

Witness Protection

A novel by Cory Parella

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Chapter 1

The entrance to Jesus' presence is nothing short of breathtaking, and most people weep initially in His presence. Larry had believed Jesus rose from the dead during a flight aboard a private plane, spending time with Ruth Carter, in 1979. After he was shot by an assassin and became confined to a wheelchair, he spent the rest of his days as the most prolific virtual sex producer in the world, his behaviors extending to the sexual abuse of family members outside of marriage. He taught his sons the trade, watched his daughter publish a book describing her experiences in a language intended for a primarily 1980s Christian readership, resulting in a brief celebrity status of her own as the Christian daughter of a global porn icon.

A film entitled *The People Versus Larry Flynt* told his story to global movie goers in 1994, alienating the very audience it was intended for, as performer Courtney Love all-too-proudly declared *Penthouse Magazine* become "Porn Again", a play on words intended to wound Christian media figures Jerry Falwell and would-be convicted banking swindler Charles Keating. The film was rated-R, therefore few Christians saw it; the Believers whose hearts were able to render God's grace did not see it because the ones that were incapable of God's grace intimidated them not to.

Since most Christians were ignorant of how the rating system established in 1968 by the Motion Picture Association of America worked, the message was lost to an audience who really needed to hear it.

“Hi,” Jesus said, His presence all-consuming, all Creation in the background behind Him. The people who reside in heaven were visible over His shoulder.

Most movies Larry had ever seen about heaven were made by people who didn’t have any idea about what heaven really looked like, and instead of creating sets that could reflect descriptions found in the Bible, they just flooded their sets with fog and made their lenses misty. The reality couldn’t be more the opposite. Larry’s senses were incredibly clear, and heaven’s colors made the brightest colors on Earth look pathetically dim by comparison. Instead of having to shield his eyes, he was instantly capable of taking it that much more through his eyes and ears and nose and...he could walk again!

“Is this where you send me to hell?” Larry asked, fearing he would be rejected. He fell at Jesus’ feet, weeping. (Everyone did that upon arrival. It was just a natural reaction to His glory.)

“You know me,” Jesus said firmly, eluding in a flash to the moment aboard a private jet when Larry did profess with his mouth and believe with his heart that Jesus is still alive. Though humankind had placed its own customs on top of what is stated in Romans 10:9 to get to heaven, this was the requirement. Larry had done this. Larry’s citizenship in heaven was irrevocable

despite the lifelong tantrum he threw due to the loss of the use of his legs for the remainder of his life.

“Yes,” Larry answered.

“Walk with me,” Jesus said.

Larry could walk with Jesus. For years he had heard, with anger in his heart, about how he would someday walk with Jesus in the Kingdom...

He was as amused at the use of his legs as he is to be in heaven. As they walked, Jesus took him down a Path of Righteousness. There was a fork in it.

Jesus said, “You were right about here when your business expanded.”

Larry looked at the other way and asked about it with his eyes. “What was down there?”

“Your Calling. You blamed me for losing the use of your legs and demanded I heal you. When I didn’t, you spent every breath denying me,” Jesus said, with a smirk.

The Lord knew Larry’s heart and there was no lying here; no facades, no hiding behind one’s body language or facial expressions or earthly wealth.

“I know sorry doesn’t cut it here.”

“We’re past that now. I want you to intercede in prayer for the young man who now has been given this Calling. His name is Willy Posta. He is an evangelist, like you. His testimony will heal all the hurt caused by you.”

With the motion of his hand, Jesus gives the command to a few Legions of His Angels to attend to the affairs of Willy Posta. Larry watches as they fly into motion on Earth, assigned to key moments in his life. “You can see where the Enemy is going to strike. My angels can see you. On my orders, you watch him and guide him away from danger and onto the Path I set him on.”

“I’m sorry I let you down, Lord,” Larry said. Jesus was walking toward another man who looked familiar, who seemed to be in on this job as well, guiding Willy from heaven. Larry’s eyes were improved and he was able to identify the man in the distance whom Jesus was giving orders to.

Sam Kinison.

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Chapter 2

The dawn of the 21st century did not have flying cars, though it did have airplanes. It did not have cures for many of the diseases suffered by those a century before, but it did have preventive care to avoid many of those diseases. It did not see the return of Jesus Christ yet, but those who put their faith in him did await his return.

On the beaches of Santa Monica, churches baptized people

according to the traditions of the early Church. The area of Los Angeles had grown from being a single adobe hut in 1863 to a population of over 4 million, mostly due to the impact of an industry born of Thomas Edison's company's invention, the movie camera and projector. (Edison himself did not invent this, but one of the conditions of his staff was that all their inventions were credited to him.)

Alongside those churches were the manufacturers of the majority of the world's adult movies, produced and distributed out of Chatsworth, Sherman Oaks, Encino, and Woodland Hills, California. It had been dubbed "Porn Valley" by the locals. By 2005, they would all go bankrupt, not by any gesture by the volatile voices in the Church, but by judicial rulings guaranteeing the freedom to fileshare.

The Church's attempts to reach out to this industry had been countered by its own legalism. Meanwhile, every performer was faced with illegal working conditions including drugs, alcohol, and exposure to every sexually transmitted disease and virus known to man.

Like motorcycles had the reputation by insurance providers that riders had a 100% possibility of having an accident, performers in the adult movie industry also had such a working condition: everyone contracts something.

The precautions taken by the industry were insufficient. Soon, the public's reaction went from being apathetic to outrage when the Web Cam enabled anyone to engage in sex, without any of the quasi-movie production facilities that most producers used

since the 1960s.

The launch of the internet took the product delivery method from film reels and cassette tapes and edited versions on closed circuit TV and pay-per-view broadcasting to anyone with internet access, forcing the Supreme Court to reevaluate Potter Stewart's assessment in 1964.

By the summer of 2001, federal prosecutors were prepared to wipe out pornographers.

After 9/11, the Bush Administration ordered prosecutors to focus only on the war on terrorism.

As a result, virtual sex became the #1 U.S. Export.

By 2015, the commercial porn industry ceased to exist. Technology and legal remedy would cause it to join slavery and pass into history. God would send a prophet who would define it, and show even those who made it His way to make films, allowing them to choose between good and evil.

A vaccine for HIV would be found by August 2014 and distributed globally by January 2015. HIV.iii would claim a portion of the global population before a a vaccine could be found and distributed within a few months -- with a catch. Anyone infected, which seemed to include 96% of humanity, would exchange immediate vaccination for 40% of their overall lifespan.

This cut the average life expectancy by one-third and forced the U.S. Government to reduce the age of legal adult to 15. Alcohol

could be consumed at 13, and driving permitted at 14. Stricter laws that once governed such issues as drunk driving were implemented, resulting in beverage suppliers being charged with manslaughter. As risks outweighed the cost of doing business, breweries turned to soft drinks and other products overnight.

Sterilization and fear of infection became the new industry powers.

Biochemistry became the next big industry. The consumption once indulged by humanity was no longer safe. By 2080, the oldest living person was 59.

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Chapter 2

The Miller Test

January 9, 2015

The Supreme Court assembled in person for its most important case since 2006.

The federal government had successfully built a case that could enforce workplace safety regulations in the adult movie industry, and effectively end it.

Performer testimonies had been corroborated by a key witness who edited them, one who witnessed violations that would put most, if not all pornographers out of business and possibly in prison.

One problem remained: the definition of “obscenity”, known as “the Miller test”, had become too vague for either side - those for the freedom to make and consume pornography, and those who opposed it, to use as a way for juries to decide the liability of the accused.

Communication had gone global since the Miller test was written. The test enabled pornographers to avoid liability when defense attorneys would prove that enough members of the community were consuming the product such that no fair jury could be assembled.

Meanwhile, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) had reported hundreds of thousands of violations by porn makers, resulting in its performers being at 100% risk of a life-limiting or life-threatening disease. With the emergence of amateur video tools, such as the webcam, the difference between amateur and commercial content was too vague to put on trial without violating the Fourth-Amendment.

Since Judge Potter Stewart failed to define “obscenity” in legal terms in 1964, citing the subjective characteristics of content, the Miller test became the central means of communicating what was acceptable and what was not.

Now, the code by which pornographers were prosecuted had fallen apart considering the advancement of technology. In this case, prosecutors were not indicting anyone until this matter was cleared up. The fact is photography did not create lust and there was no distinct connection.

Did every expression of imagery, sexual or not, amateur or not, printed, recorded as sound, paper print or digitally, qualify as a First-Amendment protected expression of free will? Or would select types of sexual content get added to the Exception Clauses of the First Amendment?

And, if they did, who would define what those were? Religious leaders? Atheists? Pornographers, given the chance to self-legislate their own industry?

The conference room was being cleaned up by staff. “What happened in here?” Justice Kevin Arnon asked.

The FBI Agent chaperoning the cleaning staff answered the Judge, “Birthday party for Judge Diggs.” Kevin nodded and, to the agent’s surprised, helped the cleaning staff wipe off the table and chairs.

A housekeeper humbly insisted to wipe down the Judge’s chair. “No, you get that one, I can clean my own chair,” he said, smiling at her.

The housekeeper smiled wide and wiped down the remaining chairs with the dexterity of a U.S. Marine.

Kevin sat down, put his briefcase next to his chair and waited. He could not see the four Angels standing at four places in the room.

One by one, the justices walked down the corridor leading to this room, their steps making a noise that was being closely

watched by Heaven.

As each entered the room, they all asked, “Judge Diggs here yet?”

Those who had arrived answered no, and the cleaning staff left.

Finally, the sound of a squeaky oxygen cart rolling down the hall got closer and closer. Judge Jeff Diggs, who had less than a month to live, made his way in, flanked by an FBI bodyguard.

“Good morning, everyone,” he said, pulling his tank close enough to him to get the large door closed behind him. The FBI Agents confirmed into their wrist radios that their assignments were safe and left the Justices alone to work.

“Thanks for the party...Kevin, we saved you some cake,” he said, carrying the attention of the other Justices.

“I’m not dead yet. I love this case. Potter Stewart didn’t do what he was asked to do, so it’s up to us. The Miller test needs to be revised.”

Abby Guthrie, the first Latina to be appointed to the Supreme Court, asked, “Why?” with the tone of an objection.

“We need to define obscenity through our legislature and stop the witch hunts. The Miller test is too vague.”

Justice Bob Koin, who attended law school with Jeff, objected. “I disagree.”

“So do I,” Abby said.

Jeff shouted toward the door, “Get my wife on Web Cam.”

The door opened and his FBI escort, acknowledged him, relayed the command and stood at attention.

Jeff stood up and removed his shirt. “If I wasn’t given a month to live, I’d go on a diet.”

This gained the attention of the room, the Angels looking on with no discernable expressions.

Jeff pulled out his phone and pressed a button to connect to his wife on webcam. “Hi, honey, thanks for doing this. My wife, everyone.” The other Justices respectfully acknowledge Mrs. Diggs.

“I am now recording this conversation. Honey, I love you, and you’re the love of my love. We have had eight children together, and 22 grand children. And though time has made us wrinkled and gray, I still think you’re the sexiest woman alive. I want to die in the act of having sex with you.”

“You got it, baby,” Mrs. Diggs replies, with a giggle. “Everything except the dead-part. That’s kinda weird.”

“I know, just making a point. Talk to you soon. Love you, bye.” Jeff hung up and played the footage back for his colleagues to see. He paused it after a few seconds. “Now, judge me.”

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Chapter 3

January 14, 2015

Fox News Reports

Cynthia Fernandez, Fox News
Las Vegas, Nevada

“I am standing on the very spot where the entrance to the adult movie industry’s annual trade show once stood, but as you can see, it’s not happening this year. Here’s what we know. Federal prosecutors who were assigned to build cases against adult entertainment companies and the companies in business with them, have stated that they have successfully done so, but are not willing to move forward until the means by which the accused may be found liable, known as the Miller test, is reevaluated. The state and federal prosecutors who I have spoken with have all said they are done spending the tax payers’ money on trials that result in acquittals or small fines, and as one district attorney said quote, ‘get more free advertising out of trials than accountability,’ end quote.

From the newsroom, anchor Bob Thomas replied, “Now, Cynthia, for our viewers who may not have an understanding of what the Miller test is, can you explain that it for them?”

“Yes. The Miller test is the basis of which anyone accused of obscenity charges is tried by judge or jury --”

Before Cynthia could continue, she was interrupted by Bob who told her the network had put the information on the screen, “Oh -- Cynthia, our guys in the newsroom have put it up for our viewers to see, and it has been posted on our web site...”

As the global news media delivered the story on the extreme measures that the American government was taking to address its most potent explosive, the CIA was busy monitoring who was accepting their invitations to an assembly of leadership not gathered to a major capitol city since the Council of Nicea in 325. It was not an international issue, yet the United Nations was being issued updates on its status.

Employing the same model as the electoral college, and using a customized internet site, every religious leader and adult entertainment company owner registered with the Internal Revenue Service was asked to register for the biggest and most important meeting of the minds...maybe ever.

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Chapter 4

Tim and Amy were associates at the public relations firm hired by The Office of The Secretary of the Interior, given a lengthy list of names and placed in charge of organizing this massive gathering of international leaders, with respect to all security protocols one could imagine. The task was daunting, even for the CIA, hence the contracting of the job to a private firm.

Tim and Amy were both married, each with kids in grade school

and older. Tim was in his mid 40's, a Caucasian man with a receding hairline. Amy was obese, gaining ten pounds for every year she had been married. She wore too much make up, and gossiped enough to keep her career from moving forward. She was a very cruel young woman, her high school cheerleader self-image still in the back of her mind when she saw her reflection. When her marriage almost ended, she found Christ, when entering a church for "free" counseling. She had first attended the church believing she could get a pastor to tell her husband that she was right, her way or else. She left realizing she was living in disobedience to God, and her husband was being tag-teamed by some Christian coworkers he went to ballgames with.

The met at a trade fair and then landed a government contract that seemed to be the answer to their prayers.

They were interviewed by the Secret Service and then issued temporary government clearances. Their offices were not bugged...for now. They started with an enormous email campaign. Not every person on their list was accounted for, and many had emails that upon using a verification shareware software, they learned even the IRS didn't have the most up to date information on these people.

Data verification was exhausting, similar to conducting census work, but this was different. There were ramifications in international laws at stake. There were wars on the line, especially here on U.S. soil. The media had already made a public panic out of the decision to suspend clauses in the First Amendment.

It was followed up with the highest TV ratings in U.S. history as a standard once used, referred to as The Hayes Code, was put back into effect. As one critic on ABC News put it, “Television was safe to watch again...for now.”

“They get mileage out of being against something,” Tim said as Amy talked about the protests by Christian groups against the latest Di Vinci Code TV series. The films had been successful, and TV franchises were now on the air.

Tim and Amy were both Christians. Both knew and loved Jesus. Both were very candid about their faith, and had matured to a point of not getting offended when those around them didn’t agree.

Amy watched the video on a small DVD player that the Secret Service had left with them, marked Classified. It was a simple film, shot on 16mm, about a man whose ability to perform miracles made him the unwilling subject of unwanted fame. He had political aspirations, but never wanted to campaign on a gift he had no control over. Instead of being able to pursue his dream his way, he found himself being used and manipulated by the world around him. It was a low-budget drama with only a few actors, well edited with music licensed by a group friendly with the producer.

As Amy watched, she began to cry happy tears. Tim didn’t see the phone light blinking, as he stopped his rhetorical question in mid sentence, “Is there anything Pat Robertson isn’t offended at?” He was typing the data into the email program

when he heard a still, soft, Voice of Authority speak to him.

Angels were in the room with them as they worked, and as Willy Posta's film played, both of these born again Believers clearly heard the Voice of the Lord speak to them about their role in this event.

They both saw HIViii ripping through the country, faster than expected, and that the State of Virginia was about to be quarantined.

The Spirit spoke to Tim, "The phone. Pat Robertson is dying. He won't make the trip."

Tim felt an urgency to pick up the phone bearing the blinking light, as if picking up the phone late in the ringer cycle would somehow reduce the tension. He soon heard the news officially from Robertson's rattled public relations assistant on the other end.

A man who spent a career cursing secular news persons of being racist, a man who spent his career making Christianity synonymous with bigotry, and a man whose greed was only eclipsed by his ego; a man who cursed homosexuals for a lifestyle that he claimed resulted in the AIDS epidemic, the man who blamed any financial competitor of the Christian Broadcasting Network as being the seed of Satan, was now being declared terminally ill by his personal physicians, given just hours to live. The cause of death: symptoms related to HIViii. Somehow, somewhere, he came into salivary contact with the virus and did not receive the immunization in time.

The headlines would read across a global digital news community: Pat Robertson dead of AIDS.

Tim and Amy had developed a sense of humor about the flaws of televangelists. One had to. Like military doctors forcing each other to find humor amidst war hospitals, they worked in an industry whereby the client was always a self-centered, self-promoting prophet whose take on Scripture was rarely accurate.

Years before, they had each been deeply wounded by cult figures, and after meeting at a conference, frustrated by things they saw at a Benny Hinn promotion, they decided to make money off the egos of those who wanted to be celebrity evangelists.

The fakes were everywhere, and the more extreme the fake, the bigger the budget of the campaign. The CIA agent who hired them originally considered investigating their firm, but after meeting them, realized, these people were trying to serve God despite the greed for money and power fueling the careers of those who hired them.

As Amy made her way through the list of names and contact information provided by the IRS, she got an urgent email from the U.S. Marshals office.

GET OUT. Go to the park at...

She printed the screen and alerted Tim, who was still on the phone, talking to Robertson's aide.

“We got to go.”

At the park, Tim and Amy were met by an Agent of the CIA who politely sat them down with coffee, in a scene straight out of *The Firm*.

The contact list was hacked. Eastern European investors who had made money in human trafficking, gay and child porn had hacked their system and copies all contacts from the adult entertainment industry.

Before Tim could ask what that had to do with their job, the agent replied, “They were sent emails, within minutes, days ago, before you could send out anything, asking every content maker if they were in agreement that the key witness whose deposition caused all this should be murdered. A man who used to work for us, a career soldier, now a mercenary living in Central America, was hired by these people to do the job. For now, we assume you are at risk. You need to leave the city, now. These men will escort you back to your homes to gather your things and your kids. We’ll get word to your spouses when we can.”

Tim and Amy do a double take at each other. No way.

Tim and Amy were split up by U.S. marshal teams. Though both of them tried to reason with the Marshals and the CIA agents assigned to chaperone them, that maybe this was overdoing it, their fear was quickly justified when they each arrived home to find their homes ransacked and notes telling them that their children had been taken.

Amy immediately began to cry.

At his home, Tim was the first civilian to meet Richard Brenner. Richard was the man hired to murder Willy Posta and any adult content makers who didn't agree to have Willy murdered.

