for a young white man, turns away.

Johnny arrives at the Jeep and starts the engine. Soon he leaves them all behind.

KJ dries off and looks in the mirror. She turns to see her wings before combing her long hair – Johnny doesn't seem to have a brush. She knows she's beautiful. It's no crime to acknowledge the truth. She looks at her body once more. The brutal monster may have forced her to stand naked in front of him, but he did not take her body. KJ manages a little smile. A towel wrapped around her waist, she walks over to the dresser in Johnny's bedroom.

The clock shows 16:00. KJ figured it was later. She searches through his dresser, careful not to wrinkle any of his clothing. As she looks she cannot resist indulging her curiosity. She opens a drawer that contains socks and underwear and looks through the latter. Johnny, like most men, does not have any thongs. If they ever know that they can be together she'll buy him one. Then they'll have some fun. She closes the drawer and

continues searching for something to wear. There is a pair of elastic-band shorts that have a draw string inside. She can tighten them enough so that they don't fall down. Inside Johnny's closet, KJ finds a sleeveless t-shirt with the "Phoenix Coyotes" logo on the front. She decides to wear it. KJ is surprised to find that it's not too large for her. It must be very tight on Johnny and she would love to see it on him. As she's gotten closer and closer to him, she's developed an intimate appreciation for his robust physique.

When KJ opens the refrigerator she hesitates to take anything. How much will she take from him? How much of his hard-earned food and drink? She thinks about her lover. She thinks about how much money he's spent on her, which is part of a dilemma that she's having. If she refuses his offer, even though the reason is honorable, it will raise a wall between them. Under no circumstance would she willingly do such a thing. The struggle for their race may force them to part ways, though it will be Johnny's decision to leave. She trusts him to make the correct one. Even if they are apart, a lone man and a lone woman, she will not be an island. Her life is bound to her white man, and his is bound to her.

"So many whites have been divided from one another," she thinks, "I will not allow anyone to divide us."

KJ takes a blackberry-flavored water from the refrigerator.

The Rubicon hardly stops moving when Johnny jumps out and unlocks the door to the Hall. He whips out his phone and calls Bill, who is approaching Old Braddock Road. Bill tells him the only words he cares to hear: KJ is safe. Johnny is already loading the Rubicon with plastic boxes full of KJ's possessions when the big Chevy dump truck pulls in and parks beside his Jeep. Bill jumps out and helps Johnny load the Rubicon. In the end the rear of the Jeep is full.

"I'll get what's left tomorrow," Johnny says.

Bill stands back and looks at Johnny. He's young and powerful, and though he may be a little smaller than massive Rob McKenna, his stamina is superior. Johnny's warrior spirit is utterly uncompromising. If Bill had to ask one man to rescue his daughter from Satan's grasp, he would ask John Ashley Bowen. Johnny looks perturbed at the moment, which is understandable.

"I'd imagine she's taking a shower," Bill says, "or maybe thinking about how you look in some of the clothes she's found. What are you thinking, Johnny?"

Johnny stops and looks at Bill. His stare is more intense than any Bill has ever seen, even Boyle's.

"You decide where they go if they choose to fight," says a stone-faced John Bowen, whose right leg is inside the Jeep. "Send her somewhere she can have a life."

"We face extinction, Johnny," Bill says, "The shadow of death is everywhere. You know that."

"I do," says Johnny, who now stands beside the Rubicon. "I also know that there's no happiness in this. There's no glory and there won't be any beautiful uprising. It's going to be grim and bloody and everyone's going to want to forget it when it's over. We will win, Bill, but it's going to get very fucking ugly."

"Her future is her decision," Bill says.

"But where she goes is not," Johnny says.

"She loves you," Bill says, "Have you considered that?"

"I love her too, Bill," Johnny says, "And yes I did consider it."

He slides into the Jeep and starts the engine.

"So will I," Bill says.

KJ is peeking out of the living room window when Johnny pulls in to the driveway. He opens the garage door and parks inside. The time is 4:30 in the afternoon. When he comes through the door he sees KJ in his shorts and cannot help laughing. This causes her to laugh as she moves toward him, her rapid approach climaxing with a strong embrace.

"I have most of your stuff in the Jeep," he says, "I'm gonna take a quick shower or I'll start smelling like shit."

"OK," she says.

She wonders what they're going to do, but hesitates to ask. The door to the bathroom closes for a second and then opens.

"You got something to drink, didn't you?" he asks while rubbing his head.

KJ nods.

"Good," he says, "good," and he closes the door again.

While he showers she goes to the garage and returns with clean clothes and undergarments and a pair of sneakers. In his room she puts on a thong and a pair of shorts. She does not replace his shirt. Then she waits for him to emerge from the bathroom.

Johnny does so in ten or so minutes.

"Hey," he says as he juggles his sweaty clothes and her muddy ones, "You can throw my stuff in with these and I'll wash 'em and bring 'em over tomorrow."

He begins walking toward the garage, where the washer and drier are located.

"Can I keep the shirt?" KJ asks.

Johnny stops.

"Yeah," he says, "Sure." Johnny tosses the clothes by the door. "So," he says and slaps his jeans. "Are you ready to go?"

"Sure," she says, "Where are we going?"

A smile grows on his face and she adores it.

"I have something to show you," he says.

The trip to Amblersburg, West Virginia, takes around an hour and a quarter. The route cuts through beautiful rural woodland, quaint pastures and farmland, with shades of green ever-present in the grass and around the trees. The closer to the destination, the thicker and wilder the forest becomes.

KJ tries to pay close attention. She feels more and more at home in these wilds. Although her mind is willing, the events and exertions of the day catch up to her. Within a half hour she nods off.

"*Sleep, angel!*" thinks Johnny. He turns down the iPod, knowing full well that if he turns it off the lack of sound could startle her awake. He's tempted to wake her when her head leans forward but she readjusts herself and leans back. After another half hour they approach their final destination and the major surprise that he has in store for her. With a gentle touch he awakens KJ. She smiles and rubs his leg once she's awake, and tries to stretch as best she can inside the Jeep.

"We're almost there," he says, "You can stretch all you want."

Close enough to little Amblersburg for the usual amenities and internet access, the cottage that Johnny bought and helped build rests atop a small parcel of land that the deep forest flanks on three sides and obscures on the fourth. The driveway that leads to the enclosed porch is basically a dirt track. If not for the porch, the house would be a rectangle with a peaked gray roof. The rest of the cottage is white. Outside, the blue Jeep sits in the driveway.

"My Jeep!" she says as they approach.

She alternates her glance between her Johnny, the Jeep and the cottage. Johnny parks in front of the blue CJ7, the Jeeps now being face-to-face.

"Whose place is this?" she asks, "Is it yours?"

Johnny shuts off the motor.

"It's yours," he says. She gasps. "Your life is your own now," he says, "In our world it's not a crime or a shame to be KJ. Finally your life is your own."

She stares at the place and then at John Ashley Bowen.

Johnny exits the Jeep and KJ follows. He walks between the Rubicon and the blue Jeep and stands beside her.

"It's not very large," he says, "It's just a little cottage, but it's OK I think."

"Just a little cottage!" she says after turning toward him. "It's a house! You're giving me a fucking house!"

She cannot resist. What sacrifices has he made for her? He may have to leave and never see her again. How can she accept such a gift, which no doubt represents an enormous material sacrifice? Even more, it is a symbol of his love for her, a love that rages in spite of the war that could divide them forever.

"Johnny," she says, "I can't..."

He quiets her by taking her by the cheeks and putting his right thumb across her lips. She starts to open her mouth to speak so he presses his thumb gently upon her lips.

"Shh..." he says, "You will accept this gift, because I'm telling you to. So no more bullshit. This is your place, angel, understand?"

"Johnny..." she whispers after he removes his thumb.

"I bought this place so you can have a chance," he says, "You never got a chance before. If this is all that I can ever do for you, it's worth the sacrifice. The enemy's money means nothing to me. What the fuck's this fight for, anyway? Saving our white children. You're a white woman who would raise proud white sons and daughters. You'd be worth all this even if I'd never met you. As long as KJ is who she is, she's worth it. If we were just friends I'd have built if for you. You know why? This house isn't about me. I have places. I'm comfortable in a house or a or a tent or a fucking ditch. As long as my crosshairs are on your enemies, I'm good with it. But this place isn't about war; it's about life, your life. It's about the white angel, KJ. Do you know what I want out of this? You get your life back and I get to know it."

He sees a little smile grow on her face. He also sees the emotions that come with it.

"Now shut up and come inside," he says.

Before Johnny can open the inside door, KJ turns him around so that she's facing him. She kisses him with such passion he drops the keys on the wooden floor. When they separate, he picks up the keys, unlocks the door and without a word returns the kiss.

The porch entrance opens into the largest of three interior rooms. Johnny turns on the light and the two remove their shoes. The interior walls are a soft white, while the curtains around the window are dark blue.

From behind, Johnny puts his hands on KJ's shoulders. There's a lovely bed against the right wall and two large storage trunks opposite the bed. Johnny lists some of the objects inside: tools, an iron, items for cleaning and so forth. One of the trunks sits under the window; the other is to the left of an exercise bicycle. Johnny notices that she's looking toward the bike.

"You take excellent care of your body, and it shows," he says, "I thought you'd appreciate that."

"I do," she says, "That looks like a really nice one, too!"

"Only the best for my woman," he says, "Oh, and on the porch there are weight sets."

He slides his hands down her shoulders to her arms and caresses her biceps.

"In the two boxes, right?" she asks.

"Yeah, beside the mop and broom," he says, "There's some other stuff too, an ironing board, it's either there or inside here somewhere. I know there's one around here somewhere."

In the center of the large room is a four-person wooden table and along the wall with the entrance door are a dresser and a cabinet. On the table is a closed laptop. A cable runs across the floor to the wall. As if to prove that Johnny thought of everything and took care of all of her needs, there are also a washer and a drier.

"It's a bachelor pad," Johnny says, "but it'll do."

She looks down. Her hair hangs all around her face.

"My life was a lie," she says, "and now it's a dream come true." She looks up at her lover and brushes the hair from her face. "How did you find me?"

"Your wings flew you here to me," he says, "Come on, I'll show you the kitchen."

Beside the kitchen door is an air conditioning panel. Johnny activates it. In seconds, cool air enters the room. The kitchen itself is small but well-equipped. At first the refrigerator-freezer seems too large for her needs, but it may be a while before she can make purchases on her own in public. Johnny had the foresight to prepare the place for a runaway. He also realized that she might be a fugitive.

At the far right of the cottage is the bathroom. It is also well furnished, though it is small enough that the towel closet must also serve as a storage place for other supplies.

Once they finish the brief tour, Johnny goes to the fridge and returns with two bottles of Saratoga water. He walks past the table and sits on the

bed. KJ looks at him and he pats the spot beside him. She comes over and sits. When she does, he puts his arm around her.

"I saw the police and an ambulance at your parents' place," Johnny says, "You didn't just panic and take her car, did you? Something else happened."

She nods and mouths the word "yeah" though no sound escapes her lips.

He kisses her head and she leans into him.

"What happened, angel?" he asks.

KJ tells him about the trip to the mall and the grocery store. She tells him about Erica and how she couldn't resist a foolish but satisfying verbal confrontation. Johnny rubs her shoulder and sympathizes. She stops when her recitation arrives at the events that took place in the Campbell House. He kisses her head again and she turns to look into his eyes.

"It's important that I tell you everything," she says, "They tell us women to keep things from you, like you're the enemy. The truth is, a woman has to close her eyes and love her man with all her soul. That's how it should be. I want to share my life with you, Johnny, and I won't hide anything from you."

He squeezes her hand.

"I don't want this life for you, where you have to run and hide," he says, "I want you to be happy. Not a fucking lie, just really happy. I want you far away from this pain. I know how valuable you are as a conscious white woman, but KJ is more than a symbol. She's so much more. I know the evil is everywhere and it won't rest until we're gone from the Earth. I'm not asking you to surrender or ignore our struggle, but you can do wonderful things for our race and still have a little peace. They're going to come after me with everything they have. The kid gloves that they wear when they go after niggers will come off when they come after me. This place is good because it lets you have your own life. When you're eighteen it'll be yours. Whatever you've done that's illegal, you're a minor in their eyes, and you're a woman. Unless they can make it overtly racial then being a woman will help you. Trust me, they can't believe a beautiful white girl would love her race and her white brothers. To them, you're a woman, not a white woman, so I think they'll let it go. But if you're with me the authorities will realize their worst nightmare is true, and they'll come for you harder and more hateful than they'd come after me."

"If they come after you I'll be there," she says, "with my rifle."

"Fly away from this terrible pain," he says, staring deep into her eyes, "Angel, fly away."

She touches his cheek. Among the miniscule number of racially-aware white women, KJ Campbell is, to John Ashley Bowen at least, the most extraordinary of an invaluable lot. He wishes to spare her the pain and horror of war, for she is to him the realization of the greatest and most improbable dream. She is a white woman, born in a fiercely anti-white city, surrounded by despicable white traitors and immersed in constant anti-white propaganda, who rose against the irresistible tide of genocidal hate and embraced the most forbidden of all loves: the love of a white woman for her race. His love for her as a person rather than a symbol, the woman KJ, the angel, compels him even more to protect her.

"What kind of man would you be if you didn't want to spare your woman?" KJ asks, "What kind of woman would I be if I left you behind to fight for me, or for some other man's children?" She squeezes his strong arm. "Johnny, my love," she says, "I don't want this life for me. I sure as hell don't want it for you. But this is our life. I could run away and find a rich old kike with a thing for young white women, or sing and write songs. I might live on a big estate and eat in five-fucking-star restaurants, while you're here fighting for white children, and all you get is a big 'fuck you' from the woman you love. No coward or race-traitor or goddamned Jew is going to get what should be yours. You won me, my warrior. You won me, even before you shot that fucking pig Strader. I know it's going to be harsh and I know I could die. This is our life, Johnny, and we have to live it, so that it won't be our children's life."

Johnny rubs her back where the wings grace her skin.

"My wings brought me to you," she says, "They won't take me away."

He kisses her head. She feels so strong right now. Even by accident he lifts his angel to the sky.

Johnny touches her nose and the spot just below her lips, and she laughs.

"I guess it's a good thing that I didn't get that stud," she says.

"Oh yeah," Johnny says, "You'd have been fucked. That river water would have given you a major fucking infection right in your face."

