

To Hunger, to Devour, to Kill

“Next up, we saw billionaire Adams Killian at the Priton awards with actress Laura Anderson, only two days after being seen with twin athletes....”

The small screens near the train’s ceiling ramble on about a person’s life who’s become known that he’s become more rumor than human. How does it feel to be treated like a plaything for the media, always there to entertain, always there to distract others?

“In related news, Killian’s company faced multiple protests because of its suspected human rights abuse in Barlow country. The company has come on record....”

I look at my hands; they seem pale. I grit my teeth and take a deep breath. There’s no time to dawdle. I need to think about what I say.

“We are now arriving at New Attem.”

I forgot that the railroads leading to the major cities now use some new engines. It allows for almost immediate travel. A trade deal between the Eastern Union and the United Northern Corps included an exchange in technology; this included the new train engine.

“Before exiting the train, please ensure you have collected all your belongings.”

I trudge down the steps; I take a deeper breath, ball my hands into fists, and start scanning the station.

“Miles?” A well-dressed man holding a sign is waiting near the exit of the train station. “This way, please.”

I follow the man through the station and pass the food court. “Can I get something?”

“I’m afraid we’re short on time.”

We arrived in front of a gate sometime later after a silent car ride.

“He’s waiting for you.”

The gate slides open, and the manor standing before me blocks the sun, casting an enormous shadow that looms over me; I should have eaten breakfast. The door was unlocked when I knocked. With a shallow breath, I take a step inside.

“Civil rights leader Miles Moore gave a dramatic anti-corp speech at the Santa Lome in Public Square last night touching the hearts....”

The tv fills the awkward void that manifested the minute I entered the room. However, it doesn’t solve what’s in front of me.

“Miles. You actually came.”

“Adam. it’s been a while.”

“Why are you doing this? We used to be friends.” Adam’s voice was coarse, weathered. He looked tired and beaten from perhaps one of the worst weeks of his life. “Why didn’t you just leave it alone! I finally found success...after all the struggle... suffering... AND YOU HAVE TO BRING IT ALL CRASHING DOWN!”

“YOU DIDN’T HAVE TO DO IT THE WAY YOU DID!”

“Back in Russobo we had nothing; we were just two kids living in a dumpster of a city; we weren’t considered people.”

“Yeah, and we escaped...and... we said we’d free them.”

“And how were we supposed to do that, with your ****ing peace signs and soapboxes.”

“IT WAS BETTER THAN WHAT YOU DID!”

We were destitute, two children born in Russobo, a hellhole where the corps dumped undesirables and picked up their workers. Nobody batted an eye. To the Suits, it was a necessary evil to keep control. We escaped and tried to bring National attention to the situation, but the corps said otherwise.

“Naz Tech threatened to put me out of business. To keep up, I needed to.”

“NO! You didn’t need to, you were fine Adam. Naz Tech was just a competitor; you didn’t need to resort to this bull****.”

“No, I-I-I needed t-“

“DON’T EVEN; you took the deal to shut up, and even then, I still forgave you because I knew it was hard, but now you’re just doing what they’re doing; I didn’t think it was possible to be this cold until you casually worked thousands to death.”

Adam said nothing; he sat in silence, seemingly unable to speak. Adam and I faced a choice, accept a corporate bribe to stay silent or keep pushing and risk being silenced by force. Adam decided, and in a few months, I had to disappear. Adam and I stayed in touch for a while;

he chose to fight fire with fire and build his own corporation, beating these dimwitted suits at their own game without bloodshed. Meanwhile, I had to linger in the shadows and raise an army of the strong through pathos, punishment, or payment. Yesterday was the first time I was seen publicly in 7 years. I couldn't leave Adam Killian out of the spotlight; it would be hypocritical of me.

"I ...I just wanted to have a chance at life," Adam Killian rose from his seat and turned around.

There was a slight hesitation, his gaze softened, but finally, Adam said.

"I'm sorry, mi--"

My ears ring as Adams slumps to the ground, the TV lays shatters, covered in blood.

"You made quite a mess, Mr. Moore."

I fell to the ground face to face with Adam. I tried to yell but nothing left my mouth. I wish we died there, in Russobo, at least we would still be together.

The well dressed man looks over the scene and slowly reaches for his phone.

"Hello, my boss was shot by a trespasser...Saints Hill district, A23." A ringing soon follows. This time the well dressed man was quick to move. "I'm finished here, there were no complications." The well dressed man sighs with relief breaking and steps outside. The Sun is setting as sirens begin to echo throughout the neighborhood.