The agents and Marshals who had behaved so confidently in the park and the cars on the way over to his house were now clearly rattled, uncertain that they would live through this chance-encounter with a man Tim would learn was the deadliest U.S. soldier alive.

Richard was not an animal. His assets had been frozen by executive order, and he was angry toward the very government he recently served.

“I’m not going to harm you, Mr. Fenway...” Richard said coolly, his tone putting the security detail at slight ease. “Fenway...I love that name. You from Boston? Sox fan at all?”

“Yeah, as a matter of fact,” Tim answered awkwardly, looking to his escorts for a frame of reference on his own fear.

“Agent Lynn, go ahead and wait outside with Jim and Cedric. I’m gonna have a talk with Mr. Fenway and nobody gets hurt. Tim, I’m not here for you.”

Agent Lynn did not like his former commander speaking to him that way. “Colonel, I’m gonna have to ask you to surrender yourself and allow these men to search you for weapons. And

then I'm gonna have to ask you to place your hands behind your back --"

Richard's hand then revealed an ordinary cell phone and motioned as if he had to take a call. As he pressed a button, an explosion rocked through the street outside, and glass shot through the residential frontage where they stood. Tim watched his living room get blown away like a hurricane.

Before Tim knew what was happening, he felt Richard's hands push him to the ground. "Stay down if you wanna live."

Tim was terrified. He caught sight of his family's most recent wall portrait, laying awkwardly on the side of tossed furniture, and started to cry a little. He wanted to be able to see his family again, if he couldn't save them.

God damn PR job, he thought out loud.

He heard gunshots and bodies dropping.

Then he heard Richard calmly say, "Tim, these men were gonna kill you."

Richard's hands helped Tim to sit up.

"Here's what's really going on. People in Europe hired me to kill these witnesses and anyone who didn't approve of that. The United States Government then decided to do something really stupid. They negotiated with terrorists. That's who they are. Most of the time, terrorists deal in guns and drugs and political

coups, things of that nature. These guys are into brokering hardcore porn. They offered this Presidential administration a big enough check to wipe out the national deficit and then some, to turn over Willy Posta. Your firm was hired to get the whole world watching this fictional gathering of religious leaders to rewrite the Constitution. It was all a smoke screen for the real thing. This kid dies, and we can all go home.”

Richard held up a photo of Willy’s face.

“I know who he is. He made a film. God was speaking to us through it.”

“I know,” Richard said, “I saw it too. Lucky for you, I was sent a copy by the people who wanted him dead. I require a good reason for killing a person, and they sent me that video. They claimed it caused the U.S. President to suspend the rights protecting their trade, and therefore they wanted him taken out.”

“Like that movie, *The Usual Suspects* - the guy who can identify Kaiser Soyse.”

“Exactly!” Richard answered. “And they would have succeeded and you’d be dead right now except for one thing they didn’t count on.”

Tim asked, “What was that?”

“When you watched that film, you say you heard the Voice of God speaking to you?” Richard asked, as police sirens drew closer.

“Yes.”

“Me too. Not only that. Jesus Christ Himself appeared to me in my living room and asked me to follow Him. He put His plan in my head and sent me here to save you from these men.”

“Wow,” Tim said, overwhelmed.

“We gotta move. I gotta collect Amy and take her to her family before this is over...” Richard said, putting his hand on Tim’s shoulder. “You on any medication?”

“No,” Tim answered quickly.

“Good. Don’t worry about this place. It’ll stay like this until you get back. It’ll be a crime scene until we return.”

“Can I ask who you are?” Tim asked.

Richard pulled a chain from his neck attached to a small ID badge with a unique bar code on it. “Let’s just say this is required to launch nuclear missiles and I used to be one of three men in the country who’s got one. The Euro trash we’re dealing with, they’re the bad guys. They believe I took the job and expect me to kill some people. Those guys, the ones I just killed, are working with the men who hired me. Me, I’m gonna get to this kid before they do and get him out of the country.”

“As long as I get to live and see my family again, whatever you say,” Tim said, following Richard blindly out a backyard door.

“There’s a few men you can trust, and those weren’t them. I’m going to take you someplace safe where you can reconnect with your family, assuming they are still alive...but you gotta trust me. And I don’t have any way to prove my trustworthiness to you except that I promise to protect you as long as I can while you’re with me and, I come in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Just then, with the momentum of a flash flood, the house was swiftly surrounded by police helicopters, FBI and ATF agents. Richard caught the eye of a man dressed in white, who motioned to him to walk toward him.

“You see that guy dressed in white?” Richard asked Tim.

“No!” Tim was sure they would be seized, and was unsure of whom to trust.

Richard swiftly walked through the avalanche of police, fire department, ATF and FBI agents invading the area around the burning house, and Tim followed, shocked that no one seemed to notice him or Richard. After walking for what seemed like minutes, Tim looked back to see the frantic scene behind him seem distant.

Richard stopped at a car and told Tim to get in. Tim did not see the man in White wave to Richard and disappear.

“You ever read that story in the Bible where Peter escapes from prison by following an Angel?” Richard asked Tim, as the

frighten public relations executive tried to keep his composure.

“Yeah.”

“You just lived it. You didn’t see the Angel escorting us through that mess, did you?”

Tim was reunited with his wife and kids and escorted by men from the Georgia National Guard and a U.S. Marshal, who began to explain that there was confusion in the executive branch and State Governors were uniting to reject the President’s orders to suspend sexual content from all publications, including the Bible. The result was State authority in defiance of federal authorities.

Tim and his wife were dropped off at a nice hotel in Toronto a few days later. The guards who escorted Tim informed him that, unfortunately, Amy was murdered. Her husband and kids managed to escape, but beyond that, they were told, try to start a new life over in Canada.

On TV, it was true: the world was watching the United States fracture over the worse judgment call by an American President in U.S. history.

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Chapter 5

The topic: the wording of the Miller test required adjustment, and the nation was asking this group of leaders to make what had been vague into a law that was specific.

Ideally, this gave religious leaders a chance to impress their values and views on the country once and for all, and it gave adult entertainment business owners the opportunity to write the very law they would be judged by.

Though the Free Speech Clauses had been pitting Christian fundamentalists against porn makers, as the accusers versus the accused, the resulting decision would have as much of an effect on how the Bible would be printed, distributed and taught, as it would have on pay-per-view broadcasting and online media.

The Bible contains a lot of sex.

The President exercised an executive order akin to deploying troops to fight a “conflict”, this time ordering a temporary suspension of the First Amendment’s Free Speech Clause until the consequences for its violations could be specified more, given the debate’s spark by the latest technology. What the internet has caused will be solved using it.

Everything would be on the table for discussion, even computer-generated child pornography.

Every since it had been disclosed to the President that a district attorney in Arizona had finally succeeded to making a case against all the pornography makers and their affiliates, which included companies that had deep ties to throughout city, state and federal government, including the Pentagon, Cabinet members advised the President to stage this meeting of the minds to avoid a possible civil war.

It was argued that information and the freedom to exchange or sell it, had become the country's greatest export, and to limit it, by any means, would risk unintentional consequences that would divide the nation, as slavery once had.

Each side would believe itself justified by God. Each side would play its most powerful moves, some using the same political resources. The fact was there was no ignoring this problem anymore.

Religious leaders could no longer write off adult entertainment makers as being the bad guys, and the adult entertainment makers could no longer hide behind the Constitution.

A key witness had helped make the otherwise circumstantial case made by Arizona District Attorney Phillip Kiel, that would convict certain entities of conspiracy to commit genocide, with data collected by OSHA. People were being recruited into an industry that has a 100% life-debilitating illness rate without any precautions being taken. Its death rate was 82%.

What the White House didn't expect is that during the time Free Speech would be suspended, the American people would not stand for it.

They had the best of intentions. And it would ignite another civil war, perhaps the last remnant of the first one. Now that all people, men, women, even children, of all backgrounds and origins, had the right to be heard, there was one expression that remained too undefined to be considered safe in a public forum:

public sexual expression.

Libraries had failed to prevent people, men and women, from viewing sexually explicit content online, just as movie theaters and covered-windowed stores had sold decades before. In front of children, people were committing unapologetic acts of public indecency.

Young adults were being taught by a declining national economy that the best way for them to make a living was by revealing their nakedness engaged in various sexual acts, alone or with others, using web cams and internet access to a global audience.

Retirees -- married people, many who had been members of Christian organizations for years, were also using these tools to “have fun”, and make some money in their retirement years.

For if Hebrews 13:8 stated that Christians were forgiven yesterday, today and forever, and that one cannot lose their Salvation, despite some denominations misquoting portions of the New Testament to debate that, what consequences were there if they used technology in the privacy of their own home, and shared such content with friends through closed circuit subscriptions?

Preachers argued about both perspectives. Adult entertainment makers, many of them Christians too, argued that the laws governing both sides, sex and religion, were unfair and vague.

As these arguments mounted in the media over time, the biological warfare that awaited them all proved to be a respecter

of neither party. In a very short time, over one-third of the country would die.

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Chapter 6

On August 24, 2014, the Surgeon General declared that a cure for HIV had been discovered. The world rejoiced. But, he warned, that it is in the nature of viruses to mutate to survive. This meant that another version of HIV, possibly even deadlier, would inevitably reveal itself.

In September, the Center For Disease Control reported hundreds of thousands of reported cases of an illness very similar to HIV, among a population categorized as “sexually inactive”.

The CIA concluded that HIV had mutated to be transferable by saliva. The State Department began a plan that could be infused into the medical system overnight that might prevent a panic. What they didn’t know is that their best efforts could not prevent the State of Virginia from being quarantined and Washington D.C. from being evacuated. Until safety could be insured, the nation’s capital relocated to Boston.

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Chapter 7

April 1997.

Office of the State of Arizona Assistant District Attorney

Willy Posta was almost 20 years old when he began to give his deposition, as a team of court reporters and Assistant District Attorney Phillip Kiel questioned him. “What did you do for Jill Conway Productions?”

Willy said, “I edited pornographic videos.”

“For how long?” Phillip asked.

“A little over a year.”

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Chapter 8

After an hour of testimony, they took a break. The two men talked over lunch.

Phillip was glowing. He knew he had made his case. Willy’s testimony was officially on the record, and along with all the other evidence collected over decades, he finally had a case that would do to the sex movie industry what the tax evasion case had done to Al Capone. Willy was still unaware of just how big of a deal this was. Then again, he had no reason to believe it would be a big deal, until people would try to kill him.

Phillip said, “We went after these guys for obscenity laws, and the most we could do is make cases about using U.S. Mail to distribute. Sent a few to prison, but never really got the top people.”

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Chapter 9

The deposition continued.

Phillip showed Willy a video tape.

“I probably edited this,” Willy said.

Phillip acknowledged the dry humor, but the humor quickly evaporated as the face of a young woman appeared, sitting up in her bed. She looked ill.

The video image looked ten years older than it was. The video quality of the 1990s was terrible.

“Do I have to give my real name?” the voice of a young woman asked, an attractive brunette who scratched at her skin due to Hepatitis-like symptoms.

“Hi. My name is Shannon Lennox...like the singer...I appeared in porn movies under the name Amazing Grace. I have AIDS. I have been told I am dying...”

Shannon began to tear up, but forced herself to remain articulate.

“You need a break?” the state investigator asked off camera.

“No,” Shannon said. She shook her head slightly and did her best compose herself. “I contracted AIDS by performing in pornographic movies with other women. I was told there was no

way anything bad could happen to me, and that if anything did, they'd take care of me. That was a lie.”

A subtitle appeared on the screen indicating there was more information, but Phillip turned it off.

“Sorry. I’ve seen it too many times.”

“She alive?” Willy asked.

Phillip shook his head. “She killed herself. I had to tell her stepmother. Parents were drug users. Father died of cancer on death row.”

“Wow,” Willy said, his eyes twitching a little with shock and compassion. Except for being unable to find a job after high school, Willy had enjoyed a fairly good home life while growing up.

“When we investigated the production company, they were cooperative,” Phillip said without excitement in his voice.

“Let me guess,” Willy said, “they verified her story and denied all liability. Pulled out a waiver...”

“Yes and no. No waivers,” Phillip said, “And unfortunately, they had broken no laws, at least none we could find.”

“So why am I here?” Willy asked.

“The Secretary of the Department of Labor wants to use OSHA

to knock the porn industry on its keister without letting them hide behind the Constitution. We need a third party, non-performer, to corroborate their stories.”

The district attorney then explained their case and how Willy’s testimony could effectively put the commercial porn industry out of business.

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Chapter 10

Jill Conway Productions was one of a dozen businesses located in Chatsworth in Chatsworth, California that leased its many warehouses.

From the outside, these warehouses appeared to be manufacturers, print shops, or vacant.

Inside, they were filled with performers, producers, camera operators and crew, if one can call them crew, recording loosely scripted, carefully choreographed and directed (or rather, improvised) sex acts between...men and women, women and women; men and men, women and animals, men and animals, and all of the above with children.

It was estimated by the National Center for Missing or Abused Children that more than a quarter of those abducted were forced to pose for child pornographers; and of those, most were murdered.

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Chapter 11

The Chatsworth Police Department was typically kept so busy monitoring the drug activity in this area, the violations that occurred on porn sets are almost ignored. And, the fact was, the performers wanted to keep working. There was an enormous financial fortune possible if one could survive the obstacles of disease and depression.

In many countries, especially in Western Europe, the sex movie industry was booming without protest from those in power. Performers knew that any web cam could make any performer a global “movie star” overnight. Name searches determined equity, and the more successful a performer was in executing a particular sexual act, categorized into action-specific genres, the more money they made. Some performers made millions of dollars for less than an hour of work.

The majority of them have accepted the rough-and-tumble requirements of what they are expected to do, and they do almost whatever it takes to do it long enough for the camera to record them. It is how they make their living. Few were able to process that entry into this industry was one-way, but since all other options in their lives when the opportunity presented itself seemed to be dismal, they would look at the massive amount of other camera-friendly models and performers working already, and their coverage by foreign press, and the power Satan had marketed to kids who were robbed of a chance to finish college, or get a better job after finishing school, had successfully lured them into the awaiting sirens of death.

A few actors had managed to survive the industry into their early 60's, but most died before that, whether from disease, depression-related suicide or heart failure.

Most if not all producers had a thorough and working knowledge of three things. One, the law. They had a lawyer on-retainer close by. Two, a firm understanding of how to market their product. And three, a network of ready-to-shoot labor, state-of-the-art cameras, and how to advertise and distribute their product once it was recorded.

A given production was not arbitrary, but a carefully calculated series of shots, with a few variations, during which a setup was established, followed by sequences of sex, finished by a climax, literally and graphically. Since there were such a variety of ways to do these things that proved popular by an online subjective audience, they would often shoot multiple endings, multiple variations, in multiple languages -- or using no specific language at all, much like the Silent Era.

Some of the performers liked each other, some were married, and some couldn't stand each other. Workplace safety laws were mostly ignored here. All that mattered was what the camera saw; just enough to edit to create the appearance of ecstasy.

They knew the risks, and they got paid -- and stardom. The more a performer was willing to do, male or female, the more fame, and thereafter, the more money they made.

The fact is 40-year veteran Ron Jeremy had made more money than industry contemporary Harrison Ford. But he had also

incurred his fair share of sexually derived illnesses; he had more than one scare of contracting AIDS. But by the grace of God, or the manipulation of the devil, he had not.

Ron was an industry role model, not a role he ever wanted to have.

In fact, he wanted to be a run-of-the-mill Hollywood actor when he began his career in the early 1970s. Before his career in film began, he studied education and held a Master's Degree in Special Education. Over time, when religious media figures like Craig Gross would engage him in public debate, Ron's education on both sides would win the debates.

The fact was not a single religious leader would address the real problems incurred by the adult entertainment industry. First and foremost, the problem was the law that kept an endless supply of workers at its disposal. Until people reached the age of 24, they were required to report their parents' income to the federal financial aid unit of the U.S. Department of Education. For a variety of reasons, many could not.

This created a sea of 17-23-year old candidates for jobs in strip clubs, adult video stores, and less-than-reputable modeling agencies. The strip clubs were comparable to baseball's minor league system for sex performers. They were typically filthy, no matter how much effort club owners put into having their facilities washed. The fact was one just couldn't sterilize an adult strip club enough. This made the chances of getting sick by being there, whether as a customer or an employee, about 80%. Most caught colds within two weeks of work or patronage.

The other problem is the cycle of dysfunction that has been passed down from their parents, varying from addiction to absence to divorce.

There is also a unique problem among the agnostic Catholic teenagers whose education in religious is limited to attending a Catholic church now and then.

With poor teaching except for mandatory obedience and a Bible that didn't exactly reflect the one used by the Protestants, the sexual abuses by Catholic church leaders and the numbness of its twentieth century Mass had made the mere mention of "religion" or "church" into a knee-jerk reaction of rejection.

And, for those who did manage to remain diligent to Catholic church attendance, its staff would use fear. They would employ fear of God and Man, proclaiming that leaving the Catholic church or adopting those "crazy" born again philosophies would have longterm and widespread consequences that would include separation from God and the Catholic community.

It was a lot like being in the mafia. Try to leave and we'll kill you. Except the message wasn't attributed to men, but God. Leave and you'll end up in hell. Of course, Jesus had already rebuked this in Samaria when he told a woman what kind of worshippers the Father sought.

This made millions of innocent churchgoers confused and afraid to set foot in a Protestant church. Add the Mormon, Seventh Day Adventist, and Jehovah's Witness views and the average high

school was a breeding ground for spiritual depression, just not knowing the truth as taught by Jesus Christ.

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Chapter 12

Most Protestant church leaders didn't take into account that there was an entire world right outside their doors that had been duped into being marked as insane or as the Amish label them, "shunned", if they were to enter into any Assembly of God, Baptism, Foursquare or nondenominational church and endure one service.

The experience could seem terrifying, seeing people gyrate and get tossed around "in the Spirit"; most agnostic Catholics were scared off by seeing people wave their hands in the air, or sort of extended toward people as if shooting invisible lasers at them or something. Random hand raising during sermons distracted and confused visitors, and when the "tongues" would happen, people ran for the parking lot.

It's one thing to be the new person in a school. It's terrifying to be the new person in a church, especially with all the legalism ready to mark you as unwelcome after you reveal you don't speak Christianese.

This is the Wall of Rejection that was initially struck down by Christ when he destroyed the racism between Jews and Gentiles thousands of years ago. It had been resurrected by religious leaders like Craig Gross. He presided for the "XXX Church", but gained little ground for neither the Kingdom among the

Protestants who trained him nor the adult entertainment world the entity was designed to breach.