"Yeah," she says and sighs.

Johnny takes her hand and kisses her.

"How did you end up in the river?" he asks, "Can you tell me?"

He looks deep into her eyes. Her blue eyes and unique face match the raw beauty of her body language. Johnny would find it hard to say why she is the most beautiful creature he has ever seen. The answer would come to him as he considers the totality of her being, not just a mental snapshot. There is no denying her astounding comeliness, though at first

glance Anna and Sinead might appear a sliver more beautiful, should there be a comparison. In real life she surpasses them. All a person need do is watch KJ for one or two minutes, and see her face and her subtle and not so subtle expressions, and the sincerity of her joy and the legitimacy of her sadness. The emotional power that she radiates could compel a man to do beautiful and terrible things. Right now, KJ's expression of pain is so subtle that her face does not show its depth. Her eyes, the sound of her breathing and her momentary silence are what tell her lover that she has suffered more than a near-drowning.

"He tried to rape me," KJ says.

Johnny squeezes her hand. He never takes his eyes off of hers. KJ begins to tell him about the terrible event. She tells him about the threat that Yates made. She tells him that the attacker demanded that she drop her pants. Then she stops. Johnny runs his fingers over and through her thick mane. Then he rubs his head against hers.

"Are you OK?" he asks.

She slowly nods.

"I dropped my pants," she says.

He feels her breathe a little harder.

"Maybe I should have fought him then," she says and looks down.

"Angel," he says, "What happened?"

"He made me get on all fours," she says, "I could see him in the mirror and as soon as he moved his hand to grab me I cut him."

She looks at Johnny when she says this.

"My girl!" Johnny says with a jubilation born of frustration and worry.

He squeezes her tight. Tears escape her closed eyes. He kisses her head.

"My girl," he repeats.

She looks into Johnny's eyes.

"Johnny," she says, "He saw me naked. He saw me naked from the front. You were supposed to be the first to see me like that. I didn't give him that right, he just fucking took it." This time there's no mistaking the look of pain on her face. "Maybe I should have resisted earlier. I was so scared; I knew if he could attack me first he'd rape me. I thought I had to wait, but he fucking made me show him my naked front." She grimaces and frowns. "He fucking made me show it to him! That wasn't for him to see, Johnny! I should have stabbed his fucking eyes out for that!"

Her emotions erupt and rage.

"KJ, angel," Johnny says. He holds her tight and she pushes hard into his chest, like he's the sea and she's trying to disappear into his

depths. They sit there for a while, her sobs the only sound. "You can stop if you want," Johnny says, "I don't want to hurt you."

"No!" KJ says and pulls back to look into his eyes, "It's not your fault! You need to know all this. I don't want you to wonder, Johnny. I don't want you to think I let him...inside me. I'd die before I'd let him do that."

"OK, angel, it's OK," he says, "I didn't wonder, I knew you'd resist. My beautiful angel," he rubs her shoulder and squeezes her. "He made you show him your body," Johnny says, "If you'd attacked him then, he'd have taken you, wouldn't he? It sounds like you waited just long enough. What kind of weapon did he have?"

"A knife," she says.

"He'd have cut you and raped you," Johnny says, "but you lured the cocksucker in close. When he tried to grab you, you cut him, right? See! You didn't make a single mistake, angel, my angel, you resisted and you stopped him." He smiles and rubs her. "My angel stopped a big nigger rapist. My angel did that!"

She looks down and, through the pain and tears, a sad little smile forms. It comes and goes.

"I said to myself, he's not going to touch my living body," she says. Johnny squeezes her hard again. She looks into his eyes. "And he fucking didn't!" she says.

"How good did you get him?" Johnny asks. He rubs her shoulder. "Hmm?"

"I opened up his face," she says, "I hit him with my free weights and I stabbed him."

She stops and wipes her eyes. Johnny rubs her right bicep. He smiles when she looks at him.

"Honest-to-God, it's an honor to know you," he says.

She smiles and looks down, and then into his eyes.

"Only one man will have me," she says, "This country's lies can't convince me to give my body to just anyone. Until my last breath I will prevent someone from taking it away from me. I fucking promise. My body is mine to give to the man I love." She touches his face. "Only him," she says.

The sky finally begins to rain. Johnny leads KJ out to the enclosed porch. He slides open the front window panes. They hear and smell the mighty downpour. His arm is around her as she breathes deep. She turns and caresses his chest.

"My life is my own now," she says, "Thanks to you."

A half hour later, Johnny is seated in the lone soft chair in the main room. KJ is sitting on his lap. They laugh and she rubs his hair.

"I have a question," KJ says.

Johnny raises an eyebrow. What could it be? Is there something wrong after all; something she hid from him out of consideration for his peace of mind, but now that they're together she must ask him? Is it something very, very bad?

"Are you hungry?" she asks.

The relief he feels does not show but it is enormous.

"Yes!" he says, "Actually I am."

She giggles and kisses his head.

"I'll make something," she says, "You can be my first dinner guest."

KJ hops to her feet and scurries off to the kitchen. Johnny does not disturb her. Occasionally he hears movement and activity from the kitchen, and he allows her to prepare a nice little surprise that will be a balm for both their weary souls.

After forty-five minutes she calls him to the kitchen. He enters to see a single candle glowing at the center of the little table. Once the meal is served, the two lovers sit face-to-face. The food is simple and delicious and quite welcome. Unbeknownst to her, Johnny has been bringing fresh vegetables every few days since Erica forbade KJ from working at Bill's farm. It's been his private vigil for her. Two days ago he brought a fresh supply. Today he won't have to throw them away, to be eaten by wild rabbits and raccoons. From the greens she makes a delicious salad. They eat the salad from a single large bowl that sits beside the candle. Now that both of them are in better spirits, their appetites return with a vengeance. She made them a couple of t-bone steaks, rare as she and Johnny both prefer, and they eat every morsel.

At 10:30PM they finish their late supper.

"Oh shit!" she says when she sees the time on a little clock by the oven, "You have work!"

"It's good, angel, settle down," he says, "I don't have work tomorrow. I don't have to go yet. Unless you want me to..."

"Funny," she says.

The rain stops. For the next half hour, they carry her things into the little house. Johnny goes out alone for the final box and when he returns, he's also carrying his iPod. He lays it and an unopened box of Koss ear buds next to the laptop computer.

"Use my iPod until I replace your Touch," he says, "And shush!"

"I was just going to thank you," she says.

"Oh, well that's OK," he says, "You're welcome. Now get ready for bed. You had a long day," he drags out the word "long".

She's not the only one who's had such a day. KJ grabs something from one of the boxes and goes to the bathroom. When she returns she's wearing a new thong, though she's still wearing Johnny's sleeveless shirt. She walks over to him without showing her rear. He holds her tight and they kiss. His right hand goes down her back and stops at the waistline of the thong.

"Are you OK with this?" Johnny asks as he rubs her back. "If that fucking nigger made you uncomfortable, I can wait until you're OK with it."

"No, please Johnny!" she says, "I'm fine. No one can take what we have. No one will ever put a wall between us. I won't allow it."

For just a second her look is severe, and he sees the she-wolf in her eyes. How his heart and soul long for them to be a pair.

Johnny kisses her head.

Before he moves his hands from her back, he pinches the waistband of her underwear and tugs a little before letting it go. This time he is being playful and she giggles a little to herself. Then he takes her by the shoulders and caresses them and her biceps.

"Nice," he says.

He looks down at her body and then into her blue eyes. His smile disappears.

"Tell me his name," Johnny says.

She is silent for a moment.

"I can't lose you," she says, "Remember that before I tell you, OK?"

"I promise you I'll do this smart," Johnny says, "But he will pay for hurting you."

She waits a minute. He has a right to punish the vermin that tried to defile his woman.

"Markael Yates," she says, "He was a senior at Uniontown."

"Does he have any distinguishing marks?" he asks.

He has an idea what she's going to say before he asks the question.

"Yeah," she says, nodding, "He has a big scar across his face."

He starts to laugh and so does she.

"I'll explain what happened to Irish John," Johnny says, "unless you feel the need to tell him. I won't go into details, fuck, you know that already, but he should know in general what happened in case it affects your training."

"Please tell him for me," she says.

"Sure," he says.

"Thank you, Johnny," she says and embraces him tight.

They stand for a few minutes, wrapped in each other's arms.

Johnny pulls back the blanket and she climbs into bed. KJ curls up and he caresses her shoulder. The air conditioning is high enough that the room is cool. It's perfect for the both of them.

"I'll make sure and bolt the door when I leave," he says, "Go to sleep, angel. Your keys are on the table with the iPod. I put an extra pair in the dresser with the keys to your Jeep."

"Our Jeep," she says, her eyes closed.

He rubs her shoulder.

"You're .45 is in there, too," he says, "I'll have to get you a new cell phone tomorrow if I can. I'm going to see Anna before you do, and I'll let her know what happened if you don't mind."

"Yeah," she says and nods, "She'll wonder what happened."

He rubs her shoulder again and then her hair. She sighs with delight and curls up even tighter in the bed.

"I wish we knew that we could be together," she says, "It'd be kind of nice in here with something warm to curl up with."

He kisses her head.

"Get some rest, angel," he says, "Sleep in for once."

"A warm bath would be nice," she says.

"There you go," he says, "You'll figure it out. No one's going to bother you tomorrow."

She opens her eyes.

"You're coming, aren't you?" she asks.

"I can," he says.

KJ closes her eyes again.

"What time?" she asks.

"Four," he says.

She smiles.

"I'll have supper ready at 4," she says.

"Sleep tight, angel," he says.

Johnny Bowen kisses her head again before departing.

The clouds have not broken up or fled the sky. It will rain off-and-on all night.

The same day that Erica called Bill and ended KJ's so-called employment at the Donnelly Homestead, Bill cancelled the "Old Core" meeting for Thursday the 13th. Whatever the outcome of KJ's situation, whether happy or sad, the meeting will take place the next Thursday. When Bill hears the news that KJ is sleeping in a safe place, he knows the next reunion will be a joyous occasion. In his mind he alters his unwritten plan accordingly. When he walks it to the bedroom, he sees that Megan

is still awake. She sets her copy of Uris' *Trinity* on the night stand and looks at her husband of over thirty years. His face answers her question.

"Oh, thank God," Megan says.

Everyone sleeps well that night.

When Johnny Bowen arrives at the Amblersburg cottage at a little before four the next afternoon, he finds KJ jovial and energetic.

"I brought you something," he says after the anticipated hug and kiss.

Johnny grabs a bag from the porch and steps inside. All the while KJ admires him. Hers isn't the only body that is an example of youthful perfection. His tee is tighter than usual and shows his hard physique. He's wearing shorts today, so there's no need for her to recall the powerful build of his legs. She can see their strong, athletic form.

"What?" she says, realizing that he spoke while she was staring at his body.

"I was telling you what I brought," he says, "Here, I'll show you."

They take a seat beside the laptop, which is energized but closed. Johnny begins to extract items from the large plastic bag.

"Here's a clock for this room," he says, "I forgot to get one for in here. I ordered another iPod Touch and a Kindle. Until it comes, I loaded up my old iPod Nano. It's mostly hardcore, with some other stuff like *Eternal Tears* and *Nothingface*, shit like that. The USB," he pulls out the long cable. "Here's the power dock, and..." He looks at her and very slowly pulls out another little box. "Here's your iPhone."

She stares at it and then looks up at him. She tries not to show the affection she's feeling right now. It will look too much like pain, since she feels such a strong desire to tell him not to spend so much money on her. If she wanted him to lavish her with gifts, she would be a frivolous beast and he would not be interested in her. Since she loves him and worries more about him suffering hardship than about her having such toys and gadgets, she is worthy of all his attention and, consequently, all the gifts he buys for her. It is an enviable dilemma, to be sure.

He reaches into the bag.

"Please, Johnny," she says, unable to resist further, "That's all, please."

"Shh..." he says, "Don't shit on my joy."

"At least let me wash your Jeep," she says, "Something..."

"You have enough shit to do," he says, "You'll be back at Coalsack on Saturday. So, shush, and let me show you your stuff." He continues bringing out items. "Pair of ear buds," he says as he pulls them out, "Mini-

move for your iPod if you don't feel like wearing plugs. OK, look," he removes a rectangular box and looks into her eyes. She looks at him with her eyebrows raised. "This is a Ka-Bar," he says, "Your shank was cool, but this is better." He lays the knife on the table. "I have something else in the Jeep, oh, and some odds-and-ends, too."

"Wait until after supper," she says.

"Oh, yeah," he says, "Let's eat!"

Johnny touches her cheek and winks. She smiles at him and then looks down at the gifts.

Today's supper is classic lasagna and as Johnny has come to expect, it is excellent.

"You could be a chef, you know?" he says.

"I'd rather be a wife," she says, "Don't look so surprised, please, America can't make me hate my femininity. Feminists don't care for me as a white woman and they sure as fuck don't rule me just because I happen to be a woman, too."

"I know, angel," he says, "You're the last one who'd submit to a bunch of miserable fucking hags. That's why I'm sitting here with you. You're a strong woman, not a bitchy, wanna-be man."

KJ smiles.

"You honor me," she says, now looking down.

The smile is still on her face. Again, Johnny sees her bashful side.

"Even the water's good," he says.

KJ looks up and nods.

After supper, Johnny fetches the 12-gauge Mossberg shotgun from his Jeep and lays it down on the cabinet, along with four boxes of shells.

"If anyone tries to hurt you," he says, "Drop that shit on them. They won't get back up."

KJ runs her hand down the gun. She lifts it and he shows her how to load and chamber the weapon with the pump action. She looks into his eyes. They say nothing for a while. She touches his cheek and lays her head on his chest.

Markael Yates cannot speak at the moment. As KJ figured, his wounds are significant, though she has underestimated their seriousness. Yates nearly succumbs before surgeons can stem the internal bleeding. His condition is stable on Friday morning, and he is able to explain via pen and paper his side of the story. Of course, he lies. He tells the authorities that KJ invited him inside. They engaged in a little foreplay. Aware that she's a notorious racist, he tells them that one of her turn-ons was acting like she was dominant over a black man. He claims that she told him he

wasn't the first black male she'd had. He wasn't about to turn down such an attractive girl so he went along with it. Aware of his own reputation, he says that he was going to ruin her reputation afterward. He says that she lost her mind when he began to get aggressive. She had a knife hidden under the rug and another under the bed. When she went "batshit crazy" she took the knife from under the bed and slashed him. When he tried to defend himself she hit him with free weights and stabbed him.

