

Look at me, isolated and afraid, trembling; trapped in my own ignominy. I look around very hesitantly at the abyss that engulfs me, hardly able to witness anything of importance or interest. I'm lost amongst silhouette frames of unknown beasts that once had some form of comfort; they had once some form of true freedom. Like any other mortal here, I do have a story to tell though. However, just like every other creature here, my story is no saga of great deeds or legend of vile, it's only a tale of simple fate realized. My chronicle is the same as the shadowed brute in the corner cowering, the same as the darkened image of the beast attempting to stand proudly and strong, and the same as the small form that searches for a familiar presence they may be doomed to never again see. We all share the same path of moments; instances. Conception, celebrations, sorrows, promises, events of grandeur, and trials of austerity; we all share. We share every type, even up until that instant fate became realized. We now are all locked down, imprisoned in this vastness of poised subsistence.

The night wind had a disturbing chill about it, and the ground was harsh from the winter's frost. I tried to stay warm, snuggled in my blanket, waiting for the call. Staring at passing shadows of night-beasts, I sat patiently, waiting for that fateful call; that damn call that would give me directions on what to do, from Hector. In the leather, passenger seat of a 75' deep blue Mustang Convertible, with the top up, I sat rubbing my hands together viciously, for warmth. I attempted to stay awake, I truly did. I did not want to be found, the next morning, frozen to the bucket seat; that would be embarrassing.

After ages of fighting the winter's cruel joke, I shook with the buzzing of my cell phone. Startled, I stumbled through my bag to reach it, "Yea, que pasa?"

"Estas preparado, mi amigo?" a whisper responded over the line. I assured the voice that I was. Then, at long last, my directions began to be conveyed. At first they came too quickly and I was lost. After they were all given I requested the teller to repeat the most important urgencies. They were, and I was ready.

"Estoy muy preparado conmigo." I shouted back through the receiver. The light on the phone dimmed, then, flickered out and I heard the whispers no more; I hung up too. Putting the phone back in the bag, I straightened myself out, opened the glove department, grabbed its contents, and opened the door.

It was a long walk to the docks and the pistol was cold within my grips. Once near the shore, hidden in the brush behind a fence, I could see the packages being handed off from a cloaked figure to my cousin, Pedro, and vice versa. The deal seemed to be going smoothly. Pedro, counted his new wealth, and smiled childishly. I chuckled as I heard him humming "O' Happy day" from the fence. I looked back at the cloaked figure; he was looking over his contents as well, but did not seem as pleased. There were some murmurs and some agitation from both parties. I noticed from my peripheral, two more cloaked figures stepping from a stretched vehicle parked a couple of feet away. From behind Pedro, I saw his hermanos jumping from there black Cadillac, pistols gripped and pointing. I heard a scream and then thunder.

Thunder from the pistols resonated throughout the docks, and Pedro fell to the ground. His hermanos followed him to the dirt, returning the favor. The cloaked figure dropped, along with his goons. I stood there frightened, witnessing it all.

As the last of the bodies landed, I jumped the fence, a single bound, and ran to my cousin's side. As I approached, I could hear the blood escaping his body. I smelt the fire from his pistol. I reached down to hold his head. In my family, I was always the quiet one, the shy kid. I looked down at Pedro—the family's black sheep—still, shy and unable to truly speak. He tried to murmur something, through his false and hopeless grin, but I heard only gasps. His head fell back to the dirt and his eyes closed, never to open again. I laid his head back to the dirt.

A grunt and scrapping sound pierced my eardrum. I heard something scuffling near me; it was the cloaked figure, the guy who took the package from my dead cousin. He was trying to stand, but his wounds burdened him more than he realized. I stood slowly, not knowing what to do. I heard the screeches of tires in the background, accompanied by thundering lights; blue and red. I paced towards the cloaked figure and frowned. Anger and sadness mixed, unsuccessfully, and boiled to my temples. I was no longer in control of my actions. The pistol was raised, steadied itself on the beast's head, shook a second or two, and then, three bolts of thunder raced from its dark cavern and leveled the cloaked figure, face down in disgust.

I leaned over to pick up the package that was pinned beneath the cloaked figure. The white bag had been damaged, and its contents began to swirl within the wind. I tried to save the last of the bag's cargo, but it spilled and rushed into the world. I jumped back, coughing. I returned to my cousin's side taking up the package that he had pinned down, and it too was damaged. The dull green mixed unwell with the vibrant red that flowed. However, I picked it up anyways; it was still valuable to Hector. I began to return to my post, by the fence, when I heard the pistol-thunder once more. There was a stab of intensity that ripped through my calf.

I turned quickly, and saw one of the cloaked figure's goons trying to stand. His arms were weak, but attempted to straighten out towards me. My pistol raised parallel with the goon's head, and unleashed its fury; three times, if not four. Something was wrong though. Before my pistol's anger was whirled outwards and manifested itself into a flash of thunder, I heard the goon's pistol do the same. I did not see where the thunder went, but I did feel pain in my chest. Buried deep, I felt something explode that made me hard of breathing. The world around me began to blacken, mist covered my face, and I fell to the ground in a shout of triumph muffled.

Moments later, I felt the presence of panic-forms scurrying about me in frantic. Their speech seemed distant and unfamiliar, so I became afraid. I could see nothing but the dimness of my eyelids tightened. Then, there was an intense pain that ripped through my frigid body. My entirety tensed, ached, and then, relaxed. Just as it had arrived, the pain, it was gone. The panic-forms grew more frantic. The intense pain returned, and my body reacted in the same manner as before. This time when the pain separated, I felt my whole body throbbing; trying to snap itself from something, maybe the darkness it felt.

I heard screeches of terror, grunted demands, howling of agony, and bellows of command; strange, all very strange sounds and distant. The pain returned and left. Then it returned and left again and again. One more time the intense current stripped my body and dispersed. I began to feel tears roll over my cheeks. It was awkward though, they

seemed to be foreign to my skin; not my tears that moistened my cheeks, someone else's. Then, there was a flash of hazing glow, a ripping sound, and there was no longer any pain or sound, no emotion or breath. I only felt loosened from my self, feathery light, and whole heartedly unprepared.

That is what brings me to this forgotten time and horrid place. That is how I landed a position in purgatory, this dark limbo of eternity. I am trapped in suspended animation until judgment should be poured upon my pained and restless soul. At this very instant, I care not for the results of my judgment, I am only tired of nothingness. I long for something, no matter the pain or joy. I only crave, desire...pray for life again. This form of being is not existing; its death that I am able to feel and ponder. It might be a slight more bearable if I was able to reminisce my former moments of true existence, but only the instant my fate was realized, I can summon up. Like the others, I long for resolution; the end. I craze myself for it.