For years, this Cold War went on. Despite best-selling book series like Every Man's Battle and Every Woman's Battle, offering recovery solutions, few readers reported positive resolutions. Meanwhile the overall demand for adult content increased.

As for Ron Jeremy, when he was recruited by a casting agent to appear (and have sex in) an adult film in 1976, he received the support of his family, who howled in laughter during the phone call most actors dream of, "Mom, dad, I got my big break..." In Ron's case, it would mean a detour that would never end, except for a few cameos in which he would portray either a porn actor or himself.

He would outlive John Holmes, befriend and outlive Reverend Tammy Faye, and have adultery with over a million women. Yet his private life was extraordinarily lonely, and he never experienced being a husband or father. What he knew about the Bible, and Romans 10:9, became even clearer in conversations he had with Tammy Faye, and all the other messages, (some not so polite), he received over time, that God loved him. A legalistic condition was repeatedly thrust upon him, if only you'd walk away from porn.

Easier said than done. Who would hire a former porn star as a Special Education teacher?

Or, for that matter, any sex performer? Most were fired when

they tried to get jobs outside of the virtual sex or live sex industries, most companies considered it bad press, worse than hiring ex-convicts. So, when religious leaders challenged performers to “repent”, what would former sex producers or performers do then?

The fact was the “grace” for nearly every addiction people suffered from, tobacco, narcotics, alcohol, food and more, did not exist for those who worked in the sex industries. Of course, gynecologists were acceptable, as well as sonogram operators. If any profession used photography equipment to capture images of the female anatomy, it was that one.

Ron never breached the walls of mainstream Hollywood, appearing as himself in a few cameo roles in independent films.

He remained an outsider and grew older, fatter, and the butt of industry jokes. Yet despite all the fame and money, the Enemy used him to show potential sex stars that it could be done. One could have a lot of sex for a living without getting sick or going to jail! In 2023, he was committed to a mental hospital after being ruled mentally unstable to stand trial for rape trial. He had sexually assaulted dozens of women spanning two decades and used sleight of hand to avoid criminal prosecution. He died three years later.

The majority of Ron’s colleagues had died of disease or heart failure. Many of those actors, male and female, got into porn only to experience the short-lived thrill they experienced through theaters, video, or the pending internet; to experience it up-close and personal for themselves.

Sex performers discovered power. They captivated audiences. They heard the moans and cheers of audiences who watched their images in editing rooms, and then in larger arenas, such as trade shows, and then witnessed mainstream audiences consume their products at an alarming rate.

Many men loved to watch visual simulations of their fluids being consumed by either gender's body parts, their genitals massaged. Many women loved all of that too, but also loved to hear the sounds of the sex, and the touch of their own clitorises experiencing multiple orgasms. Language that used to be banned from any mainstream movie was not only tolerated here, but expected; the more coarse, the more stimulating.

The visual transference was, indirectly, enough to stimulate the brain into the mild hypnosis of being engaged in a sexual act, affecting both genders. It's the same thrill as watching sports, even video games, but the release is through genitals, not sweat glands. Both are connected to creative glands, a part of the brain not functional when anger is in action, hence, most sex or creativity will not be in its desired form when emotions run foul. Angry people have a hard time being creative.

Also, psychologists had determined that anger gave a person under two minutes before their logical functions shut down, and if angry about a sports game, this is when fans do things out of rage they would otherwise not have done.

Those who opposed the virtual sex industry's product would use personal experiences of sexual assault and molestation to accuse

the virtual sex makers of being the cause and perpetrator of sex crimes.

Producers would argue that their content was to be used as stimulants among monogamist sexual partners, and a means of venting a fantasy safely away from a potential victim.

What acts might be dangerous among consumers, could be enjoyed from behind a screen, watching sexual “stunt” persons to satisfy the fantasy. Biblical leaders argued the fantasy was never satisfied, and dismissed the producers’ argument. Their claim was that the lust of the predator would be greater than their prey, and thus, all sexual content was a time bomb just waiting to go off.

Case history ranging from Ted Bundy to Jefferey Dahmer would be brought up.

Consider the exception in Dahmer’s case that his big issue was his fear of being known as a homosexual, not a serial killer. Instead of allowing a male lover disclose his sexuality to anyone he knew, he would murder them.

Bundy accepted Christ in jail and confessed to a reporter than he could not return to the mental state he committing crimes in if he was going to remain sane. He knew he deserved to die and that he had a lot of apologizing to do on the Other Side. However, if sexual content was a time bomb waiting to go off, why is it that so many billions of viewers had been able to consume words and images from books and films/videos and not turned to rape, murder or cannibalism?

First, one must understand there are countless genres ranging from types of sex to specific sex acts. It was more than just blond on blond. The commercial novelty was exactly what they were doing that became of interest to viewers.

Once engaged in the virtual experience, given the physical protection of the camera/plastic screen, the rush was like chocolate. It was great and over quickly. After a few viewings, the images grew mind numbing, no longer a high-impact turn-on. After a physical release, sometimes of fluids, sometimes not, bodies no longer confirmed any arousal cravings with the brain, much like the stomach tells us “we’re full”.

The producers knew their product all-too-well. They knew their product was irresistible by those who consumed it, those who didn’t were enthralled by live dancing and nudity.

Not everyone was excited by images of recorded sex, so the porn makers often owned their own adult clubs where stripping was the main event. People paid to see men stripping for men and women, women stripping for men and women, and the most popular genres were homosexuals with underage partners. And, some folks just liked to watch, in some cases, one other person using toys or just their hands.

In Europe, the age of a legal adult ranged. In Spain it was 13. From Portugal to eastern European nations, legal consenting adult ages range from 14-17.

This means if a 16 or 17 year old model performs a sex act in

Germany, it is streamed to a third-party source access by Americans, the FBI is slow to prosecute or violations of child porn crimes due to the cross-continental jurisdiction issues.

Meanwhile, adult nightclubs were treated as scouting grounds for new talent, anyone not yet hooked on drugs or alcohol; innocent-looking faces attached to bodies willing to Bend into almost any position for the purpose of displaying a sexual fantasy were in high demand and paid well -- usually cash up front.

The smaller video cameras and launch of the Internet created even more opportunities for marketing their product. The limitations of the 1960s and 70's were no longer applicable.

Film was now barely used, if at all. Video was cheaper and preferred; video was ideal for nonfiction, and seemed to amplify the fantasy. Suddenly that model, male or female, seemed real, closer to the viewer.

The point-of-view genre was achieved, giving the viewer the experience that the performer was being intimate with them. Many married people, even those who graduated from Christian theological seminaries, found they could record their actions and market them in a sales-tax-exempt international marketplace and quit their jobs.

Religious leaders argued with Bible quotes. Performers ignored them, citing the rising divorce rate among Christians and other ideologies. The witness of conservative Christian leaders like Pat Robertson and Paul Crouch were powerless because of their

own well-publicized sin and hypocrisy; financial and sexual scandals, from Jim Baker to Ted Haggard spoke more to the average churchgoing married couple, recording their sex acts behind closed doors, and releasing them to subscribers, sometimes for free. The greater the online hits, the advertisers would find them.

Plots were short-lived or eliminated all together. Compilations, that is, highlight scenes of a given act, performer or theme, developed into what the industry would call its own genres. The same action, done by different combinations of performers, edited to be experienced over and over.

The performers didn't always like what they were doing, but none of that appeared on camera. Smiles, pleas to continue, please to do it again, pleas to do it more so, to climax, to repeat it...

All for the camera. The exact same equipment was used to record and broadcast religious speakers, reaching a global network of audiences, Believer and nonbelievers alike.

If only Thomas Edison could have seen what would become of his inventions...

Few if any performers appeared in adult movies against their will, as Linda Lovelace's autobiography described, notably contrary to eye witness accounts of her consent. She claimed to be having sex at gun point. It was later clarified that her abusive boyfriend was a wannabe tough-guy and felt more masculine holding a weapon on the set, while she did her job; a subtle

statement. ‘Don’t enjoy it too much, Linda. Remember, you’re mine...’

No one will ever know for sure. The majority of those who made Deepthroat were dead now. That film wasn’t the first adult film, not by a long shot, it just became the most famous when its mafia-financiers learned its screenings were being viewed by the millions, and it got reviewed by the New York Times, a first for a pornographic film.

In the late 1970s, cable TV entered hotels. The porn industry didn’t miss a beat. They offered their product -- free of charge to the hotel chains, as closed-circuit private entertainment. Most channels, like Home Box Office charged large fees for their channels. The porn makers knew that just by being available, they would make money. They offered performance-based commissions. Hotel profits shot up over night.

This sent a message to Wall Street. Find a way to partner with porn such that family audiences do not become aware of it. Bury it in the accounting. When mutual funds made money off tobacco sales, and porn sales, Wall Street would display their other products, like telephones and macaroni and cheese. Stockholders did not protest.

The alliance between corporate America and the virtual sex industry was underway.

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Chapter 13

One might ask, if married people were able to have sex with each other, why wasn't that enough?

The answer was that not all folks interacted with media imagery or even face-to-face paid companionship in the same way, or for the same reasons.

Financially, the hottest selling genre was child sex. Imagine all the genres among adults, but with minors, even babies. In the early 1990s computer generated imagery (CGI) had opened the door for legal child porn, manufactured completely within computers. Many animators were employed to produce content that did not involve any human performers, and by 2010, was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court as being Constitutional.

Further, the diversity of people consuming virtual sex was greater than the opponents to its place in the global market. People with little-to-no functionality below the waste had extremely sensitive nerves in their brains, where the sensor was located, giving the viewer an enormous sensation despite the inability to have a traditional orgasm.

Married people were not the only ones to interact with sexual imagery. Catholic ministers, publicly sworn to celibacy, were among the most common consumers. Though they publicly denounced masturbation, and homosexuality, what happened behind closed doors became international news in 2000.

There were also arguments that young people, women and men, were less likely to contract a sex disease when engaging in masturbation than engaging with each other; advocates stressed

abstinence, with such slogans as “true love waits”, which, with good intentions, did little but lay more guilt on teenagers who, in another century, should have simply gotten married.

For centuries before, the average marrying age was 15. Twenty-one year old unmarried females were labeled as “old maidens”. The twentieth century’s Women’s Rights movement succeeded in restoring the equality of women in society that was lost sometime in Genesis, but some leaders took it too far, denouncing a male God, and His plan, and creating what pop singers would nickname, “the modern woman.” Careers and the workplace became the goal of women after 1966, the year the National Organization of Women gained a permanent presence on our national conscience by way of television.

The confusion of spousal roles became a point of confusion in American society to the point where men would seek friendly companionship in adult clubs, or virtually, in a cinematic fantasy world where, as Willy Posta once coined, “When ‘nice’ girls snub, ‘bad’ girls charge.” Men and women were willing to pay for the facade of love, starving for God’s love; the church had become so conceited, selling its message of a potentially perfect society, ‘if it wasn’t for this and that, and anything that doesn’t look like, smell like, walk like, act like, think like and sin like me.’ Televangelism became big business, competing with adult movies, vomiting condemnation in its general direction, promoting censorship, and competing with its shock value by declaring, ‘don’t look at them, look at us.’

It took two decades for the word ‘televangelism’ to become a derogatory term.

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Chapter 14

On a cold day in 1996, a young woman, about 19, entered the production office of Jill Conway Productions, with a concerned look on her face. She wore sweat pants. Only from a masking-taped label on a door leading to the main office corridor would anyone know this was JILL CONWAY PRODUCTIONS.

Willy Posta could see her as he leaned back from his editing bay, shuttling back and forth through adult content. From the audio, it can be noted he was assembling credits.

Jill looked taken aback to see her. “What are you doing here? You’re not scheduled until next week.” Willy had seen this a few times this month. Apparently one or more of the performers had spread an illness, albeit not AIDS. This time...

The young woman pulled a doctor’s letter out of her purse and unfolds it for Jill to read. Jill did not flinch at it.

“What is that? Don’t show me that. I don’t want to see that,” Jill snarled coldly, knowing the laws regarding an acknowledgement of an injury derived from work. It wasn’t about whether or not they liked someone, it wasn’t about feelings or right or wrong. It was about liability. The business was everything to thousands of workers. And no one would threaten it, even incidentally, with legal liability.

Willy watched the video with Phillip, this of a girl he’d never

met, who fell to a similar situation, contracting AIDS.

“When I told them I was sick, it was like they couldn’t get me out of there fast enough. I was somehow offending them by just being there...”

“Did you know her?” Phillip asked over the tape’s audio.

Willy shook his head no. Phillip turned the video off.

“I’ve got hundreds of hours like this. But it’s not enough. The best we could do is Wrongful Death. I have plenty of circumstantial witnesses. I need someone who can tie these people to the crimes themselves.”

“So, who are you going after?” Willy asked.

“Well...I can’t disclose specific names,” Phillip said, “but, in general...the companies that own the major studios that partner with pornographers.”

Willy sat next to a stenographer as Phillip Keel continued to record his testimony.

“So, seeking God by day, DJ at a strip club by night,” Phillip said.

Willy nodded. “It wasn’t what I wanted.”

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Chapter 15

UCLA College of Law, 2071.

The lecture hall was filled with fresh-faced 16 and 17-year olds.

Professor Landon Fox began the class lecture by reading from several books, one of which bore the image of Alicia Posta on its cover, her warm smile and flowing long dark hair capturing the attention of global readership in later years. Her memoir about her husband was an international bestseller and was one of three books that told his story.

On a table next to Landon lay the other two: one by Winnie Posta, and one by Emma Posta-Bravo.

“Welcome to Landmark law. My name is Landon Fox. I’ve been a Professor here for two years. Prior to that, I taught at Arizona State, where I received my Master’s Degree from the Walter Cronkite School of Broadcasting. I didn’t exactly come here by choice. I was asked by a friend who used to teach this course, who unfortunately died of HIV3, which is one of the major reasons why I chose this case to spend an entire semester on.’

“For those of you who love a good story, with twist and turns and controversy, this class should become your favorite. For those of you who do not find such things interesting, I highly recommend you drop this class after I am done talking. Drop date is in eight-days, so, if you’re on the fence, don’t panic. You got time.”

“Now, to keep you awake through this epic tale of the law, sex,

politics and religion, you'll have several reading and viewing materials, all of which are optional, but all of which will appear somewhere on the Final. I will tell you two weeks ahead of time what will be on the Final, so, again, no surprises, I want you to enjoy this class. For those of you whispering in row 15 about whether or not I am the same actor who won Golden Globe for narrating *Gift Ghosts*, yes, that was me. I did voice over work as an undergrad, and to my shock, Chris Nolan, looking for a certain voice for his film, was in a jam when his first choice to do the job, I'm not aloud to say who, got sick and I was recommended by a mutual friend. I got a script, some notes and a check for the work. I had no idea who I was working for until it was all over. So, I hope my voice is enough to keep you interested in the material. I only state this, because in all seriousness, if you record this lecture for the purposes of your own studying, that's fine, that's expected. Not required, but okay. If I see it online being sold, I will not only flunk you, but you will be expelled and sued. Got it? If you wish to post audio notes for a friend, you won't have to, because that is automatically done from this room -- in fact, anyone who blurts out something or coughs Loud enough -- or passes gas or shuffles their feet or makes any noise Louder than I am speaking now will be recorded and broadcast for this class to hear when you log in. Any," Landon coughs loudly, "questions?"

The class was silent.

"Every assignment is based on books and movies that have been around for decades, and in some cases, centuries, many considered to be very un-academic. For example, you'll be asked to watch films made by producers who were a big deal in

my father's day, but whose work we see every Labor Day and Halloween -- the Star Wars trilogies, Jaws and E.T. The real life people we are going to be talking about were profoundly effected by the pop culture of their world, and in turn, had a profound effect on it. For example, many of you know, Willy Posta made films that seemed to deliver the presence of God to who ever viewed them, some claiming to experience emotional euphoria and physical healing, while others experienced awful pain, just by watching, and some people were having heart attacks.”

“For those of you who do not believe in God, I will first say you are legally entitled to believe anything you want, and your beliefs will not effect your grade in this course -- you’re being tested essentially on history and its relationship with the law. I say again, I am not allowed to favor one ideology over another. I can tell you that I am also a licensed minister of the Protestant faith. My dad was a preacher, and his father was a preacher. And all of us started off as God-denying atheists until we had experiences of our own. I watched this man’s films, and God revealed himself to me.”

“I tried showing one of Willy Posta’s films in the lecture in our first year, and, things got nuts. Students complained of health problems, and one young woman was dissociated with her family and dropped out of school when she changed religions, going from Judaism to Christianity. Her family was very upset and sued the school. Fortunately, she testified on behalf of the school and the lawsuit was eventually dropped. Today I understand she’s about to graduate from a seminary. That said, versions will be posted online, and you will have to click many

disclaimer pages in order to watch them. I have posted them all.”

“With the exception of the blind, and someone living in a place off the map in regards to technology, we as a society all watch porn all the time. We just call it something else. Soap commercials. Toothpaste commercials. Baby food, cars, food, clothing, auto parts, education, sports, name it. Anything that turns anyone on in any way is by definition porn. Anyone who can prove me wrong will get an A in this course without having to spend another moment here, and you’ll be excused from all tests including the Final. But before you take me up on that offer, know that I have been teaching this class for eleven years and not a single student has been successful. I have a test that determines what porn is and isn’t, one that’s been admonished by the Board members of this department and this university. And not a single student has passed it. But if you feel you’re up to the task, the invitation is open to all of you until the final exam is over.”

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Chapter 16

In a lecture hall, Professor Landon Fox was one of the few instructors who could wear a beard and a suit, use a cane and still manage to be one of the coolest instructors on campus. At face value, none of his students knew he was the adviser for the local and founding chapter of Campus Crusade for Christ.

He used a clicker that operates a slick video slide program. It said “Landmark Law”.

“As for the case itself, it has often been said that to get to know someone well, ask their family and friends about them. And if you want to know them even more, ask their enemies.”

Landon picked up a book on film history and flipped to page one. As he began to read verbatim a projection of the text appeared on a large screen at the front of the class so all could read along, “In 2015, commercial porn ceased to exist. The web cam had changed the dynamics of virtual sex, and computer generated sexual images forced Bible scholars to reexamine Matthew 5:26-28. (Jesus was reiterating Leviticus 20:10, which speaks to another culture two millenniums before, another set of social rules, and a whole different interpretation of “adultery”.)

In 2015, the average age of a bride was 26. In Jesus era, that was life expectancy. Girls were often married off right after their bodies proved capable of child bearing. By 2035, when the HIViii vaccine took root, the average age of a bride was 15, due to the lowering of the age of being a legal adult.

So, here was the problem.