Yates doesn't mention the forced entry into her room. That detail slips his mind until it's too late to create a plausible lie about such a significant piece of evidence, so he ignores it. The broken doorframe does not escape police attention.

Though Yates will never face charges for the attempted rape, the authorities know it will be difficult to prosecute KJ Campbell should this development ever come to light. Although divers and recovery personnel have yet to discover a body, it is possible that Kaylee Jane Campbell drowned in the Monongahela River. Her parents have informed police that she cannot swim. This pleases some members of law enforcement and local government, who hope that she is lying somewhere on the bottom of the river. Otherwise, the truth could emerge and incite a racial incident. Nothing strikes terror into the hearts of white authority figures like non-white agitation and accusations of racism.

Anna arrived home on Friday morning. The trip to California and the tour of UC Davis was an experience she's glad to have had. She's also glad it's over. At 1:30 in the afternoon, Johnny Bowen drops by the Murphy's Lemont Furnace home. At the time Anna is loading the washer with her clothes from the trip. Gary, who works an early overtime today, is brewing coffee. Gary opens the door when Johnny rings and Anna can tell from Gary's greeting the identity of the visitor. She hurries into the kitchen and hugs Johnny.

"How was your trip?" Johnny asks the redheaded beauty.

She can feel through his charcoal-gray shirt that he's getting even stronger. Anna is as she was: gorgeous, fit and vivacious. Her hair's in a ponytail again. Her black tank top reveals much of her ivy tattoo as well as her pure white skin, unblemished by the California sun.

"How's KJ?" she asks.

"That's why I dropped by," he says and sighs. "She left her parents' house, and she's never going back."

Anna squeals and jumps for joy, hugging Johnny in the process and then her father.

"Hold on," Gary says, "Let the man finish."

The father realizes something bad must have happened. He grips Anna's shoulder and quiets her. She settles down in an instant.

"What happened, John?" Gary asks.

Johnny Bowen sighs but his eyes never leave Gary's.

"Some buck nigger found her house," Johnny says, "He tried to rape her."

Johnny never averts his gaze from their eyes. His voice is soft and grim.

"Oh, God!" Anna says. Her demeanor couldn't be more opposite than what it was a minute ago. She puts her hand to her mouth. "Is she alright? Is she safe? Oh, God, Johnny!"

"She's OK," Johnny says. He and Gary look into each other's eyes. "Anna, you'll see her tomorrow at Coalsack."

Gary knows what this young warrior wishes to do. He'd do the same.

"Did he..." Anna says in horror.

"He didn't lay a hand on her," Johnny says, "She cut him first." Johnny gets a little half-smile, born of admiration and sympathy for the woman he loves. "A big nigger with a knife threatens her and instead of giving in, she cuts him. My angel's a fighter."

"She sure is," Anna says.

There is a silence as Johnny thinks about kissing KJ goodnight and Gary and Anna patiently wait for him to return from his thoughts.

"You and your woman are both fighters," Anna finally says.

Johnny looks at Anna.

"Stay for coffee, Johnny," Anna says, "Please."

"Yeah," Johnny says, "I could use a cup."

Anna runs into the living room and brings a third seat. Gary pats Johnny's shoulder once he's seated and takes the seat to Johnny's left. Anna hugs Johnny from behind and kisses his head before taking her seat to his right.

"She became part of our family so fast," Johnny says, "But then she was always part of our family. Even back in Seattle, all alone in that god-damned place, she was still one of us."

He looks into Anna's blue eyes. They're the same shade as KJ's. What an amazing woman Garret has as well.

"I can't thank you enough for bringing her in," Johnny says to Anna, "You could have ignored her or assumed she's a flake or an imposter, but you didn't. You put in the effort. They'd have buried her if she was alone. I don't think she would have betrayed our race, but they would have crushed her. I have no doubt about that."

Anna squeezes his hand and smiles.

"I'm so glad I did, too," she says, "It's not fair for you to be alone. It's not right."

"Thank you, Anna," Johnny says.

Johnny recants what KJ told him about the events of the 12th. He doesn't go into detail about Yates forcing her to drop her pants. Gary can hear in his voice he's troubled and his soul is bruised. He thinks he knows why.

"It's hard for a man when he can't be there for his woman," Gary says, "or when he can't do a damn thing to help her." Gary would know; he suffered that feeling for years as Mary slowly died. "You're the one who trained her out at Bill's," Gary says, "Remember, son, you were there with her when she needed you. She had the spirit but you made her into a fighter."

The three enjoy a cup of Punxsutawney Phil's blended coffee. Once his mug is empty Johnny rises to leave. Anna stops him. She runs off to her room, returning with a book before Johnny can depart.

"Give this to KJ," she says, "She can have something to read until her Kindle comes and I can put my books on it."

The book is Anna's copy of *The Brothers Karamazov*. Johnny takes it and hugs Anna. Once he's gone, she sits with Gary for a second cup of coffee.

"We keep living each day the same as the last," Anna says, "You just shut your mouth and you'll probably be OK. Too many niggers? Move to Montana or Vermont. Some of us will get raped or murdered, but most won't. We'll keep showing up for work and paying the bills. Dad, they hate us. Anti-whites want us to die. They say it all the damn time! They say we need diversity, and they don't even hide the fact that only white countries have to accept a bunch of non-white immigrants. They tell us we need to mix with nonwhites or we're racist. Their diversity is brown skin everywhere, and no red hair anywhere."

"You and I know it as well as anyone," redheaded Gary says. He reaches over and lifts her thick red ponytail, which is draped across her left shoulder. "They make jokes about our extinction, and about Garret, too. They want real blonds to die off, just like us. Then they'll have niggers with bleached hair and wigs."

"I know, dad," she says, still it feels good to vent. "I think about what happened to KJ and, God, it could have been so much worse! That monster wanted to rape her. What happens when there are three white girls and sixty of them? It's what the traitors want. And those...kikes who call

white girls shiksa whores and make money filming us sleeping with anyone but a white guy. What happens to us then, when there's only a few of us left?"

"The kikes will live in their fortresses with the ass-kissing white traitors," Gary says.

"My children will not be outside the gate getting raped and tortured," Anna says.

"Anna," he says, "I'd protect you from all this, but you're a white woman. You're not meant to live in a shithole and beg for scraps of food. You're not going to dance naked in front of a nigger or give your body to them so your children can eat. You're a white woman. You weren't born to beg, and I'll be goddamned if you will. I know my grandchildren won't live at the mercy of the enemy. I know a lot of girls your age are feminists and man-haters and race traitors, but you're not, and KJ isn't either. You know, Johnny was the best thing that ever happened to her. She has that same passion and she was all alone in the world, but she never crawled or gave herself to them. Neither of you are gonna bow to the enemy or crawl out of fear. I'll keep doing what I can to make sure you have everything you need, whatever you choose to do with your life, but I know you're not going to crawl and that makes me so proud."

Anna looks at him and smiles. The look of concern returns soon after.

"I love you, dad," she says, "I just worry about you so bad."

"I know, honey," he says, "But seeing the woman you've become gives me peace. All these years you were everything that I held on to. You've become a wonderful young woman because of my best efforts and in spite of my worst mistakes, you're a proud white woman and I couldn't be happier."

"How can I leave you alone?" she says.

"If you ignore what you believe," he says, "so that you can stay here, then I failed you, Anna. I'm content now. I've realized that I've had a wonderful life. I was blessed with your mother and she blessed me with you. If you're doing what you can so that you can bless a man with your children and do what you can so they won't face all the evil you face, then there's no reason to worry about leaving me. You'll be doing what you need to do. All these years you've made me love my life, Anna, and that wasn't easy to do after I lost your mother. You're not going to stay here because you feel like it's a debt, and end up hating your own life. I didn't raise you to be anybody's slave, not mine and sure as hell not theirs."

"I wouldn't hate my life," she says.

"Yes you would," Gary says, "KJ and Johnny aren't the only fighters. You're awake just like the rest of them."

"I just don't want you to be alone," she says, looking down at her empty cup, "I know what you gave up for me after mom died."

When Anna looks up her eyes meet his. She is so amazingly beautiful and reminds him so much of his beloved wife, back when she was healthy. Anna has even surpassed her. He's not upset, nor would Mary be; they are both proud of their extraordinary young daughter.

"I'm not alone, honey," Gary says, "I've had the two most wonderful people in my life. I could be the last man on Earth and I wouldn't feel alone after sharing my life with you and your mother."

"It might get bad," she says.

"It's already bad," he says, "but I look at you and the young men and women of the core, and I know we'll win. We will. The enemy doesn't scare me. With men and women like you, we are guaranteed to win."

"They'll go after you if I take a stand," she says.

"Don't think about that," he says, "Don't ever let that stop you. There's nothing they can do to me that's as bad as you giving in to them."

"What if they kill me?" she says, "What if..." She grabs his hand on the table.

"They kill me?" he says, "Anna, I'm a white man. I wasn't born into this world to crawl like a worm."

"You never have," she says, "Thank you, dad."

"Neither of us ever will," he says and smiles.

Now he rubs her hand.

Gary rises from the table. He sings as he wraps the sandwiches that Anna made for him.

Later that Friday, John Bowen pays a visit to John Boyle. He doesn't mince words about the recent events. The two shake hands and begin unloading Boyle's supplies from the Rubicon and the new Jeep trailer that Garret bought.

"Hold on a second, John," Johnny says.

Boyle looks him in the eye. Boyle's blue stare is like that of a fierce bird of prey. He is an awakened volcano that rumbles beneath a glacier. Johnny Bowen is just as fierce, but his style contrasts with Boyle's. There's nothing icy about Johnny Bowen. Whenever danger or a physical confrontation ensues, he is Mt. St. Helens on the 18th of May.

"A fucking nigger tried to rape KJ," he says. Boyle says nothing. "She cut him before he could and she escaped," Johnny Bowen says, "She's safe right now and I told her she'd be back here tomorrow."

"Can she take it?" Boyle asks.

"We have to know," Johnny says, "And she needs to get back. I think it'll be good for her."

Boyle nods.

"I'm not goin' easy on her," Boyle says.

"No shit, John," Johnny says as he throws an angry glance. "I wasn't going to ask you to. I know these cocksuckers will try to get in her head."

The two men finish restocking the refrigerator and fuel reserve.

"Drive up to Bill's on Tuesday," Johnny Bowen says, "He's got the rest of the fuel and preserves."

Boyle nods.

"You stayin' around for a while?" Boyle asks.

"Yeah," Bowen says, "What do you need?"

"We'll put the door on the storehouse," Boyle says.

"Yeah, OK," Bowen says.

He looks at his watch.

"We should be done in time to practice," Bowen says.

"What do you have in mind?" Boyle asks.

"I'm going to fire an Armalite," Bowen says, "The ladies will use the Remingtons."

Once the new shed is finished, Bowen loads an Armalite and Boyle approaches him.

"If you're in need of any services," Boyle says, "Tell me. I'm good at putting down wild beasts."

Bowen chambers a round. He looks at Boyle and nods.

Although the travel time from Amblersburg to the Coalsack site might seem like it would be shorter than a trip from Uniontown, due to the nature of the roads involved it requires an additional 10 or so minutes. Once, that would have been significant. Since KJ no longer answers to Erica, the clock has less importance. Still, she needs to be at Coalsack by ten in order to maximize her time at the range. As established by the two on Friday, Bowen will arrive at 6 AM on Saturday. This Saturday he parks in front of the blue Jeep at 5:50. One advantage of having a home in Amblersburg is that KJ and Johnny can enjoy breakfast in her kitchen.

"Can we take the blue Jeep?" she asks him as they finish their strawberry and cinnamon French toast.

"Tomorrow," he says, "It's a good idea though, so the battery doesn't die."

KJ clears the table and Johnny watches her move. She's wearing camouflage pants and a plain black t-shirt. Over the shirt is a dark gray

long-sleeve shirt, its front unbuttoned. This morning is rather cool for June. This particular pair of pants is one of the newer ones, which are tighter than the earlier pairs of camouflaged pants and jeans. Johnny notices how well they fit her when she rinses off the dishes and her beautiful backside faces him. She is stunning even in a hunter's outfit.

Johnny's Rubicon rolls and bounces through the forest en route to Coalsack. KJ feels the freedom and deep elation from the metamorphosis her life has taken. Once it was a shadow. She had spent much of her time in the loveless confines of the Campbell House and the halls of a public school that, like all others, enforces anti-white doctrines and allows no opposition. For KJ, whose heart beats to the tune of a true rebel's song, the overbearing propaganda and harsh opposition to white solidarity made confrontation inevitable. Now she is free of their ideological bonds. It was a harrowing and painful escape, but she belongs to them no more.

The forest looks the same, as do the ruts in the ground that serve as a road. The yellow wingstem brushes the sides of the Jeep and white and purple butterflies dance outside the windows. Coalsack hasn't changed yet the entire universe is no longer the same. KJ is silent for this leg of the journey. She closes her eyes and breathes deep. She suspends her disbelief and simply feels the joy and relief of the moment. When she opens her eyes she looks at John Johnny. He'd put his life on the line to protect her and to ensure that KJ the white woman can live her life without having to conform to the anti-white establishment. Her parents would disapprove of him. KJ smiles and rubs his hair. She sees him smile as he concentrates on the rugged pathway. He is so tender and dear to her and yet he can be savage and unforgiving. She saw the knife as the two waited on Bill. Her parents would call him a racist monster. They won't sacrifice for her future, or the future of her children. He'd die for them.

Anna is waiting in the clear parking space. KJ waves and Anna goes nuts, jumping and carrying on like a puppy. Johnny pulls up close and Anna is on KJ the second KJ emerges from the Rubicon. Anna gives her a bear hug that would make Gary Murphy proud. Johnny glances at them as he parks. How beautiful they are, in their camouflaged garb and boots, Anna with a rifle on her shoulder. All is not lost.

John Boyle comes down from the cabin's porch. He, too, is wearing camouflage. He and Johnny shake hands and talk while Anna and KJ walk to the cabin, each with an arm on each other's shoulders. Inside, Anna watches KJ check and load her .30-06 rifle.

"You OK?" Anna asks.