Take the problems of today, the Word spoken yesterday, applied out of context, add the personal tastes, preferences and agendas of Bible teachers throughout the ages, including one guy who tried to defuse puberty through sugar, hence the invention of the Graham Cracker, (true story), and you get a Church culture unsure of how to address the difference between a married couple having webcam sex, and a social network web site that offers free content to anyone who can access it through the

internet -- and blame that entire industry for the spread of diseases, deaths, and moral corruption of a generation, as if such things hadn't existed prior to broadcast technology...add unforeseeable events of global proportions that reduced the Earth's population by 20%, (the United States by one-third), and what do you get?

A nation willing to edit its precious First Amendment, which led to a second Civil War. Or Civil War II. Or Civil War 2.0, depending on the computer geek you ask.

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Chapter 17

The adult entertainment industry was indicted for many incidents of adultery, divorce, and breakdown of the family, inside and outside the Church, accused of, tried and convicted by religious leaders who themselves had few to hold them accountable.

They paraded themselves as modern-day Pharisees, although denying such an obvious label, and in 2020, they had achieved substantial military power.

Note, the publishing industry was well aware of its conflicts. Those who did not see adult entertainment as a moral problem, whether live or recorded, whether marketed to men, women or both, saw it as what it truly was, a multi-trillion-dollar-a-year corporate investment, that had begun in small adult stores, slithered its way into hotel closed-circuit pay-per-view TV systems, and then found its way into the endless frontier of the

internet. The existence of adult entertainment was not the problem.

It was the fact that its cause and effect of engaging in it ran into the New Testament verse of Matthew 5:26-28 in an age when family crisis were declining, and Church leaders needed something or someone other than themselves to blame.

The fact is, between the production of unlicensed narcotics, the failure of prohibition, the confusion over the American English versions of the Bible, and their 93 different variations (and growing), and all the other microeconomic factors in the decline of what many religious leaders might describe as an “ideal” society, the existence of “porn” was only on the list of the usual suspects because it was the high-impact of television.

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Chapter 18

In any country where Christianity was illegal, the Bible was perceived to be much more shocking and offensive than porn.

In contrast, in countries where 16th-century art, (hung in world famous museums like the Getty), portraying naked men and women engaging in all kinds of acts, some sexual, some not, the laws pioneered by the Continental Congress were echoed and upheld. Sex was okay if expressed in a certain way and moderation. Lord knows in the Bible, there's a whole lot of “begotten” going on.

But in the United States in the 2020s, this particular case took

center stage as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, (OSHA), the agency responsible for monitoring workplace safety, was about to join the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), per the conclusion of a case that would absorb much of the life of one reluctant young man, whom some would say was a prophet, for his words, his testimony, effectively ended the porn industry as it once existed.”

Landon closed over the book with a soft thud. “Yes, this is a hard copy. Call me old school. There’s something about hard copy paper print books...welcome to Landmark Law 232, one of the few classes of genuine interest that underclassmen are allowed to take,” he added with a charming smile.

Professor Landon Fox, bearded, wore a suit, and used a cane, held a clicker that operates a slick video slide program. It said, “Landmark Law”.

“In 2015, the porn industry ceased to exist. Can anyone tell me why?”

A hand went up by an unseen student, and was recognized by Landon.

Jeremy Dale, a second-year graduate student, answered, “The 28th Amendment?”

“Correct. You know why?”

Jeremy answered, “The Amendment was language-specific

about the business practices of the adult industry, but it..." he said, searching for the right words, "...nullified almost all of the First Amendment, to the point where it --"

Landon is nodding.

"Created a conflict between the federal government and the States, in regards to publishing. This triggered a series of legal battles over the 10th and 14th Amendments, and...then I don't know. It was a long time ago."

Landon asked him, "You a history major?"

"No."

"Well, you were very eloquent" the professor replied. "'A' for the day." A chuckle quietly moved through the class in small waves.

"It was repealed years later, just like the 18th Amendment, also known as Prohibition. But we'll get to that later on in the term. In order to understand this law, and its relationship with something called The Miller test, we need to go back a hundred years to 1964."

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Chapter 19

1964.

On a warm summer night, in the Supreme Court office of Potter

Stewart, he drafted a decision.

Stewart was alone in his office when he wrote, “I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that hard-core pornography, and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that...”

Landon, quoted, “I shall not today attempt further to define. I know it when I see it.”

Landon looked down and pushes his slide show buttons.

On the screen, the definition of “the Duties of a Supreme Court Justice” appeared.

“A Supreme Court Judge’s duties are to interpret the laws that are passed by lawmakers, and in a sense, redefine their meaning. Potter Stewart said here he would not do his job, the job he was appointed to do, and left us with this...”

The quote appeared alone on the screen.

“I know it when I see it.” -- Potter Stewart 1964

Landon continued, “Some of you may say, so what? What’s the big deal? Well, what do you think about this?”

Landon pushed more buttons and the screen changed, dissolving into another phrase that did get a negative reaction.

“Separate but equal.” -- 1896

“Fact is the Supreme Court dropped the ball. Ten years later, art houses, desperate for cash, would show sex films, financed by the New York mafia. And in 1972, a film was released that earned over \$700 Million, unofficially.

On the screen, a photograph appeared of a movie theater marquee showing Deepthroat.

“Had Judge Stewart attempted that day to define it, we might not have had the problems we had over the next twenty-five years that lead up to what we’re going to talk about for the remainder of the term. And for those of you who think we’re being harsh on Justice Stewart, know that in 1981, he too regretted his words and his actions.” The screen changes again.

Justice Stewart commented about his second thoughts about that quotation in 1981.

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Chapter 20

Landon paced slightly in front of his podium. The class had grown substantially, any empty seats before now filled in. The university had been asked to add this course to their webinar series, but Landon objected. Too much liability. Porn as a subject was fascinating in person, but broadcasts, no matter how tactfully executed, were bound to offend someone.

An article from the Washington Post dated 1981, was highlighted.

“In a way I regret having said what I said about obscenity -- that’s going to be on my tombstone. When I remember all of the other solid words I’ve written,” he said, “I regret a little bit that if I’ll be remembered at all I’ll be remembered for that particular phrase.”

“One of the things you’re going to find in this class as you study anything in law, religion, or the humanities, is that context is critical to understanding history.”

“When we look at this period in time, it is important to know what else was going on at the time...maybe your grandparents have shared with you where they were when the Bio-accidents of 2013 happened. Before 2020, there was only one Constitutional Amendment repealed. After 2020, there were two. And, as you all know, there’s one more being debated over in Congress. This one is essentially a prohibition case dating back to the Puritans. But for the purposes of this class, we’re going to begin our timeline in the Presidential Administration of George Herbert Bush, and later pursued more aggressively by his son, George W.”

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Chapter 21

March 2002.

George W. Bush sat in the chair of the chief executive and

leaned back, his entourage sitting around the room. Advisers were brainstorming out loud what the White House's agenda will be for the next four years. A few of them couldn't get decent reception on their cell phones, openly complaining about it.

An aide chimes into the conversation, "You guys hear Steve Jobs is back at Apple?"

"So?" someone replied.

"I heard he's talking about creating a new internet-based media distribution system for music, maybe more."

"Has anyone told him the dot-com bubble burst?" Minor chuckles follow the comment.

"Porn," the President said. It took a moment for the room to quiet down for him to be heard.

"We need a war. Every successful administration has had a war. FDR had the Depression. Kennedy and Reagan had Communism. My dad had Saddam Hussein -- and I wanna go after him; put that on the list. But...porn. How do we wage war on pornographers without infringing on citizen's rights?"

The room fell silent.

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Chapter 22

A cure for the AIDS virus had been found and distributed

quickly worldwide. But, viruses mutate to survive. Almost overnight, HIV did exactly that, then spreading by saliva.

The commercial virtual sex industry was long blamed for the sexual immorality in pop culture by the Christian church and other religious entities. The Islamic world had judged America as being one ambiguous whorehouse since its 1982 revolution, ruling all things Western to be off limits among its own closed-circuit culture.

Meanwhile the U.S. suffered through what many called a second Civil War. On March 23, 2022, the Commander the Atlantic Fleet received orders from the Governors of South Carolina, Virginia and Maryland, to fire on an enemy base in response to the National Guard's presence in their respective states, to enforce new federal regulations of older laws.

Most of history's most memorable events are a series of accidents, incidents and one-in-a-million events, big and small, that, when connected by the end result, explain why the near-impossible comes to pass.

Since the end of the first Civil War, the United States government spent great deal of time during an era known as Reconstruction. The key ingredient to prevent future wars was communication. The cross-continental wire once used by Abraham Lincoln in the form of morse code had become the Internet.

But despite all the safety systems, back up systems and contingency plans implemented in case of emergencies, there is

always a possibility of failure.

A break down in communication resulted in several U.S. States engaging in an act of treason not seen since the first Civil War. The two armed forces commanders involuntarily fired on each other, killing 3313 civilians, the media calling it another Civil War.

The President denounced this, calling it a disastrous error, a breakdown in communication. At the same time, a chemical research facility in California had an outbreak accident similar to the fictional super-flu described in a 1970s novel by Stephen King, in the same league as Chernobyl. Entire western cities were ordered evacuated, as the air became toxic. Winds pushed the poison across the Plains, reducing the amount of livable land in the US by one-third, for at least the next decade. The nuclear industry knew its product very well by now and could tell the evacuees how dangerous it was to remain there, and how long it would take to clean up, even if God sent a lot of “clean” wind and rain.

Among those to evacuate were a group of pornographic filmmakers who had been engaged in an ongoing battle to preserve their way of doing business. They would find their way north, to parts of the Northwest U.S. and Canada unaffected by the toxic tragedy.

As a result of these events, one-third of Americans died. The First Amendment’s Free Speech and Press Clauses were suspended to avert panic and derail the porn industry from its stronghold of corporate power. Sadly, the protest of these federal

censorship fell short when FCC-mandated G and PG content saw a rise in global ratings. The reaction to the change in content restrictions caused China and other nations to welcome all western programming that fit the new/old criteria as stated in a remodeled version of The Hayes Code. Muslim nations delighted in programs that showed happy, prosperous, educated Muslim families whereby their religious leaders were not permitted by shows to be portrayed as anything but positive.

The mafia reasserted its role as primary investor and enforcer of content, and a new studio system was underwritten in Florida, headed by Ted Turner and Donald Trump. The two made an oddly perfect business team, as if Carl Leamle had gone into business with Walt Disney. They had two different styles, but together, wound up appealing to everyone.

Foreign investors in the porn industry were of course furious, and took matters into their own hands.

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Chapter 23

In August 1975, an American was born, the third child of Winnie and Jonathan Posta, on Long Island, New York. Jonathan has been a firefighter, transferred west for health reasons, to Phoenix, Arizona, where they raised their family. Their children were Zachary “Ziggy” Posta, Emma Posta, and William Byron Posta.

By 1995, organized crime had invaded the Posta’s suburban neighborhood with pawn shops, liquor stores, high-interest

check-cashing stores and adult video stores, the latter of which made more money than all the illegally trafficked drugs combined. But it didn't make news as such because it was legally protected by the same laws which protected the very entities that sought to regulate it.

The internet launched in 1992, and by 1995, had become a retail force that rocked the world. But it wasn't until companies like VCA joined forces with AT&T and other adult content manufacturers entered into joint ventures with other multimedia distributors that the power of porn would truly take form.

In time, it would offer enough financial incentive to kill over, much like the narcotics and brewing industries of the early 20th century.

As the Posta family pursued their happiness in the American dream, Willy had been an unlikely video editor in an industry branded as being the world's most morally corrupt, accused by the Church of being one of the major tempters and causes of marital collapse and the scapegoat of the eroding traditional American family, as emulated on 1950s television.

After a bout with depression in a year and a half of work for an adult video production company, Willy recommitted his life to Jesus Christ and on a whim, offered his testimony about unsafe working conditions to the District Attorney of Arizona.

News of his legal deposition worked its way around the globe and, in the wake of world events, like the mutation of HIV, the porn industry was effectively shut down by OSHA, citing life-

threatening workplace violations.

But the manufacturers and corporate interests did not allow this one witness to put them out of business for long. They would not go quietly. They hired assassins to silence him.

He was protected by U.S. Marshals and taken to safety in South America, where God gave him all the tools he would need to produce his films, a wife and a family in a place he never imagined he would call home.

He accepted that he had been given a gift by God: his films seemed to have a healing power. Some people who watched them experienced God -- and were healed, inspired, and some claimed to have experiences similar to when the Bible recorded Jesus healing large crowds.

Willy struggled to address his image of success; joining winners of the Academy Award, even though Hollywood had been destroyed by toxic contamination and most of the industry executives dead from poisoned air.

Willy spent two decades making films that transformed an entire industry, making the Christian genre not only a financial powerhouse, but a supernatural experience that, in one's possession of films made by him, and those who were disciplined on how to make them, were more valuable than street narcotics, making even drug dealers take notice.

The cartels that once ruled South America respected Willy and revered his name.

In the meantime, a Civil War that broke out over similar reasons as the previous Civil War, had divided the country. Instead of the nation battling over slavery, it was over the expression of sex, but in the form of a political debate by parties who argued the 10th Amendment versus the 14th Amendment.

The federal government was requiring the States comply with a censorship of all publishing to exclude sex from its printing, in response to the damage blamed on the porn industry. When U.S. Bible publishers were ordered to edit all mentions of sex from every version, the States fiercely refused. This is when conflicting orders and confusion caused American forces to fire on each other.

Willy was out of the country for most of the chaos that paralyzed the United States. If it were not for alliances with England, West Germany and a new regime in Cuba (Fidel Castro had died), the U.S. was ripe for invasion. (Keep in mind, much of the land Mexico had desired to take back was now uninhabitable; global ecologists worked selflessly to salvage what they could, but what was destroyed in months would take decades to clean).

Now, the United States had relocated its capital to Boston because Washington, D.C. had been devastated by disease and war. It could only be described as 'an accidental war'.

While Willy was developing his movie making skills for a new version of a century-old industry, he was asked to apply his natural ability on the basketball court to coach a high school

team whose language he was still learning. Two decades later, one of his former assistant coaches was elected President of the United States.

Willy was requested by the President to return to the U.S., for those who once tried to kill him were died...at least most of them.

Willy and his wife risked the flight by presidential escort and Willy was asked to advise on how to rewrite or otherwise restore the Constitution so that the damage done by the emergency editing years before, could be undone. Though the powers of the Political Action Committee, acting in the name of God, in the spirit of loyalty to Jesus Christ, had the best of intentions, they failed to execute the appropriate exercise of the law, use more force than necessary to eliminate the symptoms of a trauma rather than the trauma itself.

The Christian Coalition had achieved military power, and despite its attempts to honor the spirit of the Constitution, it wound up violating it in the worst possible way.

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Chapter 24

In Ventura County, California, a factory was being quarantined. Rescue crews helped get workers to safety. Some people looked dead, while others struggled to breath. TV cameras recorded these images and anyone with access saw these headlines scrawl across the bottom:

“Deadly Biohazards Require Evacuation of Los Angeles.”
“Governor of Texas Declares State of Emergency.”
“Highways Jammed As Evacuees Trek East.”
“Washington D.C. Evacuated, Boston Named Temporary Capitol.”

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Chapter 25

“When several Senators and Governors from southern states gave conflicting orders to the Admiral of the Navy, and the Air Force Chief of Staff resulting on American forces firing on each other on U.S. soil...”

“And,” Landon said, “while all that was going on, members of Congress who belonged to the religious cause known as the Christian Coalition were trying to get laws passed that traded same-gender marriage for the abolition of porn. Keep in mind, they meant well.”

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Chapter 26

Encino, California, 2004

In a health clinic, a young woman, 20, was seated in a doctor’s office where a clinic worker sat down with her holding a clipboard. The worker handed her a paper containing results from an AIDS test.

The actress known as Lara Roxx looked at the paper in disbelief,

and then cried.

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Chapter 27

Landon continued, “In 2004, the porn industry temporarily shut down when a performer contracted AIDS from performing in a pornographic video. OSHA, the government agency in charge of regulating the working conditions of any employer in this country, tried to implement mandatory condom use in adult films. The industry resisted this.”

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Chapter 28

Industry spokespersons like actress Nina Hartley made statements to reporters including, “If you make condoms mandatory, you’re just going to drive porn underground, and create a black market for movies without condoms...”

“Meanwhile,” Landon continued, “at John’s Hopkins University, a cure for AIDS was quietly in the works, results we wouldn’t see for another 25 years. And when we did, it was too late. The disease had changed again. This time, human saliva was able to act as a carrier.”

“So the goal was to prevent people from dying...at the expense of our civil rights. In one sense, they were praised for refusing to do nothing. And in another sense, they were criticized for effectively overturning the precedence set by the case known as The People Versus Larry Flynt. What resulted in one of the most

bitter legal battles in US history, second only to the first Civil War. I'll also state that for the record, history does not officially acknowledge it as a Civil War...for no State asked to be recognized as an independent, and then declared war on the Union. But we came very close. First, we need to address some more legal terms, and the terminology we'll be using in this course. The definition of Civil War..."

Landon turned around to write on a dry erase board.

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Chapter 29

Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2024

I am battling breast cancer as I write this, and I fear due to that, I may never see my kids or grandkids ever again. I am writing this in the hope that I will gain some peace from all the things happening in the world. The nation has changed. Not for the better, my opinion.

Maybe to understand why I am writing this might help whoever reads it. A man came to see us claiming to be a U.S. Marshal. He said my son Willy was alive and living in the witness protection program. He said that for national security he couldn't tell me anything more than he was alive and I have grand kids. When I saw a family photo of my son, married to a beautiful woman, and their son and daughter (so cute!), I just about fell over.

The nation is in a civil war, but the federal government has gone to great lengths to tell us that we're not. Meanwhile, the media is

censored like never before. There's no more sex in anything. I don't like it, but we're also fighting an epidemic of HIV 3.0. That's what they call it.

Apparently HIV mutated and now anything that made contact with infected saliva can get sick and die. There is no cure, even though they did finally cure the first HIV, thereby curing AIDS a couple years before. On the flipside, the virus can only live in the saliva as long as the saliva remains "pure", in or on a person, or air born. This has completely changed our culture.

For a time the State of Virginia was quarantined. Not sure why. I'm not a doctor. But apparently my son involved in making porn. Not acting, he edited. He had a God-given gift that made his movies spectacular. It all started right after he graduated from high school and tried to find a job.

He had a rough experience at junior college, and instead of transferring, he tried to make a living playing basketball in a bad neighborhood where organized crime was taking over.

In many regards, I feel I failed him as a mother.

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Chapter 30

Basketball had become the language of the latter 20th century, and a subindustry of the entertainment business.