KJ looks at her and nods. Anna wants to tell her not to withdraw, as it is so easy to do following a humiliating assault.

"KJ," she says, "I hope...I hope that piece of shit didn't take anything from you."

"I don't give him that power over me," KJ says. She looks up from the rifle and deep into Anna's eyes. "No one can separate me from the ones I love," she says, "They'll die first."

Now it's Anna's turn to smile.

The next day, Sunday the 16th, Johnny Bowen and KJ Campbell return to Coalsack. This time they take the blue CJ7. For the first half of the trip, KJ drives; Johnny insists on it. He knows she'll feel good driving her own vehicle. Erica can't take it away from her anymore. When they arrive at the turn-off, she pulls over so that Johnny can assume the wheel. Before he can open his door, KJ starts climbing over to him.

"This isn't going to work," he says once her rear is touching his leg.

"I guess not," she says, and she rubs her arm.

"Nice try, though," he says.

She looks down and he feels her laugh before she slides back and he can exit the Jeep.

KJ and Johnny arrive before Anna. He kisses her once before going into the cabin. She hears Johnny converse with Irish John before her man returns carrying an Armalite rifle. He doesn't wait for Anna to arrive. Within minutes he's disappeared into the woods.

Anna isn't long in coming. When she arrives, Boyle appears with the .50 caliber.

"Roisin," he says to KJ, "You'll be carryin' the fifty. Anna's your spotter. I'll call when the target's up."

It's obvious that he's not bullshitting around today.

Anna carries her usual Remington as well as KJ's supplies and extra ammunition. The Barrett .50 caliber is cumbersome and KJ doesn't need anything adding to her burden, especially on a march. The two stop at the high point of a heavily forested rise that KJ calls "Electron Ridge." Through the trees she can see the area of the shooting range. She estimates the distance to be around 700 feet. KJ and Anna get into position and await Boyle's call.

On occasion KJ looks through the scope at the hillside and the range below. In time she sees Boyle setting up two target silhouettes. The second he's done she calls him on the walkie-talkie.

"Hey," she says, "I don't know if you know this, but Johnny's out there in the woods. I'm not shooting until I know he's out of danger."

"Well, don't shoot if you see him," Boyle says.

"Let him know," KJ says.

Anna feels the weight of someone's stare and looks to the rear. Johnny's standing there. He puts his finger to his lips and Anna keeps quiet. He stays directly to the rear of KJ, who from her position cannot see him.

"Fuck him, he'll get out of the way," Boyle says.

"Fuck you, John!" KJ says. She hands the radio to Anna and asks her to keep the button depressed. KJ opens the chamber of the .50 caliber.

"You hear that?" she asks, "No shots until I know."

"Anna, yell for Johnny," Boyle says over the radio, "One of you, yell for him."

KJ takes a deep breath.

"Wait," Anna says.

"What?" KJ asks.

Anna motions for her to look to the rear. There stands John Ashley Bowen, Armalite in his arms and quiet as a phantom. A subdued smile on her face, Anna hands the walkie-talkie to KJ.

"OK, John," she says into the radio, "We're clear."

"You too make a good team," Anna whispers.

KJ smiles and nods. Anna looks back toward Johnny, only to see him disappearing into the forest. There'll be time for talk later; right now, he has a perimeter to patrol.

KJ nails the target with her first shot. The sizable bullet strikes the forehead of the image. Anna fires her Remington and hits her target as well, though she takes a chest shot owing to the long range. She doesn't know it at the time, but it's one of her best performances to date and had the target been a living human the bullet would have entered the right side of his heart.

Back at the cabin, the two sit on the porch and watch Bowen and Boyle put new tires on Boyle's Ford. It's become hot out, though the shade of the cabin ameliorates the discomfort.

"That was really nice what you did up on the ridge," Anna says, "It was really sweet. I've known Johnny for a while now. I was going to say something but you beat me to it, and I'm so glad you did!"

"He's my man," KJ says, "I look out for him. God knows he does that for me."

She doesn't mention how he helped her escape from the police, or the cottage he prepared for her at Amblersburg.

When the tires are changed, Boyle takes a test drive and Bowen comes over to stand beside the ladies. KJ touches his leg. He looks down to see her smiling face.

"I love you," KJ says.

He caresses her thick hair. "I love you too, angel."

At the Donnelly Homestead, Bill and Megan sit down for a cup of tea. On the floral tablecloth sits a plate of wild strawberry pastries that Megan prepared a few hours previous. The two have shared many conversations at this little round table in the kitchen. It's the reason Bill bought the unimposing piece of furniture, which pales in size and splendor to the large banquet table.

Megan knows about KJ's escape and looks forward to seeing her and Johnny again. Bill is perturbed tonight, far more than it would seem he should be, but Megan doesn't cajole her husband into opening up to her. He will do so on his own time, which doesn't take long in coming.

Bill mentions Sinead being in Ireland and the emptiness of the house, now that the last of the Donnelly children no longer calls it home. Michael is in New York and far too busy to make another visit in the foreseeable future. Rian's out at his place in Monongahela. So much has changed, as it must. The status quo is both untenable and undesirable.

"You're not worried about Sinead," Megan says in the Irish, as usual, "Gerry and Aoife will take care of her."

"I've been thinking about our other friends," he says, "those closer to home. I fear for them, Megan. It's the same as it once was. People who mean so much to me are suffering and desperate. The feeling that gnaws inside me is as strong as it ever was. This time I'm not in a car full of guns, I'm in my kitchen having tea."

Megan knows that those who have become very dear to the Donnelly Family will soon have to choose what path they will follow, and should they choose the way of the gun they will not ever be able to turn back. If enough of them choose to resist it will be up to Bill to decide who will fight beside whom. Megan does not know who or when, but she is aware of his responsibility. It is a great honor and a great burden.

"Their love is strong and full of flames," he says, "And just like so many of our youth back in the day, they're likely to die. They know that, I don't need to tell them, and if I did it would not stop them."

"Did it stop you, love?" she asks.

"No," he says, this time looking down at his tea.

"They know why they have to fight," Megan says, "For white children who might not ever live if they don't make a stand."

"They'll fight for them," Bill says, "And fate cheats them out of having children of their own. I'm sending these beautiful young men and women to their deaths."

"They'll decide," Megan says, "and I agree with those who choose to fight, just as I agreed with William Donnelly and Dylan McCarthy when they joined the Provos. I never changed my mind, even after Dylan died. He wouldn't have either. He fought to the death and so will they. Love of race and kin and each other drives them, dear husband. There is nothing more powerful."

"Johnny told me to send KJ somewhere where she'd have a good life," Bill says.

As he looks into his wife's eyes he recalls a day when he had the same thoughts about her.

"Of course he did," Megan says, "He loves her. Men abandon their mission to protect women. Usually that would mean you'd have to send her away from him. But his mission would be to protect her, no matter what happens. She'll fight, she will. He will, too. They're desperate and young and they know their future is bleak if they do not rise. Would it be so terrible for her lover to also be her protector, to the death if necessary?"

"I'd send them both away if I could," Bill says, "But this enemy would follow them, and destroy their children's lives, if not their own."

Megan squeezes his hand.

"It's war," she says, "This time it's everywhere a white man or woman breathes. There are no more homelands. This enemy will deny us more than our dignity and our rights; he'll deny our children a chance to live. Michael saw it coming. He was right about England and the two of you were right about the six counties. You've heard Anna and KJ, God bless them. There is so much treason, and so much profit to be had by being a traitor, our youth are facing a decision more difficult than anyone has faced in God knows how long. They can accept this madness that has overcome our race and our people, and profit from betraying all unborn white children, or they can fight the evil, and face the brutality of a heartless enemy."

"My dear wife," he says, "Our own son, perhaps our sons and daughters shall number among those who fight this war. I accept their decision as my own father and mother accepted mine. The pain of losing David is never far from my mind but I cannot allow his loss to weigh upon my decisions, or make me condemn theirs. It is a terrible decision, I must say. I carried Dylan at his funeral. Could I live with myself if Johnny had to carry KJ like that?"

"Can you live with yourself if you divide them?" Megan asks, "They'll fight, my dear. If you send her alone to Washington, she'll fight alone. You won't spare either of them any pain. You'll just deny them what happiness they might have. We can't go back and give them a different world. They were born in an age when our race needs heroes if it is to survive. I will pray for their well-being with all my strength, but I would not deny them their right to be among the heroes."

"I have my own mission," Bill says, "May God grant that it bears fruit, and keep our dear ones safe until it does."

Outside the kitchen window of the Donnelly Home, lightning bugs flicker in the gloom.

From the window nearest her bed, KJ watches a pair of the insects flashing in the back yard of the Amblersburg place. Their silent dance is at first glorious, and then mournful. KJ thinks of the beleaguered beauty of her people. The arts, now corrupted, have become a vile parody. Many of her sisters in race will show more affection to their felines than their own babies. Love, the greatest inspiration for creation and defiance, lies broken beneath the feet of the promiscuous, the condescending and cold-hearted female, and the weak, passive, cowardly male.

Her cell phone rings. She walks to the table where it lays. The call is from Johnny Bowen.

"Hi, Johnny!" she says.

"Hello, angel," he says.

"What's up?" she asks.

A little smile is on her face.

"I wanted to ask if the bed's OK," he says, "I had to guess the firmness of the mattress, and I wasn't sure if it's how you like it. I can change it tomorrow if it's uncomfortable."

She covers her mouth for a second, even though he would never have heard her soft chuckle. Of all the things that could be on his mind at this hour, he's thinking of her.

"No, Johnny, it's perfect," she says.

"Good," he says, "I know how hard it sucks to be sore all the time."

"You got it just right," she says.

"Good," he says, "I'm glad."

"Thank you," she says.

Love is still alive, and there is still hope. KJ glances out the window before retiring for the night. The fireflies are little lights in the darkness. She climbs into her comfortable bed and curls up beneath the sheets. A pleasant dream is not long in coming.

A call from Garret awakens Johnny Bowen from his own calm sleep. It's 5AM and Garret has just arrived at his Pittsburgh flat.

"How are you and KJ?" are the first words from Garret Fogarty's mouth.

"She's safe," Johnny says, "and she's nowhere near those faggots who kept her in that cage."

"And you?" Garret asks.

"I'm good," he says.

"The others alright?" he asks.

"Anna's good," Johnny says.

"I know," Garret says, "I texted her but there wasn't time to talk."

"The others are good as far as I know," Johnny says, "Cristi's already found a place and I've got John's truck ready for the move."

"There's something else," Garret says.

"Yeah, I know," Johnny says, "I didn't forget what you said. Are you ready for this?"

"Yes," Garret says, "I did some research during the trip and I'll drop it off tomorrow."

"You've decided, then," Johnny says, "OK. I'll let you know what we're taking and then we can get serious."

"Good," Garret says, "It's time for me to get this over with."

"Yeah," Johnny says, "Come by tomorrow morning. When do you have work?"

"I don't anymore," Garret says, "I have some independent projects to finish up, so I'll have extra money, but then it ends."

"Yeah, OK," Johnny says, "Be here at seven if you can."

Having established the time, Johnny closes the call. Garret looks at his phone for a moment. He's begun to rely on Johnny Bowen for the resolution of the disagreeable and dangerous tasks, and that is simply not fair. If he is to be a leader of warriors in a fight against enormous odds, he must share in every facet of the struggle. Garret Fogarty must know what it is like to take a life, and how he will react after the fact.

Dawn is bright and the air is already hot on the 17th of June. KJ makes breakfast and then tends to the household chores. When she's done, she continues her exercise and weight regimen. As she towels off at the end, she hears the sound of someone closing a vehicle door. She hurries to the bed and takes her .45 pistol from its place nearby. Johnny said he'd drop by in the evening. It's 11:00 AM.

KJ creeps over to the window that gives her a view from beside the porch. The sight makes her lower her pistol. It's Anna, wearing dark sun

glasses and a tank top shirt. KJ puts her pistol on the table and unlocks the door to the porch. When she arrives at the entrance to the house, Anna strikes the door with the brass frog knocker.

"One second," KJ announces.

The blinds are pulled, preventing Anna from seeing her sister-in-law.

KJ opens the door and Anna steps out of the sun. They embrace. KJ invites Anna inside, and when she enters she removes her flip-flops and waits for KJ to catch up. She watches KJ lock the outside door, and the inside one as well. A good deal of KJ's large angel wings is readily visible in spite of her omnipresent hair and the small tube bra she's wearing.

When KJ turns she flashes a brief smile.

"So, what do you think?" KJ asks, "Is this place fucking awesome, or what?"

Anna lays her sunglasses on the table near KJ's pistol. The cottage is austere and clean; the kind of place that a man deeply in love but short on wealth might build for his woman. There's none of the soulless grandeur of a mansion, nor is there the barren lust and unwarranted pride that exists when a rich man buys his woman a huge and sterile house. To Anna, the little home is a touching gesture born of pain and sadness and what is quite possibly a doomed love.

"Yeah," Anna says with a smile, "It's pretty sweet."

"Here, I'll show you around," KJ says.

After the brief tour the two sit down to a bottle of Saratoga water. KJ rubs her hair with the towel and then lays it on the floor. Anna's own .45 joins KJ's on the table.

"How's your family?" KJ asks, "Is Bryce OK?"

"Yeah, he's good," Anna says, "They're all good. Dad told me to say hi and he hopes you're happy and content. By the way, Bryce is coming over next weekend. We'd love to have you over if you don't think it's too dangerous to move around right now. You could come at night and stay if you want, we'd be happy to have you."

"I better talk to Johnny about that," KJ says, "I read on the internet they're looking for me."

"Yeah, maybe we better hold off for a while," Anna says, "At least you have a nice place to crash for a while." Anna looks around. "This is really nice, you know? Johnny's is so special. You're lucky to have him."

"Oh I know, and I'm going to show him what it means to me," KJ says, "I'll show him as much as I can right now." She gets a wicked smile. "And a lot more someday."

Anna smiles, though it's compassionate rather than wild and wicked.

"This is, like, beyond a dream for me," KJ says, "He built me a place! I didn't have any idea where I'd be able to stay if I had to bail, and I couldn't ask one of you to take me into your home. He obviously had this ready for me." She looks down and shakes her head. "And I made him wait."

"Johnny did this for you," Anna says, "Not for him. He'd have waited as long as you needed. Now you have to show him how much it means that he'd do something like this, for you. He may not always be able to afford it but that's not what matters. The object is just the part you can touch. It's the reason behind it that matters."

"Yeah, that's exactly what matters," KJ says, "When he met me by the river that meant more to me than any object ever could. You know, I think back to my cousin and others I've known. They fuck around and, like, expect a guy to want them and do anything for them. And then if he does they treat him like shit and fuck some asshole who doesn't give a fuck for them as a person. A lot of that is reinforced by weak guys, I know. But we do even more to fuck things up. There are strong white men like Johnny and Garret, who aren't just after some pussy, and we buy into the bullshit anti-white system and fuck around, hoping someday to win a man like that. Guess what? They aren't interested in loose fucking women. Whores and cowards have made life harder for good men and women, and they've also put our children at risk. Because of those losers there are fewer good white men who will love and protect us and our children. A real white man like Johnny will fight for us. He won't whine or complain or watch his children suffer. He won't leave them a future where whites are denigrated or murdered. He'll fight for them. And what do so many women give in return? They complain, they sleep around in their youth and deny him intimacy and affection. The more guys you bed, the less you have to offer. So assholes and cowards become the sperm donors and used-up females have the children. Then there are fewer good white men because good white women follow the same script."

"Nice," Anna says, "You make everything electric, you know? I don't think anyone rants like you and Johnny and I love it. Sorry, I didn't want to interrupt." She touches KJ's gloved hand. "I hope you tell him this shit, he'd really appreciate it."

KJ smiles and shrugs.

"Thank you," she says, "I will tell him. I won't deny him anything, or myself. What happiness is there in self-denial and denial of love? If I was, like, a race traitor or I slept around, there is no fucking way Johnny gets this place for me. And you know what? He shouldn't. The script from the

establishment and the schools and fuckin' Hollywood tells us to care only for ourselves, to fuck around and kill our babies until we're well into our late 20's and then try to find some loser who will give us children while we fantasize about some anti-white Alpha asshole. They won't tell us the real Alpha is the man like Johnny and Garret, and your father, who will fight, but who won't fuck around on his woman, and who demands no less from her. He's a man who loves his woman and his children, and she'd better love him too or he'll tell her to fuck off and join the other losers. They're rare and so are we, Anna. And that hurts me, it hurts me so bad."

"Now that's some fuckin' realltalk!" Anna says. KJ shrugs and looks a little embarrassed from Anna's enthusiastic reply. "No, really. You're a big exception, KJ," Anna says, "Johnny wouldn't have built this place for you if you weren't. I know him and there's no way he's doing this for a loser or a bitch."

Anna sips her water.

"When I woke up," KJ says, "I began to realize the power of love. A woman's love is so fucking powerful and all that time, we didn't see it. If we refuse to listen to the enemy, and we don't cut ourselves off but instead we love with all of our bodies and souls, then the good, strong, handsome men will respond. The assholes will be left picking up the whores and the cowards will disappear. How is it not betrayal when you cut yourself off from a good white man? You betray him and yourself. You betray your race and your children. There are still good men, like Johnny and Garret. And they're fucking handsome, too!" She shrugs. "That is important. It is!"

"Oh I agree," Anna says.

"You know," KJ says, "That's one reason I'm all sweaty right now, it's important that we stay in shape. I have an idea what he likes, so I'm going to give that to him. I'll work hard to keep my body like that and as much as I can, and maybe someday I can give it to him. He'll risk his life for me and my children. The least I can do is, like, make shit as awesome as possible for him."

She smiles as her words resonate with Anna, who's thinking along the same lines, though the man she's thinking about has blonde hair and blue eyes.

KJ excuses herself and visits the bathroom, where she washes her face and hands. On her return she walks to the kitchen and brings two forks and a salad she's prepared for lunch.

The two share the food, the ingredients for which John Bowen dropped off two days ago, and share a little small talk about the damnable

heat and humidity and the gorgeous orange day lilies that adorn the highways around Amblersburg.

"How's Garret?" KJ asks.

"Garret?" Anna says as if it's a surprise KJ asked, "Oh, he's good. He just got back from a trip."

"No shit?" KJ says.

"We're going to the Benedum on Friday," Anna says, "*Celtic Thunder's* going to be there."

KJ's expression hints at unfamiliarity.

"They sing a lot of Celtic and easy listening music," Anna says.

KJ's eyebrows rise.

"It's not just about what I like!" Anna says, "It's about what he likes, too!"

"I know!" KJ says, "I was just fucking with you, and now I feel like a selfish bitch. Thanks, Anna!"

"Hey, don't mention it," Anna says.

KJ laughs and shakes her head.

"So, is this like a date?" KJ asks.

"Yeah," Anna says, "Our second official date."

She doesn't elaborate on the first "official" date. It takes place that evening, in fact.

"Sweet," KJ says, "What are you going to wear?"

Anna thinks of wearing a white dress she bought for just such an occasion. She considered setting it aside for tonight's trip to the Cailleigh restaurant, but the concert is a better choice for the dress.

The two enjoy a couple more bottles of Saratoga water and a little picture show from Anna's cell phone. After the laughter fades to giggling, the room becomes quiet.

"What happened when you left, KJ?" Anna asks, "Johnny said that some nigger..."

"Tried to rape me." KJ finishes Anna's sentence when the latter hesitates. Her eyes look straight into Anna's, whose expression is one of sorrow as she shakes her head. KJ betrays no emotion.

"Johnny told me not to go back for my things," KJ says, "But I didn't listen. I thought about how much he spent and how much time he and you put into those gifts, and I decided to return. Yates, that's the nigger's name, Yates and his friends must have been there. Either they forced the door and somehow I didn't hear it, or more likely my father left it unlocked."

KJ looks down and takes a deep breath but she does not falter. She returns her gaze to Anna.

"He threatened me with a knife," KJ says, "And he told me to drop my pants. He..." KJ closes her eyes and exhales. When she opens her eyes she looks at Anna. "He saw my naked crotch."

"I am so sorry, KJ," Anna says.

"I'm alright," KJ says, "At least he didn't touch me. I had a knife that my Johnny sharpened and showed me how to use. I cut that black bastard and beat him and stabbed him. Oh yeah, I fucked him up bad. No man except Johnny will have me like that. That nigger dared to try and take my greatest gift from me. Well fuck him, he got off fucking light."

Anna smiles; it is sympathetic rather than joyous.

"They say he's in the hospital," KJ says, "If I'd have had my pistol, I'd have shot him four times in the fucking head."

"I'm sorry to make you relive this," Anna says.

"It's OK," KJ says, "You need to know."

"How'd you escape?" Anna asks.

"I stole my mother's Honda," KJ says.

Anna laughs.

"Shit, KJ!" she says, "That's awesome!"

"Yeah," KJ says with a very short-lived smile, "I didn't know what to do, other than realizing that I had to escape."

"You must have been pretty messed up," Anna says, "Where'd you go?"

Anna is literally on the edge of her seat.

"I kept driving," KJ says, "I knew I'd have to lose the car. I figured they'd track it with On-Star, but then a fucking cop tailed me for a while and I ended up ditching the car near Masontown."

"Is that where you met Johnny?" Anna asks.

"Not exactly," KJ says.

She tells Anna about the fallen oak and her plunge beneath the waters of the Monongahela.

Anna gasps.

"You can't swim!" she says.

"No," KJ says, "I can't."

"God!" says Anna, who looks to the side for a moment. "How did you get out?"

"I walked," KJ says.

"Oh my God," Anna says, "Weren't you terrified? You were underwater!"

"I was so fucking scared," KJ says, "I couldn't begin to describe it. But I couldn't give up. I couldn't. I couldn't die like that."

"I should have taught you," Anna says, "I should have told Johnny."

"No, Anna," KJ says. She touches Anna's hand. "I couldn't meet with you often enough. I'm the one who should have told Johnny."

"We have time now," Anna says, "Does Johnny know?"

"Come on, Anna," KJ says, "Of course he knows."

"Yeah, OK, dumb question," Anna says.

KJ tries to look serious but ends up chuckling.

"OK," Anna says, "He'll take care of it. And, you know, you two could have some fun when he teaches you."

KJ nods.

"But seriously," KJ says, "Could you order maybe three swimsuits for me? I'll give you the money. I'm not comfortable ordering and having deliveries to this place. I better ask Johnny first if he thinks it's safe. I have a few swimsuits and bikinis but I was thinking of buying suits like those the swimmers wear."

"Why those?" Anna asks.

"I don't want something that will, like, tease him, you know?" KJ says, "We're going to be wet and close most of the time and it's going to be fucking awesome, but I don't want to make it hard on him."

Hard on, Anna thinks, Nice choice of words, KJ.

"OK," Anna says, "But don't give me any money."

"Bullshit!" KJ says who was rising to do just that.

"Bullshit hell!" Anna says, "It'll be an early birthday gift. You can buy me something in September."

"Anna, please," KJ says.

"No," Anna says, "I'll take care of it."

KJ takes her seat.

"OK," KJ says, "but I'm getting something for you, something expensive and big and fucking shiny, just so you feel bad."

"OK, cool," Anna says, "I like shiny."

KJ shakes her head.

"I can't win, can I?" she asks.

"No," Anna says.

KJ buries her face in her hands and her hair, and then she looks up and laughs, as does Anna.

"Hey, do you want to stay for supper?" KJ asks.

"I can't" Anna says, "I already made arrangements." A smile comes to Anna's face. "I bet you did, too."

"Yeah," KJ says, "I was just being nice."

"I know," Anna says.

During the mid-afternoon hours Anna takes her leave. She takes a DVD out of her bag and gives it to KJ. It is full of mp3 music files. After mentioning a few of the bands on the disc, Anna walks to the door.

“Johnny said starting Friday, we’ll be going to Coalsack more often than in the past,” Anna says, “He also said we’ll be going to Bill’s again soon. Well, I’ll see you around, KJ. Tell Johnny I said hi.”

“OK, cool,” KJ says.

The two hug and Anna walks to her Subaru. It’s still hot and sunny outside. When she returns to the inside room, KJ is quite thankful for the central air that keeps her little home nice and comfortable.

Anna is waiting on her father when he arrives at the Murphy Home. Before he can remove his shoes she squeezes him in her arms.

“I love you, dad,” she says.

At five thirty KJ’s cell phone rings. It’s Johnny. KJ is surprised and dismayed, wondering if he might have to cancel. In spite of her best efforts her greeting is a little more somber than usual.

“Hey,” he says, “You mind if I come over early?”

“No,” she says, “Hell no!”

Her enthusiasm returns.

Johnny drives from Deer Park to Amblersburg via Corinth and Terra Alta. He does not follow the route through Amboy. The less time he spends there, the better. When he arrives, KJ is waiting inside the porch. She unlocks and opens the door. KJ has taken a quick shower and changed into a t-back sleeveless top that will let him see a bit of her wings. Better yet, she’s wearing the tight black snakeskin leggings she knows he’ll appreciate.

“Hi Johnny!” she says with a big smile.

“Angel!” he says. He embraces her once the door is closed. “Wow, look at you!” She turns around once; a tiny smile is on her face.

“Supper’s not ready yet,” she says.

“Perfect,” he says and then he kisses her.

Once inside he removes his tennis shoes and kisses her again.

“I’m going to help you make supper,” he says.

“So, is this, like, a date?” she asks.

He nods. “Um-hmm.”

Before the two begin the food preparation, Johnny brings a bottle of Merlot from his Jeep. He chills it inside the refrigerator, which is stocked well enough that he has to make room.

The kitchen work does not progress as swiftly as it might, owing to the antics and intimacy of the two lovers. In the end, the meal turns out to

be delicious. Fortunately KJ prepared the béarnaise sauce before Johnny arrived.

After dinner Johnny sits on her bed and KJ finds her spot on his lap. She nuzzles him and they sit in silence for a little while. Finally he smells her hair.

“Sing for me,” he says.

KJ looks a little surprised.

“Go on,” he says as he rubs her left leg.

“Any requests?” she asks.

“Something that fits the mood,” he says, “The mood you’re in.”

“OK,” she says and shrugs.

She thinks of the past, of her mental prison, and the future with its changes that might rip him from her arms. The song she chooses is “Tides of Time.” Performed by *Epica*, it is a symphony of haunting and beautiful notes woven around the melodic voice of the female lead. Johnny knows it well. KJ’s a cappella rendition is quite different, yet loses none of the emotional drive of the original. Her voice does not resemble that of *Epica*’s singer; instead of being operatic, it is potent and earthly. Nor is it celestial; rather, the power of her voice is relentless and unwavering. Her potent charm lies not in her range, which is not great, but in the clarity and power of her voice, which ranges from soft to stentorian and is always clear. It can fade to a whisper that pierces the soul or rise to a crescendo that could lift a dying man to his feet and convince him to make a final stand. It is born of generations that stood while others crawled, and those who suffered mightily for their defiance.

As her voice ebbs like the mighty ocean, she looks into Johnny’s eyes and he returns the stare. For a while neither one speaks, until Johnny breaks the silence.

“Thank you KJ,” he says.

“Did you like it?” she whispers.

“It was amazing, thank you,” he says.

She nuzzles him and again he smells her hair.

“I told you this before, but thanks for not smoking,” he says, “That nasty fucking smell and the way it fucks up a woman’s voice, what a stupid fucking thing to do. I love your voice the way it is, whether you sing to me or just ask me for a glass of water.”

She laughs a little and leans upward to look at his face.

“I wouldn’t think of doing that,” she says.

“Good,” he says.

He pats her leg and takes a deep breath.

The sound of her voice ignites passion and flame in his soul. It brings to his mind everything he could lose, and everything worth fighting for.

"There's so much shit they dump on your generation," Johnny says, "Fucking cigarettes, weed and meth, all the fucking feminist and anti-white lies, I'd give anything to spare you that shit. They won't rest until we're gone from the fucking Earth. 'They.' Who the fuck are 'they?' The ones profiting from our pain, that's who they are: Big fucking companies and anti-white politicians and all the little traitors who keep the machine going. And then there's mommy fucking professor, who gets paid to teach my white brothers and sisters to hate their own fucking race." He shakes his head. "Shit, now I'm fuckin' venting."

He pats her leg again and she kisses his cheek.

"Go on, my love," she says, "I know how good it feels after not being able to speak for so long. I guarantee you have a sympathetic ear."

He smiles. "Angel, my angel," he says and touches her hair.