Players were scouted as young as seven years old. But no scout would have noticed Willy Posta. He was 5' 8" and Caucasian,

both strikes against a player when the ideal player was 6' 2", and black. In a game once dominated by Caucasian Jews, that's just the way it was. The WNBA, the female version of the NBA, had just started, after a century of watching from the sidelines, and being relegated to seeing a woman's career end after college regardless of her talent.

Willy didn't really show his gift until he was in his junior year of high school, due to a case of stage fright. When he was alone, Willy was as talented as Pete Maravich and Steve Nash. But few coaches or scouts would have ever noticed.

Willy was noticed by a man known as Shadow.

1995.

Scottsdale Park was known for being a scouting ground for basketball talent. The courts were kept in good condition by the city, one of great wealth, and its surrounding neighborhoods were senior retirement communities. Gangs were not tolerated here. Even they knew that if any youths seeking to prove their toughness to local cops had any luck overwhelming them, the veterans of World War II and Vietnam would be quick to issue an On Demand butt kicking. The city was steeped in a history of the Old West, gunfights and all, and Scottsdale Benefited from all of this. There were no low-income apartments, no toleration of drug dealers on its streets, and no sign of prostitutes.

It was here where the thresh hold of tomorrow's stardom came to audition, assuming it could get into a game. The ambience was like a constant reminder of the 1992 film *White Men Can't*

Jump.

Every time he played, Willy started with disrespect. He was white. He was under 6-foot, couldn't dunk, and was rarely picked by locals. When he did play, he showed defense one only finds among elite college teams, a stamina that could outlast most marathon runners, and a shooting percentage from outside the 3-point line that made even the most cynical onlooker blush.

Willy could hit half-court shots blind folded. He had been born with a gift, an inner-compass, which he would later use as a moviemaker. He could form a pattern of what "it" would be in his mind and then feel out how to get there. Distance. Arc. Timing. His opponent's feet. Righty or lefty? Could he dribble? Willy had learned early on, from wisdom derived from his father, during late nights playing ping pong with the family, that the other guy will almost always slip and make a mistake. Who can stay focused the longest? That would determine the winner.

Later in life, Willy would coin his own version of that philosophy: who can keep their eyes on Jesus the longest? That would be the winner.

Willy and Shadow never played against each other. As Shadow once said of their Knock Out and HORSE matches, Shadow refused to oppose a boy he believed to benefit more as a student than an opponent. Willy absorbed Shadow's teaching on the court. There was nothing to gain by competing with each other. Shadow was a towering figure who would play professional basketball in Europe. Willy would someday coach in another country. For now, basketball was their language; it was how men

made love, without being sexual in any way. It was how brothers bonded, and remained teammates on and off the court. When White Men Can't Jump debuted, each of them watched and laughed at the coincidental relationship of the main characters.

East Phoenix was a suburban neighborhood where the Postas lived for 30 years, sprawling with land developers and nice playgrounds and new schools. It was relatively diverse.

A mixed diversity of men play basketball, including a former pro named Shadow, late 20's and Willy Posta, a teenager.

A crowd of about 100 people gather to watch and play basketball. Some were local youth, and some were not, commuting a long ways to test their skills on a collegiate scouting ground.

The majority of those who came were moderately talented, undisciplined punks who initially tested Willy's temper. He categorized them into genres: Clumsy White Guys, Untalented Blacks Guys, Arrogant-Quick-Tempered-Wet-Backs, and the newest generation of Gang-dressed Asians.

Few girls played.

There were no referees, for the most part, and unless a foul was extreme, competitors would rarely call their own fouls. Tempers flared quickly. The night games were lit such that it made each game surreal, almost scary, as if gang fights would break out any moment. Scottsdale Police Department cars sped by the distant road, Scottsdale Road, without a care.

In one instance, Willy recalled a pudgy black man, mid to late 20's, (so he guessed), going out of his way to be a jerk to everyone on the court. The balls he shot managed to rattle in, but he lacked a basketball IQ. He was all attitude. No coach would ever recruit this guy. He never passed, rarely played defense, and when he opened his mouth, every cliche one could imagine spewed from his tongue. His mocking of opposing players, whether he scored or not, whether his defense worked or not, sucked the fun out of the game

At one point in a game, Willy played opposite him and had to guard him. The guy was a dirty player. If he had the ball, he could do no wrong. If he were on defense, he practically tackled the dribbler. Willy chased a loose ball, turned to pass to a player who had a better angle at the rim, and did so, the ball deflected off a couple other players and finding its way back to him.

As he shot, he felt the guy's entire body land on him, and the ball ricocheted off his head and shoulder, grazing his face. Willy instinctively called foul, not out of injury, but possession.

The rude man shouted, "That wuddn't no foul just cuz you ate the ball!"

Willy sized the guy up. After years of martial arts training, he knew that minus the man skillfully wielding a weapon, he could kill him here and now.

He tested the waters. "Our ball." A man playing on his team took the ball from the top of the key and no one contested it.

On the next possession, Willy tried to tune the guy out. Another player shot the ball, and it missed, sending the players to the other side of the court with the momentum of a slow tennis match.

Willy watched the guy run slowly behind the player driving to the basket with the ball, who eventually missed an easy lay up without anyone defending the rim. The black man suddenly wandered off the court, as if he'd been stunned by a taser and collapsed.

As the other players pursued the ball, pushed back the other way, no one but Willy seemed to notice this man falling down. And no one could see what happened next...

His spirit left his body due to a fatal heart attack and found its way to the portal of where the souls of the dead enter Eternity. The Holy Spirit that is inside a few souls entering was not within this man, and he takes once good look of the glorious entrance to the kingdom of God, where Jesus sits on His throne, the center of all creation, and found himself being escorted by Angels to the path the majority of the souls were going, all sharing one commonality: none of them had His spirit living inside of them.

His spirit was in hell before the paramedics arrived. A funeral would be held at a local church where his family, his mother a devout Christian with the Spirit living in her, his sisters pending, and his cousins, all dressed like musician Ice Cube, did not, listened to a black minister declare before a black congregation

and a black choir that he was now with God.

Uh-huh. Apparently when it came down to it, he was too cool to need Jesus.

Now his choices could not be undone. The man found himself in a surreal jail cell by himself, surrounded by deep, dark monster noises and the sounds of distant human screaming in every direction. And in his heart he heard a voice confirm to him, forever.

Meanwhile, on any given day, Willy played '21' basketball and made a shot only a few men in the world could make - Steve Nash, Pete Marovich, Mike Bibby, John Stockton.

Other players groaned. Some seemed to know he's that good, while others were surprised at the talented Caucasian young man.

Also, Willy's body language was extremely polite versus most of the other players.

Willy and Shadow competed in games of horse. At first glance, it appeared to be a lopsided contest, but Willy showed remarkable ability and made most of his shots, no matter how desperate or ludicrous they seemed.

Shadow had to maneuver elaborate dunks to beat Willy.

"And no White Men Can't Jump jokes," Willy bantered playfully, "That movie was so choreographed it wasn't even

funny. That's why they used so much slow motion, to cover up the choreography."

"And I think you're the only person in America who noticed," Shadow teased back. "Wanna play again, no dunking?"

"Do you?" Willy challenged, having beaten Shadow before. (Granted, Shadow did have the stomach flu that day.)

Two men in suits were present, not playing, sitting in a nearby set of bleachers. They kept track of gambling. Shadow made eye contact with them. At first it was antagonistic.

When there was a break in the action, Shadow walked to the bleachers and wiped himself off with a towel, guzzling a water bottle. It was about 102-degrees.

"I need water," he shouted, motioning to his bottle and the nearby fountain.

"You in?" Willy asked as players waiting for a new game assembled to shoot for eligibility.

"Did I lose?" Shadow asked rhetorically.

Shadow walked to a water fountain to refill his plastic bottle. One of the men in suits approached him. Max. If Max had been raised in a home that forced him to finish college, he was a CEO.

Here, he was a bag man for the local mob.

“My boss said no,” Max said, “If it were up to me, we wouldn’t be doing this, but, it’s not.”

“I understand.”

“But there is another way,” Max said, grabbing Shadow’s attention.

Shadow looked at Max, listening.

“A drop. Drugs for cash. All debts wiped. Including mine.”

“Yours?” Shadow asked, not realizing that Willy wasn’t the only person working off a debt to Thomas Fierelli.

“It’s weird.” Max said.

“That is weird,” Shadow agreed.

“I don’t like it either,” Max said, trying to hide his own dread. He almost hated his suits, for they were provided by a thief, a murderer and a liar.

Shadow’s hand on the water kept it going as he began thinking. “Why him?” he asked, motioning to Willy.

“I don’t pretend to know Thomas’ mind, but, his dad’s a fireman, his brother’s a cop. And nobody’s gonna come down on him as hard as they might somebody else.”

Two Angels stood next to Shadow and Max and listened closely to them.

“He’s gotta have someone on the inside.” Shadow said, “I mean, let’s say he does the deal, and Phoenix PD catches him and the money and the drugs get put into a locket downtown, Thomas has to know that.”

“It’s like he’s using him as a diversion.”

“Meanwhile it ruins his life. He’ll get probation,” Shadow responds, thinking it out. “So why would he forgive you your debts?”

Max stares at Shadow, shaking his head side to side without knowing it, “I’m a liability. He needs me to get out of Arizona. He gave me a down payment on my freedom.” Max pulled out a bus ticket, destination: TBD.

Shadow realized Willy’s life would be in danger. “Like Casablanca. Papers no one would reject to get out of the city without being arrested or worse. What’s he got on you?”

Max wrinkled his eyes, as the noise of the people passing by them drowned out the sensitivity of their conversation, “Are you kiddin’? I’m wanted for 14 ‘missing persons’, man. Don’t worry. Ain’t nothing gonna happen to your boy. Cool?”

“None of this is cool. I pray you and yours stay safe. I want nothing to do with it. And if I can help it, he won’t either.”

“If he doesn’t do it, you know what’s gonna happen to him, and maybe you. You think Thomas Fierelli don’t know how to get to people? The man has Hell’s Angels on payroll.”

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Chapter 31

Most criminals have nice homes with well-maintained yards. Thomas Fierelli was no exception. There were security cameras and armed guards inside.

There were two main doors. One was a facade, custom built for this house when Thomas bought it, mostly for logistics sake -- mail.

Thomas was a made man by a Mexican gang with its roots in Central America. He was on the receiving end of distribution. His lone fidelity was the manner in which he sent his quota to his bosses in several Central and South American countries. These people did not love drugs. They loved profit. They loved the worldly freedom that money bought. While most people in their countries barely survived, they traded their free wills for the luxuries afforded to them by their bosses. Only a few men truly enjoyed a sense of freedom, and those men had to live in custom made bunkers, under the constant threat of rivals, police and foreign military.

Amidst sidewalks with Humvees parked bumper to bumper, Shadow parked his modest sedan and walked into enemy territory.

Over time, citizens like Thomas Fierelli would become the subject of ongoing Homeland Security searches and harassment, being an accomplice to terrorism, but the attacks of September 11, 2001, in New York City, had not happened yet and this puppet of Satan's still lived under the umbrella of evil.

Shadow knew this was the man who was behind his brother's death. He walked by faith to the front door and rang the door bell.

The guard who opened the door looked about 14 years old, armed to the teeth. Shadow didn't smile. "I'm here to see Thomas. My name is Shadow."

The boy closed the door without a word and after about 30 seconds, the door reopened, this time about 20 men walked slowly out the door and surrounded Shadow.

Shadow did not speak. One man, a short, unarmed Latino man with light skin and pleasant demeanor, recognized him. Julio Vega was an educated man, his parents spending their money on educating their son. Unfortunately, Julio was recruited by Thomas and given all the amenities a college graduate could earn, without putting in the time. Over time, his participation and even planning of crimes made him the mastermind behind Thomas' evil desires. Every Number-one needed a number-two.

"Stephen, what a pleasant surprise. This man is my friend. What brings you here?"

Shadow did not answer him, shaking his hand only out of

protocol.

Thomas Fierelli played video games with several underdressed women, drinking and smoking around him.

Two sat near him wearing very loose-fitting clothing. They were surrounded by drugs. Thomas used them as much like toys as he did the game control he frantically pressed buttons on.

Thomas himself didn't consume any of the drugs.

“Thomas,” Julio said gently, making a brief shh-sound to his cackling men, who quickly obeyed.

Thomas paused his game and turned around to see Shadow's face, towering above his men, ducking the doorway into this room.

“You got my money?”

Shadow stared at Thomas, and the jailbait young girls who sat next to him on the couch.

“The FBI has made a case against you.”

“Okay,” Thomas said, unfazed. “You got my money?” The noise from the paused-game is so loud that Shadow considers Thomas may not have heard him.

Louder, Shadow declared, “The FBI has made its case against you.”

Thomas muted the TV. “I know. They’ve been saying that for decades. They want me to turn state’s witness for them, and let the Justice Department and the CIA go after leaders of foreign nations. Doesn’t that sound really cool? I told them I wasn’t interested. However, you vouched for your young friend, the sharp shooter. Willy. Do you have his money?”

Shadow pulled out an envelope and handed it to Julio. “It’s there, with interest.”

Julio and Shadow exchanged a long look, as if Good were staring down Evil. Julio did not count it, though Thomas’ eyes seemed to want him to.

Shadow, “As for your business transaction, whatever you do, it will not include Willy or Max or myself. Do we have a deal?”

“No,” Thomas answered. “If your boy isn’t there, I’m going to kill his family and yours.”

“But I just paid you.”

“I don’t remember seeing any money.”

Shadow reached to pull the envelope away from Julio, when he saw it get tossed to a man in the back of the room and disappear.

“Now, do as I say if you want to live.”

Shadow, a little taken aback, looked at Julio as if to ask for help.

Julio only offered a blank look back. “I will walk you to the door,” he said gently.

Thomas shouted to Shadow as he walked farther away, “You all think you can dance with the devil and walk away. You can’t. No one can.”

Shadow walked alone with Julio and said, “He’s insane.”

Julio only offered back, “Next time my friend, don’t bring cash.”

As Shadow stepped outside the door, he expected to hear the sound of a gun at his head. Julio said, “Tell your boy a car will come by the bus stop near his home at about 6:30 in the morning. He is to get in and do as he is told. Tell him to keep his head down and he will live.”

“Why are you just letting me go?”

“Because I know you are close to his brother, who will be there, a part of the sting operation that will capture him.”

“The money and the drugs will get placed into an evidence locker and the bank account of the State Attorney General. You’ll never see it.”

“Shadow, when you attended community college, did you ever take accounting?” Julio asked.

Shadow glanced around the short man’s line of vision to notice

no one was around him; no security was in sight. This was slightly unnerving.

“There is a term used known as the Cost of Doing Business. The authorities learned long ago that if the cost of allowing companies to do business is cheaper than war, they will allow it, especially when they receive money directly from those companies or they benefit from a certain level of self-regulation by the companies. This is a company. No more, no less. If you want to change it, show a more profitable way and the company will listen.”

“You’re saying the State Attorney General will launder the money and the drugs for you?”

“That is what I am saying. The drug war that President Clinton fights, why doesn’t he send his jets to bomb poppy fields? Why doesn’t he drop a single nuclear bomb on a city in Central or South America?”

Shadow was speechless.

“Macroeconomics,” Julio explained. “If you crush the infrastructure of an entire country, two entities are going to demand an explanation. One entity is the populous of your own country. There are many tax payers in the United States with family here and there. They are voters. Two, Clinton would have to answer to the United Nations. Notice how the U.N. has not acted to end the suffering in western Africa, or Serbia. As for the business venture we will conduct in a few days, consider this: when people die in a drug war, nobody wins. When they all live,

all that is lost is some paper work processing them through the system.”

“Willy becomes a felon.”

Julio shrugged, “Better than dead? He’s Caucasian, and family to the police that patrol this city. No judge will put him in prison.”

“You don’t care that this may ruin his life?” Shadow pleaded.

“You are a minister of God, are you not? Did you think it would easy?” Julio asked him with a tone that sounded almost offended. “You act like Willy is innocent. He spent the last year working for Thomas at Private’s Cove, racking up a bill for video rentals in the thousands and no one ever questioned him.

When he quit, he became a liability. His debt cannot be dismissed. He must pay it.

“Okay. Real world. Give me my money back.”

“I already did,” Julio answered. Hen then stepped back and closed the door.

Shadow saw a security camera swivel to point directly at him and he awkwardly returned to his car. He sweated a little before turning the ignition key. Then Shadow saw a guard appear to pop open the hatch to the Humvee parked right in front of him, he realized his car was not armed with a bomb. However, his glove box was not closed all the way.

He opened it and saw the envelope. Apparently his car locks and alarm were not enough to prevent Fierelli's men from breaking into his car, undetected.

The message was sent, "We don't want your money. Do as you are told. We can get to you."

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Chapter 32

A few days later...

At the very city park basketball courts, albeit, the parking lot...

Police arrest many at a drug sting operation in a park adjacent to the basketball courts. Zachary "Ziggy" Posta, a cop in his early 30's, is among the police dressed in athletic gear.

Within seconds, a dozen undercover agents who were playing basketball pull out weapons and cuffs and contain a dozen men, including Willy, seizing a few duffle bags of contraband.

Max looked relieved to be in hand cuffs, almost happy, explaining that for him, it was all over. Willy looked dazed, confused and terrified.

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Chapter 33

Police Interview Room 3.

Willy's feet and hands were in chains in the room. He stared at the floor in embarrassment, as his brother Ziggy questioned him. Before he could ask more than, "Why?" another detective, Paul Warfield, a Caucasian in his late 30's, dressed in a suit, entered.

Paul had already talked to the captain about what happened, and an informant had explained why Willy felt he had to play his role in this. The Captain knew all too well of the leaks in the department, and was not in the political position to oppose them. That would be done well after his career was over.

"Zig, go check in with the sergeant," Paul said, making it clear it was not a request.

"What? Why?"

Paul whispered into Ziggy's ear, "You ask me what or why again and I have been ordered to put you in the cell next door."

Ziggy left the room.

"They sent you?" Willy asked.

"Conflict of interest," Paul said calmly. Paul sat across from Willy and unlocked his hand cuffs.

"Why didn't my brother do that?" Willy asked.

Paul bent down to unlock Willy's feet.

“He wants to strangle you,” Paul said.

Willy felt the chains unlock, the feeling of freedom exercised by the separation of skin and chain. “Thank you. Why are you doing it?” The foot shackle fell to the floor.

“Because I can.”

“If I try to make a break for it?”

Paul’s calm tone turned lethal by his choice of words, “I will shoot you dead. I know you won’t,” Paul added, sitting face to face with him. “Little brother, what are you doing here?”

Willy looked at the table. “You have no paper. Room’s wired?”

“Yes. Do you want a lawyer?”

Willy paused and considered the question.

An Angel of the Lord, invisible, standing behind Willy whispered to him. He is dressed in white, and is surrounded by a bright light that seems to form an umbilical and reach to heaven. “Trust him.”