Through the window, Johnny sees the boughs of the nearest silver maple swaying in the breeze. Their silent dance and the flash of their leaves remind him of fantasies he doesn't think he'll ever live to see. He looks back at KJ. She's looking down, her sea of hair all around her, yet her tiny smile and gorgeous face still visible through the strands.

"I don't want you to die," he whispers.

She rubs his cheek and looks into his eyes.

"I don't want you to die, either," she says.

"How could your parents and all those obedient fucks throw you into this world of death?" Johnny asks, "How the fuck could they set you up like this, and offer your life as a sacrifice? Your life isn't theirs to give."

She rubs his chest with her left hand.

"If you obeyed them it'd mean death for your children or grandchildren," he says, "It'd catch up with them eventually. Someday there won't be enough white people to keep living this fucking lie. They won't be able to feel good about themselves by betraying some other white man, because they'll be the only ones left and then they'll die, too."

He caresses and gently squeezes her upper arm. She looks down at it and flexes ever so slightly.

"I will fight for you, angel, and those who follow," he says, "It's your choice what you want to do. I know it's your future and your children's future and white women are just as big a part of this as we are, whether they like it or not. But, angel, my heart does not want you to fight."

She leans back to stare into his eyes.

"Please don't ask me to walk away," she says.

"I won't," Johnny says, "but I'm not going to say that I want you to fight."

"You're not going to be alone," KJ says, "We're not going to abandon you or make you fight for us all alone. I'm a white woman and you're a white man and our fates are tied together. Your war is our war too."

The feeling of her smooth glove on his face is a divine experience for John Ashley Bowen. For just a moment he closes his eyes.

"It's not my decision whether you'll be with me or not," he says.

"I'll still fight," she says, "For my children, and for yours." She puts both hands on his cheeks. "And in the off-chance I can shoot the bastard who might hurt you."

He takes her hand and looks into her sad and wondrous blue eyes.

"I love you," she says, "Nothing in Heaven or Earth can ever change that."

"I love you, too, my angel," he says.

Before he must leave, Johnny turns KJ around so that her back faces him. He slides her top upward and then, when he can see most of her wings, he traces them with his left index finger. They kiss before he departs, and she squeezes him tight.

After breakfast, KJ puts on one of her pairs of boots, dons her gloves and the black Mack cap that she found in one of the drawers, and loads another of Johnny's backpacks with some essential items and the cell phone. She fastens her pistol in her belt holster and exits the cottage through the rear exit. The wind has blown in heavy clouds and cooler than normal temperatures. It's a perfect day to scout the thick woods west of her new home.

Anna wakes a little later than usual. After her dinner at the Caileigh, she and Garret spent much of the evening at the Murphy Home, where they and Gary talked and laughed and looked at pictures from days long gone and not so long gone. It was a bit of normalcy that each thoroughly enjoyed and needed even more. Gary made breakfast today, before heading off to the mines, and he let Anna sleep in. Now that she's eaten, she begins her household chores. After she's digested the morning meal and performed some preliminary stretching, she'll drive to the aquatic center in Pittsburgh. Since Garret can't make it today, Anna won't be taking her silver mermaid suit.

John Ashley Bowen is satisfied with his 8AM interview. It's 9:15 when he departs Westernport, Maryland, and heads for Deer Park. There is an opening for a part-time driver and it's not long-haul. The pay is not very good; in fact, he'd be taking a \$35,000 cut from his old job, but John

Bowen has no intention of driving until retirement age. The job would be a welcome source of income during the current period of uncertainty.

Before Johnny can even remove his shoes his cell phone rings. He pulls it out of his pocket and looks at the number. A part of him hopes it isn't KJ, since she probably thinks he's at work and would only call in case of emergency. He looks at the number. His aunt Becky is on the line.

"Yeah," Johnny says.

"Hi, John," Becky says, "I hate to bother you." Johnny snorts. "Can you come over for a little while? Jim's car won't start."

"Alright," he says and closes the call without waiting for a response.

Johnny changes his dress shirt and slacks and throws on jeans and a plain blue t-shirt. He grabs a quick drink and leaves without ever having sat down.

Jim and Becky McCabe live in a new house southeast of Oakland. Johnny arrives in no time. He sees Jim's gold Chevy Equinox parked ahead of his cousin's red Mitsubishi car. They haven't left him space to park, so he drives the Rubicon into the field beside the house.

When Johnny knocks on the front door, Becky answers. She is a 50 year old woman with thick reddish-brown hair and blue eyes. Her attractiveness ends there. She is artificially thin and fanatical about carbs and calories to the point that no one wants to share a meal with the creature. Her face is narrow and angular and unwholesome, while smirks and looks of superiority often disfigure her expression. Today she wears a blouse and slacks. Johnny cannot remember the last time she wore a dress.

"Come in," she says.

"Why?" he asks, "Send Jim out and we'll get to work."

"In a little while," Becky says.

Johnny knows it's bullshit. They have something planned, probably an annoying inquisition about his father Carl who won't talk to Becky anymore.

Inside the living room are three familiar faces. The pudgy, mustachioed mug of Jim McCabe looks up from his slouching position at the powerful young man before him. Jim is Becky's second husband and the father of her only son, who is away at Florida State. Five years her junior, Jim sells health insurance and paid very little on the expensive house that Becky wanted. To his left and seated on a matching red recliner is 56-year-old Samuel Welton, older brother of Robert Welton and Bowen's uncle. Samuel has none of the street-fighting knowledge that he brother knew in life, though his physique is muscular for his age. Sam wears glasses and a perpetual scow that is enhanced by his bushy gray eyebrows.

Johnny's cousin Jennifer Lawson sits on the plush red couch. Recently divorced for the second time, Jennifer is only thirty years of age. She is a handsome female, gray-eyed with long brown hair. Her body is fit but not strong, and her legs are twiggy and unattractive. That doesn't stop her from wearing a very short pair of jean shorts.

"Have a seat, John," Becky says, "Please," she adds, knowing Johnny will leave if she attempts her usual tactics of browbeating. He won't take that from the two men, let alone an annoying woman.

Johnny sits on the couch beside Jennifer.

"You look fantastic, John," Jennifer says.

"You didn't bring me here to compliment me," Johnny says, "So what's this about?"

"We're worried about you, John," Sam says.

Johnny sighs and shakes his head.

"A fucking intervention, nice," he says.

"Don't say that word," Becky says.

Johnny looks at her.

"I think we're done here," he says.

Jennifer puts her hand on his shoulder when he starts to rise and he sits back down. These relatives could make life harder for him if they begin to pry into his personal business.

"Alright, Becky," Sam says, "He's not a child."

"I know," Becky says, "I'm just worried about you, John. Bob Dearman's wife said you left your job. Is everything OK?"

"Everything's good," Johnny says, "Just be sure and give my compliments to that fucking bitch for talking about me behind my back."

He knows the words that Becky hates.

"Ever since you took up with Robert," Sam says.

Johnny interrupts him.

"Leave him out of this," Johnny says.

"Look, I loved my brother," Sam says, "but you have to admit he had a way of finding trouble. Heck, I miss him as much as anyone but sometimes I think your father made a big mistake letting you stay with him."

"Yeah," Johnny says, "I'd still be a Neocon jackoff. What a shame I learned from a man who wasn't afraid to tell the truth."

Becky shoots a stern glance at Sam.

"You must have been through hell in Iraq," Becky says, "If you ever need help..."

"No, thank you," Johnny says, "I don't need some psychoanalyst pervert or fucking kike telling me that I'm fucked up."

"You never even talked about it," Becky says.

"Never will," Johnny says, "Jim, since you're here, what's wrong with your car?"

"I had to tell you that or you wouldn't hear us out," Becky says.

Johnny stares into her eyes. His annoyance is obvious.

"Thanks for lying," he says.

"Come on, John," Becky says, "You know as well as I do that I had no choice."

"Who's the young girl?" Sam asks.

"What young girl?" Johnny asks.

At the very start of the conversation Johnny prepared himself for this question, so it does not catch him off his guard.

"Joan Wanek saw you with a teenage girl," Becky says.

Wanek is one of Johnny's neighbors in Deer Park. She'd once called the police on him when he revved a motor at 8:45 AM on a Saturday. He'd finally got the F150 engine to turn over but when he tested it Wanek apparently found the noise to her displeasure. To the cop's credit, he didn't even warn Johnny to "keep it down."

"Wonderful," Johnny says, "It's nice that cunt's spying on me. I'll have to mention it to her."

"I thought you were smarter than that, John," Sam says, "There's a lot of good women around here. You don't have to fool around with some little tramp."

Johnny looks at Sam.

"It's none of your goddamned business," Johnny says.

He moves as if to rise.

"Wait just a minute," Becky says, "OK? One last thing, I promise."

"A liar promises," Johnny says.

"I told Madison you're single," Becky says, "I even got her phone number. You could call her. She's really pretty, you know. She's even prettier since you saw her last time."

"Yeah, a woman really respects a man who has his aunt approach her about a date," Johnny says.

"She doesn't care," Jennifer says, "Madison works in the office at Sky Tech. I see her all the time." She touches Johnny's knee. "I hope you don't mind I asked her, too. She likes you, John."

Johnny turns his head to look at his cousin.

"I can't fuckin' believe you'd be part of this," he says, "If you remember, Cristi dated her a few years ago. She has at least five ex-boyfriends."

"You can't expect a girl not to have fun," Becky says, "Get real."

"Oh I can't, huh?" Johnny says, "I haven't fucked anybody and you're damn right I could have. I'm not doing that shit until it's right, and you tell me I can't expect a woman, who has more control over her sex drive, to keep her goddamned pants on until she's mine?"

"You don't know Madison," Jennifer says.

"I know enough," Johnny says, "and what I know from Cristi and Steve Pomeroy she reminds me a lot of Christina Nagy, 'Oh, I'm not a feminist, but...'"

"Are you going to let Christina ruin you?" Sam asks.

"Christina ruined Christina," Johnny says, "She educated me." He looks at Becky. "Thank God I didn't have a little fun with her."

"Feminism isn't all bad," says Jennifer, who no longer looks at Johnny.

"It's not, huh?" Johnny says, "It tells white women that white men are evil. It tells white women that they're 'sistahs' with niggers and kikes while their own flesh and blood men are the oppressors. We're the only men who can love our women and be willing to fight to the death for them, for you, Jennifer, and your fucking feminism tells you we're the enemy." He looks at a grumbling Becky. "Quiet! You'll get your fucking turn."

Johnny returns his glance to the only one in the room who has given him any reason to hope.

"I know you don't believe all that shit," Johnny says to Jennifer, "Feminists tell you to fuck around while you're young, so you become cold-hearted and can't bond with a man anymore. And those fucking lesbo cuntts tell you it's OK to fuck around with some hyper-aggressive twat who doesn't give a shit for his race. No, it's not all bad. I guess white genocide isn't all bad either, right?"

"That's not what I meant," Jennifer says.

"Good," he says, "Maybe there's hope for you, then."

Jennifer's second husband, who cheated on her, was one of those "hyper-aggressive twats."

"We're not here to discuss race," Becky says.

Johnny Bowen jumps to his feet and it startles more than just Becky.

"Well, thanks everyone for the faggotry," he says, "Jim, next time you fuck up your car, stick it up your ass."

Johnny walks outside, leaving the front door open as he departs. He breathes easier once the house disappears behind him.

"Could you do me a favor, Austin?" Bill asks.

Austin spent the early morning hours purchasing parts for the Meyersdale garage but he is back and ready to begin the day's work. At the entrance of the garage, Bill meets him and makes his request.

"Sure, Bill, what's up?" Austin asks.

The young mechanic folds his thickset arms.

"I need you to tell the Core about KJ," Bill says, "I can't take any calls right now. We can't be talking about her in public, even over the phone. I'll ask Garret to contact Tom and Sarah. As for the rest, tell them she's safe and in good health and that's all I can say at the moment."

"Yeah, I'd be happy to," Austin says.

"Take two days if you need to," Bill says, "We'll manage around here."

Austin changes out of his coveralls and back into his jeans and button-down top. He and Jimmy Ford know that KJ is safe, as do the Murphy's and of course Garret. It will take the rest of the day to track down the others, and Bill might be right, he may need the morrow as well.

Inside the garage Bill returns to Mrs. Kershaw's 1980 Oldsmobile Cutlass. Beneath the car there is a welcome solitude. He pauses to reflect.

In selecting the membership of Capricorn Cell, he will decide who is going to share their lives with whom. Among the few cells that shall exist, Capricorn will have the best chance for an impact. The active members of the cell will not be able to have any semblance of a normal life. They will need each other for more than protection; they will need each other to remain human, and they will need each other to mourn. Owing to its extraordinary nature as a bellicose cell operating within the United States, a nation that is zealous in using extreme force against politically correct enemies, Capricorn Cell will be the most likely to suffer loss.

First on Austin Kelly's list is David Fox. Being a fireman, he was among the first to hear about KJ's flight and potential drowning. He managed to keep his knowledge of KJ a secret though he's called Bill five times since the incident. He tries a sixth time and once again the only response is the voicemail service. He resolves to drive to Bill's before work. Seated at his kitchen table with a cup of coffee in his hand and a laptop computer on the tabletop, Fox does a news search for information about KJ.

Police continue to focus on the Monongahela River in their search for a runaway teen who is also wanted for questioning in the malicious wounding case of another Uniontown teen. Kaylee Jane Campbell has not been seen since fleeing the scene of the crime on the 12th. Police found her backpack in a deep hole in the river, leading to speculation that she may have drowned. According to her parents, Kaylee Jane Campbell was a non-swimmer. Authorities are quick to point out that the case is under

investigation and no conclusions as to the fate of the Kirkland, Washington native have been made.

Fox stands and tucks his shirt into his jeans. He'll be leaving in about twenty minutes. Perhaps Bill has heard something he hasn't, and although he still holds out hope the continued silence is disheartening. David hears a car pull in to his driveway and, upon glancing out the kitchen window, sees Austin Kelly's black Avenger. He rinses the grounds out of his coffee mug and sets a second cup on the table for Austin. In a few minutes he won't need to make that trip to Bill's after all.

"Hello, Johnny, this is Bill speaking. Come on over tomorrow for a supper, at five in the afternoon," Bill says on Johnny Bowen's voicemail. "Oh, and bring your girlfriend. Let me know if the two of you cannot come, otherwise we'll be expecting the both of you. Anna's coming over too. God bless." At first Johnny cursed his relations for making him miss the call. Now that he hears "girlfriend" instead of "friend", he's no longer upset. He'll let KJ know about the invitation when he visits her this evening.

Not long after departing from the little cottage, KJ traverses a patch of woodland and emerges at a railroad cut. She checks for any approaching train and when she's certain none are coming, she crosses the dual track. On the other side is a great swath of forest. KJ walks straight into the verdant terrain and disappears from view. The canopy there is thick and even on the sunniest of days the foliage would keep the harsh rays from pounding the forest floor. On that floor are ferns and the remains of trees adorned with delicious oyster mushrooms and inedible conks. For now KJ leaves the oysters, though she notes their presence. On the return trip she'll inspect them and, if they're fresh and free from worms or beetles, she'll adjust supper to include the tasty fungi.

After the noon hour, KJ finds a sturdy stump to use as a seat and takes lunch out of her backpack. There was some arugula, a hunk of Munster and some gourmet salami as well as a loaf of uncut French bread that Johnny bought from a specialty bakery. Combined with homemade vinaigrette dressing, they make an excellent sandwich. She washes down the sandwich with a mixture of mineral water and last night's Merlot. Then she sighs.

He takes such good care of me, she thinks, Everything's done with loving care. Thank you, Johnny.

The forest is tranquil. She can hear a cardinal in the distance and sees his mate flit by. A breeze hushes through the leaves high above. With the exception of the camping trip and the visits to Coalsack, and those were more like delays rather than exceptions, any time she felt this peace-

ful she invariably had to return to the Campbell House and her life of desperate rebellion. No more; today KJ begins a return trip to her home, the home that Johnny made for her so that she might escape from those who would force her to deny her own identity. Now she is free and if she wishes she can turn her back on the desperation and the conflict. But hedonism and selfishness on her part would doom her future children before they can even draw breath. They will need her dedication to their race, regardless of whatever pain or loss she might face, and she tells herself that she will make any sacrifice for them if she must.

Near the railroad KJ finds and picks several immaculate oysters. She's expecting her Johnny at seven o'clock and he's likely to be hungry. She remembers that Johnny left some emergency candles among the other disaster supplies that he brought for her. Tonight will be a good time to test them.

That night, hours after an excellent and intimate meal with the woman he loves, Johnny Bowen stands at the door to the enclosed porch. He kisses KJ and squeezes her shoulders.

"Johnny," she says, "You can stay, it's cool. I mean, I could fix up a place for you. I have a sleeping bag."

She'd offer him the bed, but she knows damn well he won't let her sleep on the floor.

He smiles and kisses her head, and then he bids her goodnight. She waves to him from the outside doorway as he drives away.

Johnny arrives early the next morning. He parks to the right of the blue Jeep. There doesn't seem to be a light on inside the cottage. Johnny exits the Rubicon and looks over KJ's blue CJ7. Beyond the cottage the fog is still heavy in the fading darkness. The weathermen say it will be cloudy again, with periods of rain from a stationary front. He calls this "KJ weather" and has come to appreciate it.

The kitchen light comes on at 8AM. Most of the fog has lifted and Johnny sits inside his Jeep, where he looks over an issue of *Fur-Fish-Game*. He waits an hour before going to the door. If his calculations are correct, this is one of the mornings that KJ sets aside for exercise and he doesn't want to interrupt her vital routines. He has a key – there are, in fact, three, with the final spare at the Murphy Home – but it would be terrible form to enter without KJ at the door. He knocks and, when there's no response, pushes the doorbell.

When KJ arrives, she's wearing a long t-shirt and bike shorts. A towel is draped over her shoulder and her hair is damp. The towel falls to the floor when she throws her arms around him.

"I made you wait, didn't I?" KJ asks after the necessary kissing. "Fuck," she mutters as she looks down, "I'm sorry."

"No, I just got here," Johnny says.

It's what she'll want to hear. She looks into his eyes, a little half-smile on her face.

"Good," she says, "That makes me feel better."

It's what he'll want to hear.

"Remember, wear something you can practice in," Johnny says as KJ returns to the bathroom, "And bring some clothes for supper. Oh, don't forget your deodorant and other shit."

"OK," she says from the bathroom.

The items are already bagged.

The two eat breakfast and KJ dresses for her return to the Long Hall. She wears camo pants and a loose tee, since she'll likely be practicing self-defense. She wears her gloves and one of the pairs of assault boots and puts her sunglasses in her bag, should the meteorologists blow another forecast and the sun come out in full force. She also packs the Mack cap in case they're wrong.

Johnny's still sitting at the little table when KJ enters.

"Listen, angel," he says, "We'll take the blue Jeep today, but there's one other thing before we leave. You'll have to ride in back and it'll be a good idea for you to lay down when we get near Uniontown."

"Yeah," she says. She walks over and kisses his head. "You put up with a lot of shit because of me."

"I wouldn't if you weren't you," he says, "Remember that, angel, you're worth all this and a whole lot more."

She squeezes his shoulders and nuzzles his head.

"I love you, Johnny," she says.

He reaches up and touches her hand.

"I love you too, angel," he says.

From the kitchen doorway, the image is a classic illustration of love and intimacy. It could be a painting from a European fairy tale. The holster and black handgun on KJ's belt date the image to contemporary America.

Johnny opens the passenger-side door of the blue Jeep and KJ climbs in back. She unlocks his door before he can even come around the front.

"I'm gonna bring the seat back," he says, "You sure you want to sit there?"

KJ slides her boots to the place between the front two seats.

"Yeah," she says.

As they drive up the road away from her verdant tranquility, KJ looks at Johnny's head of hair. She noticed that he's letting it grow a little longer than usual. She hopes it's a trend that will continue for a little while.

After ten or so minutes, Johnny pulls over and connects his iPod to the Jeep's stereo.

"I just realized the lack of tunage," he says and she laughs.

The music of *Sonic Syndicate* emerges from the speakers.

"Who installed the sound system?" KJ asks after the first song. "It's, like, fucking awesome back here," she says.

"Jimmy Ford," Johnny says, "He and Austin did most of the work."

"Cool," she says, "How are those guys?"

"Good," Johnny says, "I saw both of 'em last week. You know, Ford helped out with the sound system at Diamond. He learned a lot from working with those guys; the guys who built the system at Diamond, I mean."

Later, as the blue Jeep rolls past the fields south of Bruceton Mills on the Brandonville Pike, there is a pause in both music and conversation. KJ leans forward and looks into the rear-view mirror. She had been deep in thought, but now breaks the relative silence.

"That little stud would have been cool," she says, "But I guess it's a good thing I never got one, you know?"

"Oh yeah," he says, "Angel, you don't need it, it might have been cool but it wouldn't make you more beautiful than you already are, so fuck it."

"Yeah," she says. She looks at him from behind. "Yeah. Thank you, Johnny."

"You've got your wings, angel," he says, "That's all you need."

The journey from Bruceton to Uniontown takes about an hour.

"Angel," Johnny says, "we're getting close to Uniontown."

He hates having to tell her. The sight of KJ rocking to the music in the rear-view mirror, her hair flowing and flying, is a great pleasure to him.

KJ ceases her motion.

"Oh shit!" she says, "Thanks, Johnny."

She lays on a throw pillow that Johnny put in the back seat, and then pulls the sheet she's been sitting on up to her neck. Johnny turns up the air conditioning and turns off the iPod.

"You always think of me," she says.

"I take care of my woman," he says.

"You do," she says, "I'll never forget that."

Johnny drives down Old Braddock Road to the Donnelly Homestead and pulls up to the Long Hall. He is prepared to turn around should there be any sign of police. Fortunately, there is none.

KJ walks around inside the entrance room of the hall. She breathes deep and smiles for a lot longer than two seconds. Johnny leaves her in peace as she wanders the rooms of the hall and makes a full circle back to him. When she does, she hugs and kisses him.

"It's good to be back," KJ says.

There's not just a smile on her face this time, there is one in her eyes.

"As much as I hate telling you this, it may not last," warns Johnny.

She rubs his arm.

"We'll worry about that later," she says.

The two practice unarmed self-defense, mostly just moves and blocks. She still won't strike him, even with pads, and he doesn't have her hit the heavy bag. He'd always taken care not to have her overdo the actual punching, since her hands and arms are far too valuable for that kind of abuse, and the heavy bag has become a thing of the past. He hopes that a sentinel will protect her from close-in combat. As strong and fast as she is, like any woman KJ Campbell will never be a match for any but the more effeminate males.

Gary Murphy is at the mines but he knows Garret will be visiting Anna at the Murphy Home. He trusts them, and she's a woman now. He knows Bill has invited them to have dinner at his place. Bill asked for Gary's blessing, which he gave. He knows that he cannot be there, even if he didn't work overtime. In some way this dinner meeting will involve both pleasure and business. Events are evolving beyond him, as they must.

Anna greets Garret inside the kitchen of the Murphy Home. He's dressed in a lovely green shirt and charcoal slacks. She's wearing a green summer dress; with a white bow in her copious red hair she is the vision of a goddess from the time of Cú Chulainn. By the way the dress is fashioned, he can see the majority of her tattoo, that which her untied hair does not cover. His opinions on tattoos have not changed. This specific one is growing on him, however.

After he removes his shoes Garret touches her hair and kisses her. The motions and act are discrete yet they have great emotional significance. When Anna looks into his eyes, she has no doubt Garret will fight for her and her children. She has no doubt that he would sacrifice his life if it came to that. He wouldn't be there, holding and kissing her if she doubted him.

Anna puts on a kettle of chamomile tea. She knows it's his favorite.

"I have mulberry jam and soda bread," she tells him in the Irish.

“Excellent,” Garret responds, “Thank you, Anna.”

Anna serves him the simple delicacies, which she made herself. She even picked the berries from a patch of early-budding trees not far from Masontown.

As they sip their tea, Garret rubs her hand with his thumb. Between them is a narrow vase that houses a single red rose. Anna cut it for this occasion.

“I do not want you to feel obligated,” he says. His Irish is so good that Anna can’t help feeling pride, since she had a major hand in his progress. “There are many ways that you can help our race,” he says.

She smiles and sips her tea. If he really, truly cared about her, he’d say these exact words, and he has. She turns her wrist so that she can rub his hand with her thumb.

With practice over, KJ and Johnny cool down in the entrance room. Their change of clothes and other items sit on the little wooden table against the far wall. Johnny tries to peek in her bag, but she stops him. He grabs her around the waist and swings her around, both of them giggling and laughing. When he lets go, she gives him a hungry look and sprints from his grasp when he makes for her. He doesn’t catch her until she walks up to him and they kiss. She reaches under his shirt. Their eyes meet as she feels his chest. He does not stop her when she lifts his shirt a little. He grabs both sides and pulls it off.

There is a scar that runs from near his left shoulder to just below his right breast.

KJ puts her open hand on the middle of this upper chest, across the scar. She looks into his eyes. The levity is gone and her face shows a little of the pain she feels.

“The rapist had a knife,” Johnny says, “And, he knew how to use it.”

She puts her head against his chest and squeezes him. He kisses her head.

“How much blood will you give for us?” she whispers.

“All that you need,” he says.

He feels her squeeze tighter.

Anna and Garret depart early for the Donnelly Homestead. They’ll stop at a chain department store so that Anna can buy a swimsuit for KJ. She’ll need it sooner than she probably thinks. There’s not enough time to wait for the three that Anna ordered, although KJ will still be learning when those suits arrive. For now a blue one-piece will do just fine. They have black, but Anna chooses a light blue one. She also makes sure it’s just the right size.

Megan Donnelly, dressed in an elegant yet modest white dress, answers the door at 7PM. Before her is John Ashley Bowen, most handsome in his black tie, black long-sleeve shirt and gray pants. Beside him is the gorgeous KJ Campbell. Her green dress fits her perfectly, and the black blazer she wears atop the dress is a typically interesting choice. Megan greets the handsome couple and compliments their beauty as Anna and Garret make their approach from the direction of the hall. Garret wears a jacket and tie, while Anna looks spectacular in a white gown with yellow trim. Her hair, like KJ's, is free to flow over her shoulders and down her back and chest.

The three couples will enjoy supper in the large dining room. Bill makes his appearance as they enter. He, too, wears a jacket and tie. He looks to be in excellent health, though he is not free from the weight on his soul. He and KJ embrace and exchange gentle words of appreciation and thankfulness at seeing each other in good health. After they take their seats, Bill pours each guest a glass of wine while Megan completes the final preparations in the kitchen.

Stuffed salmon in puff pastry with Seafood Mornay are the highlights of what is once again an excellent meal. KJ has not had seafood this exquisite since she lived with Erica. She'd give up all the Earth's seafood to not have to do that again.

During the course of supper, the beginning conversation of course focuses on KJ, though the emphasis is on her escape and her newfound freedom rather than the terrifying and abhorrent events that almost claimed her. The remaining mealtime chatter is light and often humorous, with recollections of the past and present that are less grave and more whimsical. Some of the stories are retellings, which is no bother. Everyone can sense that the heavy words will come after the meal and there's no reason to upset a delicious supper with a potentially distressing discourse that is destined to come regardless.

After dessert Bill asks that his young friends remain for tea and a discussion of a different character. Not a word is spoken as Bill takes his seat and Megan, having served tea, takes hers to his right.

"As you know, my name is William Donnelly," he says, "As you may not know, in the year of our Lord 1976 I joined the Provisional Irish Republican Army. I was eighteen at the time. Between 1994 and my departure in 2005, I was an active member of the Continuity Irish Republican Army. I still support Continuity. I'd be back in Continuity if they'd have me. I still refuse to recognize the Belfast Agreement and, therefore, I am still what the United States and the United Kingdom call a terrorist. To be clear, I

shall support the actions of the RIRA, the INLA and the Provos as long as they aid the survival of our race and my Irish people. More than ever, I see the peril of allowing the six occupied counties to remain under British law. By doing so, we are giving our anti-white enemies a beachhead without costing them a drop of blood.”

Bill looks at Johnny and then at Garret.

“I wish nothing but peace and fraternity with our Protestant brothers and I will not support anyone who seeks to remove or oppress them,” he says, “However, we cannot allow anyone to facilitate a non-white invasion of our land, whether he is a Scotsman or Catholic Irishman. We need to rearm. My great-grandchildren are worth more than my life, and I’ll be damned if I hand their Ireland over to a pack of savages. England, I fear, will soon be under the dominion of such creatures. We have no choice but to prepare for this strong possibility.”