Willy looked at Paul. He could not see the Holy Spirit glowing in Paul’s heart.

“I trust you.”

“So do you want a lawyer or do not want a lawyer?”

Willy spoke up, as if announcing, “Paul Warfield is a trusted family friend and at this time I do not believe I need a lawyer. I am not at this time requesting a lawyer. That work?”

Paul cracked a restrained chuckle. “Yes. What were you doing there?”

“They told me if I made the buy, my debts would go away.”

“Who is they?”

“Thomas Fierelli and those who enforce his investments, from gambling to prostitution to porn to drugs.”

“You doing drugs?” Paul asked.

“Oh, no, no, no...” Willy reassured him.

“Then, what debts?” Paul asked.

Willy had a look of embarrassment.

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Chapter 34

Pirate’s Cove adult nightclub and video rental at night had a mall-like atmosphere. The parking lot was full. The customers looked like the same one might find at any other supermarket. Men and women shopped there alike, and sadly, a few kids were with them. (Store managers knew that a child in an adult store

was forbidden, so doorman sat next to the entrances, screening storefronts of the obvious disallowed.) No food or drink, no third-party solicitors, no animals, and no kids. No one under 18. The fake ID industry was thriving, enabling early-developed 14-year-old girls to market themselves here.

There were multiple stores in a row of this strip mall, all selling a sex-related product. Among them were check-cashing stores, pawn shops, liquor stores, video stores, and auto insurance.

Young women, ranging in ages from unofficially 16 to early 40's, entered the dance club and got into a dressing room.

Boys and men, ranging in ages from 11 to 90, also went in, shopping among the other shops as well. It was unnerving to see older men here with young boys, and undercover cops had these shops well covered. Law enforcement of prostitution was an ongoing science. Defense lawyers had used the Law to make prostitution, and sadly, human trafficking into big business that attracted every facet of organized crime. Most criminals spent their lives hiding in plain sight, and most victims did not know they had every right to cry for help.

The video stores were packed, with a constant flow of foot traffic going in and out. If the patrons of the average adult video store could be cross-marked with a bright red skin color per every churchgoer, mostly Christians or Catholics, about three-quarters of the population would be red. Church leaders who tried to claim that this industry was an obscure blip on the Gross National Product of the U.S. economy were either ill-informed or trying to underscore the counseling needs of the church by

downplaying the problem.

Hungry people will always seek food and unfortunately, the 1980s church had become a TV-enabled hypocrisy-entrapped reenactment of the pawn shop the Temple of Solomon had become when Jesus cleaned it. Those seeking love, in any form, came here. Attractive women smiled at them.

On TV, comedian Dana Carvey was applauded by mocking the sour-faced judgmental old church ladies who repulsed younger church goers, many who found themselves engulfed in the porn industry years later.

The racism that had existed between the Jews, who claimed to be children of God by way of a prophetic link to ancestor known as Abraham, versus the godless, pagan war mongers of Rome. Now the Church leaders, lead by authors like Jerry Falwell, whose book *Wake Up America!* struck a cord among the upper class in the United States, a generation trying to balance financial success with spiritual peace. It accused pop musicians and entertainers who did not fully agree with Rev. Falwell of being the seeds of Satan, and the reason for all the nation's spiritual woes.

An unknown screenwriter named Aaron Sorkin would one day scribe a character named Andy Shepherd in a film called *The American President*, who stated, "...is interested in two things and two things only: making you afraid of it and telling you who's to blame for it. That, ladies and gentlemen, is how you win elections."

His strategy both succeeded and failed. It cited a desire within all Americans to seek answers within the Bible. A surge of nonprofit-ism not seen since the mid 1960s turned the word Nonprofit into its own industry on college campuses everywhere.

One the flip side, when you tell people something is off limits or risque, it's going to add to its brand equity and stir interest. Just like Adam and Eve and the whole EdenGate fiasco, the Christian Coalition set themselves up for failure by counter-promoting the entire adult entertainment industry. Every condemnation became free promotional marketing.

Considering the effectiveness of the product, and the natural desire for humans to engage in sex regardless of the availability of published works, with or without visuals, every single plea not to touch that unclean product became a motivation to consume it all the more.

Inside these stores were the filthiest, under-lit warehouse with old, worn, stained, cheap carpeting was walked on by half-naked and partially naked women.

The beehive of bodies weaving in and out of each other resembled an anthill, with table dances visible within the shadows.

Invisible to the naked eye were a sea of demons perched on every part of the buildings, inside and out, spitting on the customers, Discouragement, Entitlement, Desperation, Pride, Selfish Ambition (not to be confused with self-motivation and

discipline), Vengeance, and Lust.

These demons looked like they are straight out of a horror movie, disfigured remnants of the fallen angels they once were.

From their eyes, evil whirled and glared out, fired like muddy slime at unsuspecting people.

On almost all people is a date, marked “Distract Until...” and a specific date. The demons had one main task: keep the people away from God.

A few people did not have such a number, but such customers looked very sickly. Their hearts glowed with the Holy Spirit, glowing softly within them.

As women gave private dances, demons interwove themselves around the motion of their bodies, and wove in and out of the eyes and heart of the customers.

Out of the speakers boomed music in which demons rode on, spitting on customers the venom of hell, with the motion alike kids flying off water slides.

Shadows of dancers gyrating in repetitive movements around customers; men and women, who tipped them \$20 - \$100 per dance, created a dark jungle within an otherwise empty building. The money was made on overpriced alcohol and stale food. Enough food was offered to quell the amount of vomiting in the restrooms. (Certain foods helped the body process alcohol better, and would enable customers to drink more.)

The bar was registered as a third party check cashing retailer, so customers could bring their printed out paychecks directly here after they left work each week. They could literally give their paychecks to the bartender, which was both helpful and disastrous. Many husbands and fathers who were or became alcoholics lost their incomes, and over time, their marriages and parental rights because of bars like this.

The Constitution gave business the right to market itself. The only thing a city could do to combat these issues on moral grounds was raise luxury taxes and qualified the adult genre as luxury. This did put some poorly managed stores out of business.

Most adapted by raising alcohol prices, and the customers kept coming in. Consumers proved in the 1930s that they preferred expensive alcohol to none at all.

In a VIP section, which was nothing more than a wall separating the main dance floors from a semiprivate dancing area, drunken men sat on filthy couches and watched dancers torsos and groins gyrate very slowly in front of their faces.

The wall was short enough for the dancers to be perched, appearing as if they were wading in a swimming pool, leaning on the cool decking, and they were perched close enough together to carry on side-conversations with each other. The clients were oblivious to this, eyes focused on their bodies. Both women and men sat to receive such personal dances from female dancers.

Male dancers and female dancers were not permitted by law to solicit their services in the same facility, creating different crowd flows, between the straight and homosexual genres. Also, most states required that stores choose one of two options: video sales and semiprivate dancing or alcohol and semi-primate dancing. The combination was not permitted.

The body motions were so automated that the women were bored, and the VIP wall took on a conversational life of its own. The best gossip, side deals and roommates situations happened on The Wall. Dancers would coordinate their clients to accommodate friend-to-friend counseling. In most cases, the counseling was terrible or lacked the compass of the Bible, and more often than not, this worsened each worker's circumstances.

This of course, was a byproduct of sin. The majority of the men and women who worked at these dancing places were high school graduates and, of those, a few were college students. The system had failed them.

Their childhood dreams had been detoured by bad parenting, deaths in families, divorces, parents addicted to drugs or alcohol or both, and the majority of the nonreligious programs designed to use humanist "positive thinking" to reach out to them had fallen short.

Most cops who patrolled these beats were, at heart, ministers of their faith employed by the badge. Christ had Called many to Discipleship through police, sheriff, prison guard and fire jobs. Youth pastors spent a great deal of their time visiting juvenile

detention facilities and orphanages, trying to build bridges between the worlds of these kids, rocked by any number of dysfunctions and spiritual wars, and the sanity afforded to anyone who cried out to the Lord, as proclaimed in Acts 2:21, “Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Of course, not all of these artists gyrating before clients were there because they had nowhere else to go. Some were there because they truly felt the powerful jolt afforded to the stage performer. Models who did not find the path to a steady paycheck for showcasing clothing or food or demonstrating products, in person or on TV, were often found here, working in what was on par with the baseball minor leagues.

The greatest danger of the job was not being caught in the middle of a bar fight; it was not being robbed; it was not being raped or murdered. It was catching a cold or flu virus or yeast infection that would result in becoming too sick to work. If you couldn’t work, you couldn’t make the money needed to eat and pay rent.

Few strippers were homeowners. Most didn’t own their own cars, suffering long track records of repossessed vehicles and evictions. The roughest situations happened among workers who had sexual partners with addictions. Relationships that might otherwise result in content marriages and families instead filled the family court system with domestic violence arrests, child custody problems and frequent patronage of Planned Parenthood or other businesses that performed abortions and sex disease testing.

Several of these women read books and the employment ads as they do their job.

The VIP area tables were littered with newspaper fragments, mostly employment ads. The employees looked like they had to be there. This was their prison.

A young woman, barely 18, walked a client into the VIP booth to give him a private dance.

Less than ten years before, she was in a classroom, during the day, listening to a guest lecture on Career Day.

A woman who was the local manager of a bank tried timidly to inspire the class, coming off as weak. “You can be anything you want to be. Listen to teachers and get good grades.”

In a common apartment, that same little girl was at home, sitting alone the couch watching TV. Her mother was asleep, drunk in the next room. A man emerged from the bathroom, and gave her a greasy smile.

Now that little girl was a legal adult giving a stranger a lap dance in the VIP section. She mounted the couch so that her torso gyrates for a young man, maybe 20 years old. The young man had a look of compassion in his eyes. Some in a church might have accused it of being lust. It was compassion.

Another girl, Emma Posta, considered a veteran dancer from a well known stable family, walked through the dark strip club, and a customer’s hand reached out for her, requesting a dance.

The man who asked her is a familiar repeat customer, Ben Gillian, a local salesman in his early 60's. Ben suffered from depression and alcoholism.

The music was booming, and people were yelling to be heard, speaking into each other's ears.

Movies often show club goers having casual conversations at reasonable speaking volumes. Not so in real life. The ambiance is intended for the comfort of drunken customers. Alcohol numbs the senses; therein alone is the reason why drunk drivers are oblivious to their conditions, the internal censors of their bodies designed to warn them of being unfit to operate heavy machinery, like a car, is numbed such that they think they are fine. It's not that they are fine, it's that their senses, including common sense, is blistered such that they make choices that they otherwise would not make.

When Emma was asked by her church going friends, who gossiped about her that she was backslidden for holding a job as a waitress...stripper...waitress...stripper, really? Emma Posta? She's got a nice body...she make good money?

Emma was an intellectual cursed with a body that attracted all the wrong kind of men. She would say, 'When I go to work, I see alcohol effect nice people to do stupid things...of course, you can't tell 'em anything without them gettin' offended. Drunk people never think clearly. They can't. Their normal brain movement, and most people are really smart on a full stomach and sleep, is paused by alcohol until time passes.' She held most people's attention because she was smart, and funny, and loved

God. And, because she was hot.

A youth pastor once warned her of the curse of beauty preventing her from having the kind of man of God she saw in her father as her own husband. He told her the story of Mary Magdalene, a wealthy single woman in a day when Jewish women did not live single lives. She fell in love with Jesus in all ways that were not erotic.

The very Spirit that attracted her to Jesus reminded her that He was intended to redeem the world as a husband to a spiritual nation predestined by God, not be a husband to any woman on Earth. Ironically, she was able to meet and get close to many men who sought God, most of whom did so out of the lust for power. Emma took that to heart. She knew men were flawed, but she also knew she wanted children, and by God, someone who truly loved God and was as hot as she was in her eyes, and who delivered the magic many only found in entertainment, such as this place, did exist in real life.

As her youth pastor would preach, 'For every fake, there must be an authentic.' She noted that he always half-joked, 'Don't be afraid to leave your home town to meet Mister or Misses Right.' Society once courted and match-made absent of the automobile, absent of cross-continental travel. 'Your true love might be in another country, reading the same Bible you do...' The pastor always explained why he would say this, emphasizing, 'You're rejection is God's protection. Either you're not ready for them, or they are not ready for you. Don't ever sit at home, and wait by the phone...or since we have cell phones now...you get the idea...you've heard that expression from that one movie...You

Complete Me...It's true about Jesus...when it comes to the opposite gender, the fact is you might be jewel surrounded by a bunch of lumps of coal...'

Emma took the lesson to heart and was the hot girl in school who treated all the geeks with respect. 'Those geeks are going to grow out of their acne and awkwardness in time, and the ones whose jobs skills catch fire, the ones who follow God, the ones who treat their bodies with self respect, those are going to be the fathers who raise their families and bless their wives. Those are the men you're gonna want. Those other guys...prison and homeless shelters are filled with men whose lungs are filled with excuses. It's up to you to make the best choices for you. Make no mistake, that doesn't mean you run from Genesis 3:16. But, if you don't know what you want, and ask God for that type of man, then whomever you think might accidentally provide it will always let you down. Then, the problem is you. You become that woman worth labeling the quarrelsome wife. The woman at the water well Jesus talked to, and so on. Avoid having bad taste in men by surrendering your taste buds to the Lord. Our taste buds at 13 years old are awful, because we're drawing from the limited experiences of puberty. And when in doubt, wait...make no mistake, when he's the right guy, you won't have any doubts. And as a song I like goes, you'll know a kiss that knows no shame. Never let the world and its trendy opinions tell you who you are...'

"Emma, I missed you," Ben said.

Emma saw the face whom the hand was connected to and asked with a genuine smile, "How are you?"

“Uh, bad week, but, you’re gonna cheer me up,” Ben said with the charisma of a self-destructive man. Ben was a man who spent his whole life looking for back doors and short cuts, when the front doors were always just a few more steps away. He suffered from broken trust as a child that never healed.

“I’ll give you a freebie on one condition.”

Ben pulled out a \$20 bill. He couldn’t hear her very well over the music volume. “What?”

Emma stepped out of the lane of walking traffic she was in and shouted closer to his face. He was at-a-glance, a nice, handsome man. “I said I’ll give you a free dance on one condition.”

“What’s that?” he asked, waiting for the alcohol to kick in.

“You go with your wife to church tomorrow.”

Ben answered with the same tone as the men who pleaded for Jesus to heal them at a distance in Luke 17:11-19, “I don’t go to church no more. I did that years ago...didn’t help.”

Emma smiled, appearing slightly disappointed, and replied in his ear, taking his money. “You’re a fool.”

Ben bore a naked tipsy smile, “I’m a fool for you, baby.”

Emma started to dance for Ben. He pulled out a \$100. “This is for school,” he said.

Emma eyed the \$100 bill as she placed her steady feet in such a place whereby she could dance without risking any man take control of her. Ben pulled his hand back slightly as Emma slung her arms around him to grab it. She reacted to his arm denying her. He smiled.

“Take it all off,” he asked, a felony.

Emma smiled. “It’s illegal.”

“I got another one in my pocket,” he counter offered.

“It’s illegal,” she repeated, continuing to gyrate over him.

“How do you know?” he asked, like a child not liking being told no.

“I’m majoring in Political Science and my brother’s a cop,” she replied, using her body language to maneuver her face around his, keeping a steady 3 inches between her lips and his. Radar aimed at her mouth would have clocked her at 3.1 to 3.3 inches from his face the entire time. Few people outside the profession knew this was a calculated science that performers learned to get good at over time. The closer they got, the more tips they made. But, even if the customer was attractive enough to touch, the risk of fluids, or worse, vomit, (most were drunk), emerging accidentally from a person’s mouth were all too high.

Ben’s grip became weaker and he felt her take his \$100 bill.

The man who owned and operated this bar, with investment interest from organized crime, was the bane of every cop who worked against the horror of drug addiction. He looked like a wannaba gangster. He had an east coast business sense and a west coast charm. He was a respected businessman in his own mind, and on the Put Out of Business List of every mayor who took office. The damage done to the local workers through drug addiction and alcoholism wasn't worth the amount of money this store generated in taxes.

Few knew he attended church when he was younger, but was devastated by a tragedy, turning him into the man he would become. He had taken a failing strip club and with the help of eastern European financing and southwestern launderers, he had entered into a couples dance with the devil. He was not born from the seeds of evil, but his feet had followed Satan's plan for decades. His name was Mickey Bravo.

He was in his mid-30's, about six-feet tall and only about 15 pounds overweight. He held a clipboard and a cell phone, seeing Emma out of the corner of his eye and taking note of her. Emma looked healthier than any of the other girls. The Holy Spirit glowed in her heart.

Mickey was drawn to that.

A stripper emerged from the stage and was approached by a woman in professional-casual clothes who offered her a business card. She offered a sales-like smile. Though the music is booming, the woman spoke just loud enough to be heard as she leaned into the stripper's ear.

“My name is Jane Mazzelli. I produce adult movies. I think you could be very successful at it. When you have some time, I’d like to talk to you.”

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Chapter 35

Landon lectured, “Strip clubs had long been the porn industry’s equivalent to major league baseball’s minor league system. It’s where talent scouts and producers go for new talent prospects. They sell ‘em on the rewards, and leave out all the risks.”

Inside this adult video store was a world unto itself, with its own subculture, its own movie stars, and its own demons. They were invisible to humans, perched like ravens on each shelf.

This particular one was skillfully laid out with the same psychology as a grocery store. Retailers knew shopper’s habits dating back to R.H. Macy and F.W. Woolworth’s breakthroughs in regards to predicting and guiding shopping behavior.

Impulse buying was even more strategic in adult stores because each gender purchased different products for different reasons; each culture and age group had its own idea of what was appealing. The performers would buy out all the food and refrigerated beverages. Non performers would buy out all the most recent rental videos. The content was designed and delivered with two factors in mind: psychology and federal laws.

Genres and sub-genres were born of successful cinematic

experiments ranging from the number of partners, to the camera's position in the acts being recorded. Over time, one of the most bankable heterosexual genres involved men having their orgasm consumed by one or more women. The brain adopted the virtual partner and processed it personally, and the other body parts were able to do what a spouse would otherwise do.

Not everyone used their hands, for not all customers had hands. A huge marketplace existed among paraplegics. Their brains were even more energized by visual stimulants because their bodies were incapable of having standard orgasms. Since the main sensors were in the brain, their enjoyment of sex was different than a man who could have a traditional orgasm, but just as desirable. Much depended on the specific type of paralysis.

In general, men's appetites were like idling rockets, filled with fuel. Once they experienced orgasm, they were relieved, for about a half-hour. Then they would want to have another. Usually four to five orgasms would make a man feel content with his sexual activity in a 24-hour span.