Bill looks down in silence.

“All the blood spilled from short-sighted stupidity,” Bill says, “All the good men we lost.” He looks up at his dear friends. “And they lost,” he says, “There weren’t many devils, but there usually aren’t among us whites. Usually there are a few pricks who don’t give a shite for their own skin. Most of the enemies we faced were good men who were blinded and fooled by those who were evil. We responded as we had to, and killed a whole lot of those good men. And now, together, we face a much bigger war, one for our very survival as a race, not just as Catholics or Protestants. We face the might of traitors hell-bent on filling our white nation with non-whites, and forcing us to accept policies that will condemn our children to extinction. I pray our onetime enemies shall understand this, and I pray that my Catholic brothers shall understand as well. This war will be terrible and we will need one another.”

Anna looks at this man before her, who reminds her so much of her own father in build and character. The steam from his tea dances toward his face before disappearing. He looks ominous and fearless. He looks like a warrior.

“I came to the United States with a purpose,” Bill says, “At first I hoped to create a new support structure for Continuity. September 11th ravaged our old support structure, since America allowed the UK to decide who was and who wasn’t a terrorist. But once I began to see the grave threat that faces each and all of us, the scope of my mission and the nature of our little group began to change. My original intent was to build my support network and then present my fears to the CIRA, in hopes of awakening my Irish brothers to the peril that we face from non-white

immigration and invasion. But now I see a bigger fight. Thanks to my dear son Michael, my vision has grown, although it took the death of my son David to galvanize me. That was my price for ignoring the plight of our race. I would have died a million times over in his stead, but we can't go back and put ourselves in front of a knife or a bullet, not once it's fired."

He glances at Megan. She is stoic and smiles at him. He knows the thought of his son David is cutting her soul. He knows this because it's cutting his own.

"I came here to recruit," Bill says, "Specifically, I came to establish a support network: money, weapons, training, and racially-conscious recruits of Irish descent. I established the Celtic Society for the purpose of creating contacts and finding prospective recruits. It was a case of going with what you know. Ostensibly, membership was open to anyone, but a recruit had to be at least half-Irish. He, or she," he looks at Anna, "had to be sympathetic to the Republic as well as conscious of race; at the very least they could not be anti-white. Recruits had to be open to challenging the oppressive anti-racist propaganda, and understand that anti-racist is the code word for anti-white. I believed that I'd have a better chance in the States to find such persons. The way America is headed, I figured that I'd have more luck finding warriors and auxiliaries who would be happy to leave behind this anti-white nation. Even if they would not leave, they could provide invaluable support to a pro-Irish, pro-white Republican movement back home."

Anna looks down for a moment. Had he asked her a year ago, she might have been willing to depart. She realized later that the shadow falls across all nations, not just the Americas.

"Before I tell you what happened," Bill says, "and for you, Mr. Fogarty, before I reveal the answers to some of your questions, I must tell you from where my ideas and experiences came. My son Michael was sixteen when he became race-conscious. He's a prescient lad, always has been. He spent time in France and saw what was happening in Paris. He saw places where whites could no longer live in safety and he witnessed the miscegenation propaganda of the anti-whites that is destroying the beautiful French people. He had been to London and witnessed the results of the anti-white genocide, the requirement that all white nations and only white nations accept massive non-white immigration. That, he said, included Ireland, and Ireland would be forced sooner than later. London and England as a whole were in worse shape than even France. He tried to warn my son David not to go."

Bill looks at Megan. He manages to keep the emotions from his face.

"I was the one who thought Michael was overreacting," Bill says, "I came to believe every word that Michael said on the matter, but at the time I did not think the danger so great and so near. David was rebellious. Michael gave him reasons not to go to London. I don't believe he'd have listened to me either, but I should have tried. I should have told him a white man in London lives in increasing peril, as that once-white nation is submerged in a brown tide. I could have told him about the speech laws, and how anti-whites would imprison him for uttering a word. I did neither of those. I was weak. I knew he'd leave in spite of me, so, instead of trying to convince him, I told him not to worry. He'd be gone for six months. What could happen in six months?"

Bill turns to Megan.

"Forgive me for repeating this," he tells her in the Irish.

She smiles and nods.

"David was the closest member of the family to our dear Sinead," Bill says, "I will never forget the day he left, how our Sinead waved to him in silence. Maybe she knew he'd never come home. My son went out with his friends one night, and there was a fight in the little pub where they were relaxing. There were Pakis in the place, guests of Her Majesty of course." Bill forces a little smile that does not last. He sighs. "They blamed my son for one of them being struck. Witnesses said no such event occurred, and that my son's group was at a different table. The bastards threatened my son and his friends, and at that point David and the lads called it a night and left on foot. But the savages couldn't leave well enough alone. One of the black bastards called a friend of his, and in a country where a white man goes to prison for owning a firearm, that filthy bastard's friend had a pistol. The group piled into his car and...and soon they found David and his friends. Later they told police that David had insulted them with racial slurs. It is beyond depravity and insanity to claim that the use of a word justifies physical violence and brutality, but that is exactly what the filthy creatures did. After the vermin shot my son, David's friends ran away."

Bill stops for a moment and then resumes.

"Then he shot him again," Bill says, "and ended my son's life. He claimed my son had said a word. As David lie bleeding that piece of filth gloated over his body. I won't go further."

Bill clears his throat. The others look upon him in silence. KJ looks down for a few moments and Johnny rubs her back.

"The bastards never should have been in a white country," Bill says, "If they'd have said no immigrants whatsoever, and my son could not go

to London, I'd be in agreement. The six counties wouldn't be facing a tide of non-whites and my son would be alive. There are many who profit from our death and extinction: Companies out for cheap and malleable labor, governments out for easy votes and power, professors who are paid by like-minded anti-whites to teach our children to hate their own kin. They neuter men with the law and destroy any white man who defends himself, his woman, his children and their future. They destroy his ability to support a family by accusing him of being racist. Many men become weak and gutless so that they might enjoy the poison fruit of an existence without struggle and truth. Most women will join them in their weakness, so the strong man faces a life without the love that a man and a woman need. It's not just a mass of non-white immigration that we face. We face the constant promotion of miscegenation between whites and non-whites, the destruction of our strongest men, and the corruption of our women. There is no other word for that than genocide."

Johnny nods openly. All the others are in complete agreement on the inside.

"I was hoping to build a core of strong men and women who would support both the Republican cause in Ireland as well as our race," Bill says, "I did not realize that another man was hoping to recruit a core of race-conscious young men and women. That man also wished to use the Society as a starting-point. I realized what young Garret was up to when I caught the subtle way he'd direct conversations at the bar. I'm sure he read me too. I remember him warning me not to be so open about race. 'Here the Supergrass traitors do it for free.'"

Garret nods. He feels Anna squeeze his hand from under the table.

"It's impossible to see the end of a journey before you've started," Bill says, "It was never a necessity for a man to be Catholic. All whites are together in this war for our survival. Some will be contemptible traitors, to be sure, but those will be found from all stripe and belief. I went with what I knew. I couldn't start a German or Swedish or Russian club. I leave that to our racially aware white brethren. I created a Celtic society with an Irish emphasis. Garret, Cristian, Mason, they were all half or more Irish as was most of the membership. They were my focus. Jesse, too, was of great interest, being half-French and half-Irish. She had a great deal to offer. Even before I founded the Society, I'd mentioned the importance of strong white women who saw themselves as white, as sisters in race to white men. As a beautiful young lady, when Jesse awoke to racial realities she could be an inspiration to both Irishwomen and Frenchwomen, not to mention her white American sisters. Anna and Gary arrived and I couldn't

have been more delighted. I decided the moment had arrived, and I introduced the idea of racial solidarity during our discussions at the little Society pub. Perhaps I'd found friends of Continuity and the Republic, and for our beautiful white race."

Johnny looks at Bill, who glances toward Megan. He says something to her in the Irish. She smiles and responds. Bill looks more at peace than during the entire conversation.

"Then a young man came, who was neither Irish, nor Catholic for that matter," Bill says. "This man had been to war. Any fool can pull a trigger, but this man had gone to war for his race. He risked everything and gave years of his life in the military, so that he could fight when his race needed him, and so that he might train others to fight. He'd fought and killed a predator who stole the innocence from a teenage girl, one of the few who hadn't given away her innocence or her body, in spite of the vile urgings of the entertainment and media industries. That predator had raped the man's cousin, who was a virgin at the time. The man did not call on the judiciary, the men in dresses as he called them. He knew they were another anti-white lot that would use the event for their own purposes. He was already a man at seventeen and though he could not obtain a weapon that would spare him the loss of his own blood, he fought and he killed the beast."

KJ looks into Johnny's eyes. Her emotions show on her face, though herculean efforts keep her from weeping. She rubs his shoulder and then lays her head against it. Anna, her mouth open, looks at Johnny. Garret, whose face betrays no emotion though he desires to shake Johnny's hand, does the same.

"You did that?" Anna asks, "Is that how you got your scar?" She looks at KJ, then back at Johnny. "Does she know?" Anna asks, "I'm so sorry! I didn't think."

"Yeah," Johnny says, "She knows. And yes, that's how I got it. One of us wasn't going to walk away. Ever."

"This man is no less than a hero to me," Bill says, "He personifies the white man's warrior spirit. I have never met a man or a woman who has more love for his race or his brothers and sisters. I have only seen its equal, three times."

Bill looks into each of their faces.

"Those who will rise in defense of their white children, and the children of their brothers and sisters in race, will not come from only one of our peoples," Bill says, "The warriors shall come from many. You are the proof, as is Cristian with his lovely white Romanian ancestry, and Jesse

with the elegance of white France, and Mason with his ancestral ties to the land of Shakespeare and Faraday. Another extraordinary young man convinced me that America shall be the first battlefield in the war against our genocide. America is the child of Mother Europe, and as such both of us owe our love to one another. The American influence is potent in the motherlands, and it is often carried to extremes. As America becomes anti-white, the genocide against our race accelerates in Europe. As American companies and politicians support open borders and non-white immigration for America, Europe opens its borders to Asians and Africans. Europe cannot resist the power of an anti-white America. South Africa and Serbia should be clear examples of what anti-white America will do to a white nation that strays. Anyone seen as pro-white will face this nation's wrath, so long as it remains anti-white. No one can resist American might. The battle must begin here."

Bill, whose gaze roamed from face to face, stops and stares into Garret's eyes.

"You were right, my lad," Bill says, "You came to recruit for a war that must begin in your homeland. I pray my fellow countrymen will see the truth. I pray that they will see the genocide we all face, as white men, and as white women. I shall not remain here forever. I have my own war." Bill looks at Garret again. "As long as I remain and after I depart, I pledge my eternal support for you and your warriors, Mr. Fogarty. I have hopes that you shall triumph, and faith in our people and our race and in God Almighty. I fear the price will be great and though none of us may see the victory I believe we shall win. The unborn who depend upon us are reason enough to stand."

Megan takes his hand beneath the table. She puts her fingers between his.

"Good people who would have lived long lives and had beautiful families will fight and die so that others might have those things," he says, "It was that way for us during the Troubles, and it is the same for all whites now."

Bill has spoken his peace, and the tea cups are empty. Megan and Bill accompany their beloved young sons and daughters in race to the rear exit of the Donnelly Home. Before he bids them adieu for the evening, Bill offers a final word.

"My dearest friends," he says, "You are going to face a grave decision soon, and your response will determine how you will live the rest of your lives. Think of the survival of those like you, your racial kin, their children and yours, and what the future means to you even if the price is so

great you shall not be there to inherit it. Think of how you will help those white children to be born, and whether you shall fight for them. If that is your decision then do so. You are not a traitor if you do not take up arms. We are all at war, whether we admit it or not, though there are other ways to combat this genocide against us. There are several methods of war against those who betray our flesh and blood. You must decide, and when you do, remember that your decision is final. Others will depend on you with their lives. Your children will depend on you. All white children, newly born and yet unborn, depend upon you. I am sorry we left the world as it is, but we have no time to lament. Whether you choose to fight with your voices and keyboards, or with a gun, white children will need you to stand up for them.”

Bill waits for a moment. No one leaves. He looks at each face.

“And please,” he says, “Anna, Garret, KJ,” he hesitates when he looks at Johnny. “Johnny, please, if you can, come home.”

The four youths linger in the parking spaces in front of the Long Hall. It’s not the clear, starry night they would have preferred, although Lyra pokes through a hole in the gray stratocumulus rolls. The temperature will rise in the morning and tomorrow promises a return to the heat of a typical Pennsylvania summer. Garret is holding Anna’s right hand as they stand beside his Jeep, not yet ready to call it a night. KJ, her back toward Johnny Bowen, holds on to his arms which envelope her from behind. Anna doesn’t feel right speaking but there are a few unturned stones that she cannot leave for another day.

“Johnny,” Anna says after turning toward him, “I’m sorry I brought up your scar without asking you first.”

“It’s OK, Anna,” he says, “Look at it this way. A man shouldn’t keep secrets from his woman, and she shouldn’t keep them from him. If I hadn’t mentioned it before that was a good time to tell her, huh, angel?” He kisses KJ’s head.

She breathes deep and sighs twice, searching for words, then says a simple “Thank you, Johnny,” and leaves it at that.

“John,” Garret says, “My parents have been planning a vacation and it looks like they’re finally going to do it. I told them I wouldn’t mind house-sitting while they’re gone.”

“Yeah?” says Johnny, who is interested only because he knows Garret isn’t just making conversation.

“They have an in-ground pool,” Garret says, “Three feet to around nine feet deep, and it’s covered.”

Johnny’s interest rises.

"When do they leave?" Johnny asks.

"Friday," Garret says, and he shows a slight smile.

KJ is thinking about something else, deep in her mind, and whatever it is she holds on tight to her Johnny. He kisses her head again.

"You hear that, angel?" Johnny asks.

"Ah...what?" she asks.

"We're goin' swimming on Saturday," he says.

"Yeah?" she says, "You're going to teach me?"

"Yep," he says and nuzzles her hair, "I sure as hell am."

Before the two couples part ways, Anna gives KJ the blue swimsuit.

"You'll need this soon," she says, and KJ hugs her.