The desire to have sex would remain until a release happened, whereby fluid traveled through the urethra.

When that was released, men usually wanted to do something else. A fully sexually satisfied man has sex with his wife about twice a day or five times per week, minimum. Most women's desires were less than half that until both genders get into their 40's. Most women wanted more sex and, given life

circumstances and the man's spiritual growth, assuming he had remained sexually faithful to her, (and vice versa); this was when sex lives kick into 3rd and fourth gear, using a standard transmission from a car as a metaphor.

Women were much different. Their sex drives were more like water waves. At the beginning of the wave, their desire was enormous. Over time, water naturally fell because of gravity, and when the wave finishes, the woman's desire to have sex passed.

Make no mistake, the more a particular man excites her by any number of ways, mostly outside his control, and during times of his vocal silence, the wave started again and lasted a while. The wavelengths varied depending on any number of carnal factors, some emotional, some physical.

The oldest men here were typically widowers, or were getting visual aides to share with their wives. Many had remarried and their younger wives preferred to watch the movies together. In many cultures, including the majority of the Old Testament, older men who had financial stability and other wives, would take younger women into their beds.

As of the Epistles of Paul, it was declared that any man who sought church leadership shall have one wife, and that tradition, derived from Adam and Eve, (minus the ability to confirm that Adam only had sex with his wife, and not his daughters or grandkids -- about a 1000 years before such acts were prohibited by God due to the damage of sin), such that today, in the 1990s United States, polygamy was illegal.

The cliche that porn shops were for dirty old men were as ignorant as the Spanish Armada's business plan that taking Africans to The New World would remedy the massive labor shortages incurred by way of European diseases invading the West. Black people wouldn't die from diseases, they reasoned, they are too strong. Wrong. And it took over 400 years to fix the damage caused to the civil rights of entire ethnic groups.

It was a women's industry. A woman managed the inventory and restocked the shelves. She spent years working at JC Penny. She had boys of her own, grown and married, and remembers explaining to them the difference between fantasy and reality. Just like action movies used stunt men to do the dangerous work, no means no. Before video, there was film (sale rack now, 8mm,) and before film, there were books and before books, there was opera. She remembered when books were banned from her high school library for being accused of being obscene. She attended a Catholic school at the time and asked the nuns why fiction was branded as obscene, but the Song of Solomon was okay?

They answered contritely; it was a liberal Catholic school. There was a political battle happening in the courts and there was no difference. Sex was sex. The fact that fiction books made sex out of wed lock sound glamorous was deemed a threat to the establishment. Her teachers further explained the history of Margaret Sanger's dark experiments, in an attempt to exterminate black people through birth control. Sanger's ideas were later adopted by Hitler and manifested in the darkest way through the Holocaust.

The fact was the lone difference was context. The Song of Solomon and other books in the Bible described sex in detail. That wasn't the problem. The problem was the financial tax that came with addiction, disease and child neglect. Some cases were involuntary. Betty Page was sexually assaulted as a young woman, as were many would-be adult performers. Ginger Lynn Andrews was the most recent adult star inducted into the industry's hall of fame, whose sex life began prematurely at the hands of a selfish, evil man who it was believed ended his life on Earth in prison for raping other women, a theory no one could prove.

Many of these women found nice people, many of them men, to work with, and after bonding with colleagues who in some cases experienced even more nightmare life paths, they chose to put their apparent attraction by the opposite gender to work for themselves.

Some found sanity, marriages and parenthood this way, and some only found short-lived success in a blur of life filled with drugs, paranoia and eventually, depression. The number one cause of death for adult entertainers was suicide.

Any high school actors with delusions about the loose-and-wild lifestyle of being-paid-for-sex-party-all-the-time career of an adult actor would be rudely awakened when their bodies suffered from a variety of illnesses and in some cases, terminal illnesses.

There were not many old retired adult performers who lived

beyond the age of 50. And, the money was not good. Males were paid less than women, and the most destructive genre for men was homosexual and bisexual. Microscopic cuts in a mouth or any contact between genitals that was not protected by latex, whether a condom or some other device, risked the performer or director's exposure to AIDS and other disrespecting illnesses. Clinics sponsored by the trade would test performers and warn them that diseases were a cost of doing business. Plan an exit strategy if you want to live.

Few customers considered what was happened on the other side of the camera to create the products they were buying. At face value, child porn was not allowed in the stores, but in many cases, one could not easily discern whether or not a performer was of legal age. In more than one instance, millions of copies were pulled from circulation when it was learned that on the date of recording, the performer's identification was fake.

As customers looked at each video cover, the demons imitated the poses and faces on the covers, mocking the person looking at it. The demons were able to shoot venom from their eyes into the customer's eyes in an instant.

Customers were affected, their body language shifting from polite to introverted, from considerate to reserved, their faces from tight to relaxed.

The cashier's station was a long wooden bar-like platform. On the front of it there are many signs. "All Sales Final".

Several demons stood in front of the check out stand holding

signs that read:

“This is the last time.”

“No judgment.”

“Make sure no one sees you.”

“Buy this over food.”

The front of the store had sex toy accessories and clothing. There were a few sale racks with surplus videos no one wanted. They were marked 1/2 off.

Behind a few more rows of shelves, the hardcore porn video products were mounted. The silence of those browsing was like a library in the 1950s.

One woman in her mid 20's, giggled to a friend, in her late 20's, about a video title. They got dirty looks from other browsers, who had serious looks on their faces as they shopped.

The prices were outrageously expensive. Large handwritten signs were mounted at the cashier stations declared, “No Returns, No Exchanges, No Exceptions.”

The clerk behind the counter was heavily tattooed and lacked teeth.

Willy emerged from an isle with several titles and avoided making eye contact with anyone.

He set them on the counter for the clerk to account for. The video boxes were swapped out for a massive library of cassettes behind the counter.

The clerk knew Willy. “You working tonight?”

“No, couple days off,” Willy answered.

“I heard you over there the other night. You sound good. Like you should be on the radio or something.”

“Thanks,” Willy replied, “I heard this pays better.”

“You don’t say...tab?”

Willy nodded. “Thank you.”

Another woman, slightly younger than the manager, short, fat, wearing an assistant manager nametag, called to Willy before he walked away. “Is that him? Willy! Mr. Bravo said you gotta start paying on your tab. It’s over \$1000.”

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Chapter 36

Willy was in the DJ booth, selecting music, his hands moving fast. He was able to interact with performers at a small opening behind him as they got ready to go on stage.

As he did his job, he saw Mickey Bravo inside the club’s

business office, through a crack in the wall, giving a girl, barely 18, cocaine. In another moment, Willy stood at the closed entrance of the office and listened to Mickey book a dancer for prostitution.

Later, as the mall was closing, Willy saw a dancer sitting in a car with two small children in the back seat. They look 5 and 2. The elder one looked distraught. The younger one was asleep. The young woman was talking to Mickey Bravo about money.

“...you owe...\$200,” Mickey said loudly. “Every week I hear you say you’ll pay me, and then you take off.”

The woman showed neither fear nor respect at first. “Hey, if you don’t want me to dance here, say the word and I’ll go to Candyland. They’d love to have me.”

The conversation got heated. Mickey smacked her in the face, and then made eye contact with the kids.

Willy’s parents hated this job. But, Willy was in a tight spot. The job market had been inundated by undocumented labor. Willy really needed college to place him where he was qualified to work, but, the media was sending a mixed message. It’s not what you know, but who you know. In the next decade, that proved to be unreliable.

In 1990, an agent successfully marketed an otherwise invisible film by Robert Rodriguez. This sent a misleading message to an industry full of inexperienced filmmakers who wanted the awards for Best This and Outstanding Achievement in That at

Sundance, rather than actually putting in the work on a great short film. The result? Willy wrote college off as optional, best embraced by people who didn't know what they wanted.

What he didn't know was that on every job description published by the major studios, they began with specific criteria: Bachelors Degree Required.

So you know how to operate a video camera and imitate John Carpenter films like 'Escape From New York'. So what. Instead of hearing that, and returning to Texas to complete his degree, Rodriguez found himself being the interviewee on Howard Stern's shock-jock radio show, whereby Stern declared, "Did you hear about this guy who made a movie for \$7,000? Now he's rich and famous..."

In reality, Robert was not rich or famous. He had been able to trade his film, essentially an over-glorified student film, and earn an agent's help in making another film, this time made-for-cable on another company's money.

Meanwhile, Robert's message to the studio heads that they were spending too much money on crews, whereas all they needed to do was hire him to do it all himself, was dismissed by the vice president of Columbia who politely explained to his new business associate, no, those crews are not expendable, you just don't know what they do.

It really came down to Robert not finishing his four-year degree program. Meanwhile, the lore that traveled from one entertainment news program to another was terrific publicity for

the recently acquired Columbia Pictures, purchased by electronics giant Sony. The executives who once championed *Boyz N The Hood* and the discovery of Rodriguez found themselves laid off by Sony.

In a few more years, online venues would become the next means by which media was consumed. DVDs came out, and soon after, email became a public utility provided by previously obscure “search engine” companies like Yahoo! and software-maker Microsoft. Steve Jobs was fired by Apple and then rehired, bringing “sex back to Mac” by way of iTunes and i-named widgets ranging from the iPod to the iPhone and iPad.

But, between 1990 and 2000, independent film found a place to die. Companies that once boasted their promotion of indies like The Brothers McMullen and Clerks were now seeing every single person with a video camera trying to imitate the formulas, resulting a surplus of product.

The Brothers McMullen should have been redone or marketed as a made-for-cable movie. Clerks should have not been made. Its director, who went on to become a cult figure himself, was described by Willy in his later years as, “the epitome of Ephesians 2:8-9.”

Willy was facing a spiritual stronghold that would not let him pass. To his credit, God had a bigger, better plan than the one chosen by his contemporaries.

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Chapter 37

Willy's fateful commitment to Thomas Fierelli's plans were in motion. His father heard the hard facts from Shadow over the phone.

Jonathan Posta hung up the phone. His face bore the signs of a treaty. He disapproved of the circumstances, but could not change them.

Jonathan began to breath as if the wind had been knocked out of him. The sounds of the game on TV offered him no comfort. "Shadow says please be on time. This is the last one, and meet him at his office on Sunday around 2 o'clock. He says you know where it is."

"He didn't want to talk to me?" Willy asked, knowingly offending his father by speaking.

"No," Jonathan said, looking at his son with the kind of disgust one only offers to strangers. "I'm done with this. I'm gonna watch the game and I would very much like it if you weren't here."

Willy looked both relieved and heartbroken. He nodded, grabbed a few things, put them in a backpack, and walked out of the house. Winnie stopped short of saying anything. They weren't shouting at each other, but they were clearly breathing at the top of their lungs.

As Jonathan watched the lights from Willy's car come on and turn, fading away into the distance, he looked at his wife as if he

had just experienced a death in the family. He looked up at the game, and all he could do was reach up with the remote control and turn it off. Winnie got up, sat next to him on the couch, and laid a hug on him.

“Lord, please watch over him,” Winnie prayed aloud.

“Amen,” Jonathan thought aloud.

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Chapter 38

Willy knocked on the apartment door of Heather Vickson. A black man named Dominic opened it, about 20 years old, rail-thin and wearing a bandana, smoking.

“Yeah? Whachyuwant?”

“Is Heather here?” Willy asked.

Dominic called back into the apartment, which was both filled with people and dimmed by smoke. “Heather, you decent?”

The sound of snorting of marijuana bongs and cocaine was heard. Smoke fills the apartment, but no one seemed to care. A small child, maybe 18 months, skittered through the smoke.

Heather replied, “Who is it?”

She stumbled closed enough to the door to see Willy, having just gotten done washing dishes. Her hands were still slightly moist

from the task.

She danced for many clubs all over the state, and Emma thought she was both polite and too dangerous for Willy.

Heather flirted with Willy, eyeing the DJ booth, and was both taken by his authentic, Hollywood-good looks and his humility. She had never met such a handsome guy who was both cute, intelligent and had a healthy respect for women. Heather had developed a spiritual weapon to overcome the abuse she had incurred from her father's adulteries. She learned how to use her body as a weapon to get what she wanted and convinced herself that true love was a fantasy.

However, when she met Willy, she found herself wanting him to be that man. The problem was, he wasn't a man yet. And to make matters more difficult, Willy didn't know that. A part of Heather wanted to wait for him to mature, but, that would require a process she knew nothing about, something God had reserved for a girl growing up in another country, should Willy choose to receive Him as his savior.

But God always looked at the heart. Could this woman turn to Him, as Hosea's wife had, once Willy became the man he was Called to be?

One night, Willy was wrapping up his shift and was about to leave. Heather stood before him with sweat pants and a shirt that was very revealing. She smiled at him seductively. The buzz at work was that Willy and Heather were a couple. Heather was known to date rough guys, drug dealers and bikers. No one

expected these two to get together. It was presumed that either Heather had somehow taken some bad drugs, and wasn't herself, or Willy was a closet criminal with a record a mile long.

At first, Heather enjoyed playing the role of the doting girlfriend. And, to her satisfaction, Willy chose to believe the act.

When he played in his games, observed by Fierelli's enforcers, Heather showed up, sometimes with a girl friend. This only made him seem that much more attractive on the court and off. As Willy played 21 and made a game-winning shot, Heather was among the sugar-daddy-seeking women in the bleachers watching. She would smile at him seductively.

After a long shift of witnessing one second-degree assault after another, Willy went to her apartment to test their relationship. He knew it was either going to end, or become permanent. And he really didn't care which.

“Gimmie a minute,” she said to the people inside.

The door closed over. Dominic gave Willy a once-over, noticing how clean cut he was compared to the people inside this apartment. “You’re the DJ. Dominic.” Dominic offered his handshake.

“Hi,” Willy replied, shaking it.

“You want some weed? I brought extra?” Dominic asked, just like his mother would offer kids from the neighborhood water or

juice during play dates.

“No thanks, I don’t use it,” Willy said.

Dominic was genuinely surprised. Most people he knew used marijuana. “You don’t smoke weed? You ever tried it?”

“Uhhh...not tonight,” Willy said, feeling slightly like an undercover cop.

“All right,” Dominic said, nodding slightly, sizing up his employed new acquaintance, “But, hey, you change your mind, you come see me. Dominic. Nice meeting you Willy. I’ll come by the club sometime. We’ll hang.”

“Nice meeting you,” Willy replied, forcing a relaxed smile across his face. He silently wished he was armed.

Heather stepped out the door, and closed it behind her, Dominic disappearing into a back bedroom with an unattractive black woman whose arms were notably bruised. The toddler was being passed from one person-doing-drugs-to-the-other until she finally found a spot on a pillow in front of a TV set to BET.

Heather looked good, but not great, a remnant of the woman she was before drugs.

“What’s wrong?” Heather asked, noting the obvious body language.

“There’s a baby in there,” Willy said.

“Yeah,” Heather said, “that’s my friend Sheila’s daughter. She got kicked out of her step mom’s place, and she didn’t have anywhere else to go, so I let her stay here. I’m going to try to get her a job at the club tomorrow.”

Willy did not voice his objection to Heather’s plan, but it was all over his face.

“You think it’s okay for her to be in a room full of drugs?” Willy asked, referring to the humongous pink elephant in her apartment.

“No,” Heater replied, doing a double take as if she was unaware of the problem. Heather ducks her head into the apartment. “Sheila, could you take Marianne into my bedroom until the smoke clears? Thanks!”

Heather closed the front door behind her again.

“Good call.”

Willy watched Heather prepare to pull a cigarette out of a box that’s been opened, “You have no intentions of quitting.”

“I’m not doing anything. They are, but I’m not. What is wrong? You look freaked out.” Heather would reflect on this conversation for the rest of her life when she finished AA and became a counselor for abused women.

“Hard to be in water and not get wet,” Willy said, his words

offending her.

“Do you want her to stay at your place? Oh, that’s right, you live with your parents,” she replied sarcastically. “And as you can see, I have people over so we’re not having sex tonight.”

Willy fell silent. The pain in his face tugged at her soul. A part of her was very much in love with him, but absent of a relationship with Jesus Christ, this relationship would end.

Heather embraced him very closely. She was a beautiful woman.

“I quit my job,” Willy said, as if telling his mother he got suspended from school.

“What???” Heather reacted as if she was his mother hearing that he had been suspended from school.

“I saw some things tonight that...I...” Willy tried to put into words, but Heather heard what she needed to react.

“You quit your job?” she yelled, “What the hell? Were you fired?”

“No, but, Mickey knows why.”

“Whoa, back up,” she asked, “Why did you quit your job?”

“I told him I’ve seen too many things that I don’t agree with, young girls, barely 18, doing drugs, prostituting...” Willy said, a justifiable reason to anyone other than a coworker at the club.

“You said that?” she asked, with a level of disbelief in her voice only equaled by her concern for Willy. She knew Mickey Bravo was capable of violence.

“Yeah, it’s not like it’s a surprise,” Willy said. “Why else do people go there, for the inexpensive beer and clean rest rooms?”

The restrooms were disgusting, and drunken people used them anyway to vomit in and have sex in.

“What did he say back?” Heather asked.

Earlier that night, Mickey had grabbed his clip board, which contained a handwritten dancers’ list and paused to respond to Willy before walking back onto the main floor.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” Mickey replied, “but...we sell sex here Willy. And sometimes things happen. We don’t necessarily want them to, but they do. I like you, but if you feel you need to quit, quit. I’ll find someone else.”

“Oh my God. Did anything specific happen?” Heather asked.

Willy replied, “The usual.”

At Pirate’s Cove, normal was not normal.

Recently Willy walked in to begin his shift. A young woman was having painful, forceful sex with a man. At first, Willy believed she was being a raped and asked a bartender, filling the ice trap,

to call 911.

“You mean that girl up there making noise?” he asked. “It’s consensual. I’m not calling the cops. She’s with a client. We have a VIP service. You know that, right?”

Willy was heart broken as he told Heather the story. “She was being raped.”

“She was paid?” Heather asked, as if that would have somehow justified it.

“She went home in an ambulance,” Willy said loudly. “Slaves had better working conditions.”

Heather gave him a long look, and for a moment, he couldn’t tell what she was thinking.

“You know what? Good. There are other clubs. They’d be lucky to have you. You get on somewhere else, and I’ll come join you? Sound good?” Heather smiled at him and kissed his chest. Heather then turned to open the door again and grabbed a lighter.

Willy started to object.

“Don’t start. I haven’t had one all day.”

She lit it up and took a long drag, and then took another long look at Willy. “Why did you come here?”

“I wanted to ask you something.”

“What?” she asked.

“You wanna get married?” Heather laughed at him.

“You’re serious.” Heather took another drag of her cigarette and began to shed a tear. At first Willy thought they might be happy tears, but her mouth wasn’t smiling at all.

“No?”

She shook her head and tried to stuff her emotions down by inhaling the cigarette harder.

Willy walked away, but only get a few feet before Heather asked him a question.

“Have you ever considered what you have to offer to a woman?”

Willy turned around with a defensive look on his face.

He never saw her again.

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Chapter 39

Sometimes the greatest battles that effect our lives do not involve us. They are fought by others on our behalf. Willy’s initial college experience at Pima Community College was miserable. After two terms, the latter of which he didn’t finish,

he dropped out. A family friend learned of his circumstances, and after years of watching at-risk kids fall through the gaps of the system, both in the church and public school system, she had developed a low tolerance for bureaucracy.

Jayna Andrews walked into the counseling office and finds the office of Bruce Wayne. His cubical was decorated with Batman stuff.

“Bruce. Hi, I’m Jayna Andrews, Media 204?”

His pleasant demeanor was later offset by his actions. “Oh yes. Hi. What can I do for you?”

In Jayna’s mind, she replied, ‘Drop dead you lazy sad excuse for a college counselor.’ What she really said was, “I have a question about a student who came through your office a couple terms ago. Here’s his ID.” Jayna handed him a handwritten note.

“I’m helping get back into the system and I want to learn what his last advisor did.”

“Willy Posta. I was his adviser. And, I set him up for English 100 and Writing 100.”

“Can I ask why? He tested out of both.”

Bruce did not have a good answer. He would misguide thousands of college students over the next decade and be asked to resign from his job in the early 2000s.

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Chapter 40

Jayna took this case where it needed to go. Lawrence Keeling, a school administrator in his mid-40's, sat across from Jayna and listens to a paraphrase of the story.

He was genuinely concerned. Just how many people's lives had they soiled with this single counselor? "I'm sorry that happened."

"Why would he do that?" Jayna asked, referring to the placement of Willy into a course he had already tested out of.

"He's lazy," referring to Bruce Wayne. "Sorry. That's the truth. Now, where is the student?"

"I'm trying to get him to reenroll. He's got tremendous talent, but he's going through a difficult time."

Lawrence nodded and agreed. "He's going to have a hard time with a record."

"That's why I'm here," she said. "I want to enroll him at Arizona State."

Lawrence spent most of his time referring students to the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University. "Why there?"

“They are rebuilding their media program to be on par with SC and UCLA,” she said. The fact was that Michael Landon had died and the majority of production work found at Tucson’s Old Tucson Studios had died with him. By 1995, disgruntled former stagehands, their customers for locally grown marijuana scattered and unemployed, set fire to the century-old sets.

“Really?” Lawrence asked.

Jayna handed him a form. Lawrence read it.

“You know this kid from somewhere else?”

“Yes,” Jayna replied. “He’s like family to some close friends of mine. My husband pastors at their church.”

Lawrence signed it. “Say no more. He’s lucky to have you watching his back. Sorry it happened.”

Jayna offered a weary smile. “One of thousands.”

Over time, the college would be the subject of a probe about poor counseling. It resulted in their board getting money to establish more campuses, more programs, and increase their teachers salaries. It also spawned competition in community colleges to its eastern and western borders of the State.

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Chapter 41

1985.

At a PTA meeting, Jonathan was one of a dozen parents who sat in.

An assistant principal said, "...the budget cuts will require that we raise fees for athletic programs to \$18 for the next year. In a moment, we'll move on to new business. I can see we've got some new faces here today."

As an order of new business, Jonathan stepped up to a podium for Parents. "My name is Jonathan Posta. I am a parent. My son Zach, we call him Ziggy, is a sophomore this year. His sister enters next year. Our youngest is in middle school. I am here with a couple suggestions so that we might avoid budget cuts..."

The sports program, especially its basketball program, had been celebrated in the community and alumni. Jonathan and Carter Smith, whose wife Vanessa and her kids Gilbert and Stephan, were heavily involved in their local church. The boys thrived in sports, and Gilbert showed talent in baseball, football, basketball and track. It wasn't until he started setting records in assists and steals that he got the attention of Pac-10 coaches. Arizona State's coach Steve Patterson sent him letters, but his assistant coaches never followed up. He would up leaving the conference, playing a year at Indiana before dropping out.

His younger brother Stephen was also walking two paces behind him, such that if they stood next to each other at around 3 p.m., Stephen looked like Gilbert's shadow. The nickname stuck.

By 1990, Gilbert had been killed as a bystander at a party. It was

rumored by a brief police investigation that it was gang-related, but that was never confirmed.

Gilbert's untimely death ultimately fueled Stephen's drive to succeed. Over time, he accepted that God had given him a gift, and that his brother's untimely death should not be his only motive for competing. He also had more than one teacher tell him that unless his grades were excellent, other players would invariably get the opportunities he might have otherwise anticipated.

All of Stephen's scoring records had been beaten by a Caucasian Italian kid half his size, and Shadow knew Willy all too well. He was a natural on the court, with a higher basketball I.Q. than most players he had ever known. But Willy lacked the confidence to play with the skill he possessed, and except for private time alone on the court, rarely played with others. He liked to show off as a preteen, but his classmates had little patience for a showoff who made ridiculous shots.

Willy showed Shadow how hard he practiced, and how he developed shots to overcome dirty defense, unfair height-match ups, and his own perceived flaws as a player. He studied Pistol Pete, the Globetrotters and a new player from Arizona, Steve Kerr, whom he followed closely.

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Chapter 42

It was mid day at Pima Community College East Campus, in Tucson, 1992.

Media 101 was written in chalk behind Jayna Andrews as she taught. Shadow was among the students. She held a registration sheet.

“Welcome to Media 101. I’m gonna take attendance. If I butcher your name, I apologize. If you do not hear your name, come see me...”

After class, Jayna closed the door as she and Shadow walked from the room, across campus.

Jayna was wearing a necklace that looked blue, brown and yellow, with beads assembled as if they were from South Africa.

Shadow wore an authentic dress shirt from South Africa that showed Nelson Mandela, declaring “Free At Last”.

Shadow said, “You look like you’re feeling better.”

“Yeah, doctors said I’m officially in remission. Praise God. It’s in God’s hands. Look at you. You grew another foot.”

“And I’m working out,” Shadow joked.

“I heard you’re going pro?”

“Yeah. The question is when and for who.”

“The Suns still stink if you want stay close to home,” Jayne replied, getting a hard chuckle from Shadow.

“So you think I can Walk-on...ESPN reported a trade rumor, Chambers for Barkley,” Jayna said, hinting that she did keep up with current events.

“Hmm,” Shadow remarked, noting the trade talk.

“I’m leaning towards Europe. They pay as good, the money goes farther, and if I suck, no one here will ever know.”

Jayna broke into laughter, “You’re not exactly a poster boy for the NBA, but I see the logic...if you suck no one will notice? You couldn’t suck. You’re like, one of the best basketball players in the world...” she said, laughing all the way through her words.

Shadow laughed along, “Here, in the courtyard, surrounded by all these people who are shorter and more talented than me at certain things, yes, I am the greatest basketball player of all time. But once you experience a Nike All-American Camp, you realize just how expendable you are.”

Jayna acknowledged his point and encouraged him, “Wow. I can see that. So you get your degree and play in Europe.”

Shadow only heard the words, ‘Play in Europe.’ “Or the Middle East or Asian or Australia. Basketball is a global now-a-days.”

“And you get your degree.”

“Yeah...” he replied, his tone purposefully trailing off.

“That didn’t sound too convincing...you drop out and I will hunt you down. You understand me?”

Shadow looked away from her, trying to be charming.

“Shadow, you’re a role model. A role model is a dangerous thing.”

Shadow laughed. All right, she thought, I beat him up enough. “How’s your dad?” she asked.

“Good. We sat down with Ricky Birdsong a few nights ago and we had a long talk.”

“I don’t know who that is,” she replied.

“Assistant coach at Arizona? Lute Olson? Wow, I thought you were an insider. How many Pac 10 titles do they need to remember their names?”

“I know who Lute Olson is,” Jayne replied defensively.

“Good guys. Men of God. Enough about me. How’s teaching?”

“It’s okay. Adjusting,” Jayna said. She wanted to share more, but he was a student. She changed the subject. “The boy who topped your high school record last year just did it again.”

“Yeah, he’s been a good disciple. His name is Willy. Ziggy Posta’s little brother. Tail back, now at Texas Tech.”

“Zig’s at Texas Tech. Wow. Time flies. Is he starting?” Jayne asked.

“I don’t think so. But he’s on the team. Criminal Justice major. Last I heard. Wants to be a cop. Maybe run for mayor someday, stuff like that.”

Jayna returned to Shadow’s previous thought. “You used the word ‘Disciple’? You’re coaching him?”

“Kinda of. He’s been picking my brain a lot. I can see him coaching someday, or managing. Our parents have been close for years. Since Gil died, you know. Winnie Posta went out of her way to watch out for us, my father being out of the country and all.”

“How’s your mom doing?” Jayned asked, “I haven’t been by the church to see her.”

“Like I said, she’s hanging in there. Winnie Posta’s been in touch a lot. Even tutored her through some classes. Mom graduated last term.”

“That’s awesome!” Jayna replied. “From here?”

“Oh, no. Grand Canyon College.”

“Really? Her Bachelors?” Jayne asked.

“Uh-hm. Finally. Going for Master’s next, but probably here.”

“How’d she do it? She do correspondence?” Jayna asked.

“Yeah.”

“So it can be done. I think she sent you a message.”

“Loud and clear, slam dunk, momma in my face. Finish college. No excuses,” Shadow replied, imitating his mother’s voice. “Nothing but respect for my momma. Seeing her in the cap and gown...she glowed. Gave me an idea of what it’ll be like for me.”

“What are you going to do after basketball?” Jayne asked him.

“Ministry. Means to an end. My dad and Coach Birdsong had a lot to say about that.”

“How is he?” she asked.

“Which one -?”

“Your dad,” Jayna said.

“He’s all right. Apartheid sucks but, with Mandela back in office, who knows? He’s got an offer from some school in South America - I can’t pronounce it.”

“French Guiana?” Jayna asked.

“How did you know that?”

“I have a PhD, Stephen,” she replied. “Every kid on the planet chokes on that one in Geography class.”

“Now, you just got back, right?” Shadow asked.

“Yeah. Couple months ago. Three years. Planted a church.”

Shadow pointed to his neck, reference her necklace.” “I noticed this. You can’t get that here.”

“Yeah,” Jayne replied, “Hand made by one of our pastors.”

“Beautiful.”

“Thank you. We even prayed about staying.”

“But...” Shadow asked.

“I would love to raise a child there,” she said.

“And? The quest for motherhood?”

Jayne offered an awkward smile. “It continues.”

“For what it’s worth, you’re like a mom to your students.”

“Thank you,” she said.

Shadow’s pager began making an annoying buzzing sound and he clutched his pocket.

“I’m vibrating. I hate this thing. Can’t wait until somebody figures out a way to make quiet phones like this.”

“Maybe you? Major in engineering?” she teased. Shadow laughed, as he read the page. “Who is that?”

Jayna ended that chat with, “Tell your mom I’ll call her.”

“OK. See you Wednesday,” Shadow replied, waving as she walked to her car in the parking lot.

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Chapter 43

In early 1996, Willy hooked up two VCRs to each other on his bed, covered with used VHS tapes. He assembled a video. It was crude, but it was working. He had the natural editor’s rhythm that most filmmakers wanted but could not learn.

Willy poked his head into a room where his mother was working at her desk. “Hey. Can I borrow your eyes for a few seconds?”

Back in his room, Winnie watched what Willy had made.

“I’m not done, but I want to see if what I did so far worked.” Willy pressed play.

Winnie watched and reacted with an impressed eye. “You have a gift.”

Willy smiled humbly. “I can’t do most of the stuff I want to do, but, it’s something. The idea is there.”

Winnie commended her son. “Technology will catch up with you.”

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Chapter 44

July 1993.

At Lucasfilm labs, at Skywalker Ranch, in northern California, senior engineers showed a few senior executives from Lucasfilm and Apple their progress on an editing workstation.

An engineer addressed the other people on the team. “We nick named it the edit droid. Now, the goal is to get this thing down to the size of a suitcase, as George had stated in his mission statement. And, Randy Ubillos wants to present this at expo ‘96. We think this could become a consumer product by 1998.”

The engineer cued up a scene from what would be known as Schindler’s List.

“We’ve been letting Steven Spielberg use this to cut his next picture, here in Los Angeles, while he’s in Poland on location. He used a virtual terminal there to give instructions to Michael Kahn here, and they are able to edit both films at the same time.”

With a click, the engineer pulled up a scene from Jurassic Park.

As the two films were shuttled through seamlessly, all the executives got inspired smiles on their faces.

The voice of George Lucas could be heard behind them, playfully aware that he is late. “Hey, wait for me!”

Another engineer teased him back, “Is that George? Quick, turn it off! Last time he took a peek at technology he broke Jaws!”

They all laughed.

An Apple executive said, “Good job George. This thing rocks.”

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Chapter 45

Shadow watched Willy’s video. He was on the phone with his dad, Carter. “It’s rough but he’s got vision. When I watch it, I feel the Authority of God, as if we’re in deep worship.”

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Chapter 46

At an evangelic church, congregation of Pentecostal Christian worshippers had their arms extended upward, singing along to the lyrics of gospel music. The focus of the crowd was on Jesus, His living Spirit.

Invisible to the eyes of the worshipers, the Spirit of Christ blanketed the crowd in a gentle vapor. It was connected to a light that was connected to the heavens above.

Shadow had experienced the voice-of-God by watching Willy's video. He called his father, a pastor serving in French Guiana, and told him of his discovery. A genuine prophet with signs of God's power had not been found in any New Testament prophesy, not confirmed in the world since the Apostles died. Miracles, yes; answers to prayer, absolutely. Events attributed to God that may or may not have been, sure. But an actual burning bush-type experience to anyone who watched a video?

A few boasted of having this effect. Tele-evangelism was full of fakes and facades. But this, this was real. Shadow made arrangements to make a copy of the video and send it to his dad.

The Postas had attended a church for two decades. Most firemen and cops in this city attended the local Catholic Church. The teaching was terrible, but the public servants were shown great favor by the priests and nuns.

In the Protestant churches, attendance was down.

As Jonathan sat with his family listening to a Catholic sermon, a priest yelled angrily at the congregation. "You're all sinners and you're all going to hell and there's nothing you can do about it!"

A sign at the back of the church read "Quiet Please".

The Posta family was asleep except for Jonathan, Winnie fighting the urge to nod-off.

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Chapter 47

Scottsdale Park.

The basketball courts were filled. Willy was among the players on the court. The bleachers were half-filled with players waiting to play and spectators.

Jayna sat with two of her teenage youth group members Mike and John and the Youth Pastor, Ken, a Caucasian man in his early 20's. Mike and John looked nervous as they prepared to try and give away a stack of fliers.

A young man, Damien was between games guzzling water from a water bottle when he glanced over at Mike and Jason, and noticed they weren't there to play ball.

"Whatchyu got, man?" Damien asked.

Mike was a little nervous. "We're from First Fellowship Church, a few blocks from here. We're having a music night. Free. Food, music. Jesus. 6 p.m. Saturday. No dress code. Just show up."

"Underwear would be nice," Jason added. Jayna, Damien and a few others there crack up at Jason's humor.

"Matching socks are optional," Jason said.

Damien flipped it. "I've been there."

Mike noticed Damien's tone, and said, "Sounds like something

happened.”

“No - exact opposite. No one said anything to me. It was like, three months. I left,” Damien said.

“That so sucks,” Jason replied. “I am so sorry. I remember seeing you. My bad.”

Jayna interjected, looking like a movie star behind her sunglasses, “Did you come alone?”

Damien replied, “No. My brother -- he’s in the Army now. But, when he left, I kinda stopped living life. I come here just to get out of the house.”

Jason moved toward Damien with his hand extended to shake. “I’m Jason. And I’m sorry.”

“It’s all good,” Damien replied. “It’s really my fault...it was a stupid reason to stop going...” He folded the flier and stuffed it in duffle bag. Then he reclaimed his place on the court.

“Good job,” Jayna commended. “Nervous anymore?” Mike and Jason shook their heads no.

“Convicted,” Jason said.

“Welcome to ministry.”

Jayna heard a familiar voice, as an entourage approached. Shadow was surrounded by autograph seekers.

“I didn’t bring a pen,” Shadow told a fan, “but I’ll be here a while. Go get a pen! What’s up everyone?”

Willy finished his game, a part of the losing team, forcing him off the court.

Drenched in sweat, he dragged himself to the water fountains and got in line. He looked up and saw Shadow talking to Jayna. Shadow had grabbed a flier and smiled wide at it, engaging in talk with Mike, John and Ken. As if having a history with Ken, Shadow teased him. Encouragement and smiles seemed to follow Shadow, contagious to all around him.

Willy stepped out of line to go see Shadow. “You on leave or are you back for good?”

Shadow replied, “I’m home. I’ll wait on the hug until you shower.” Willy broke out in laughter and hugged him anyway. “You know what, for that, here.”

Shadow handed him a flier.

“What is this?” Willy asked.

“Your new home church. This is pastor Jayna Andrews. Your dad knows her well.”

“I loved your video,” Jayna said.

“Thanks,” Willy replied. “I just made the one. And it was

crude.”

“You free Saturday night?” she asked.

Willy shook his head before he read it. “No, gotta work.”

“Where do you work?” Jayna asked.

“I’m a DJ at Pirate’s Cove.”

“Ask for the night off,” Shadow said.

“Why? I’m Catholic,” Willy argued.

“Your reason not to go is my reason for you to go,” Shadow said. “No, you ready to get beat like a pinata?”

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Chapter 48

The average church spends thousands of dollars per year trying to attract new members and maintain current ones. By 1995, membership had experienced an influx of members when two events happened in the late 80’s and early 1990s that touched a nerve in Americans.

Bill McCartney resigned as a two-time college football national champion coach to reinvest his time into his family. The result was a conversation he had with a colleague: he didn’t like the fact that one could fill a football stadium with 80,000 fans, but a prayer meeting could barely populate the grounds crew. He had

a flash: fill a football stadium with men to worship God.

The result was Promise Keepers. The entity faltered in the next decade, and its founder departed, becoming just another brand marketing the Christian genre, but it did plant the seed for the future of the Protestant church in the global West.

The other event was a music promotion experiment. Traditionally, music publishers created tours for their artists to visit fans with live performances, selling merchandise along the way. In Australia, Hillsong Church decided to invert the process, inviting worship leaders from around the world to an elaborate concert where they demonstrated their music. It worked. Churches with emphasis on a contemporary pop style of music, combining fundamental rock and roll sound with traditional hymnal lyrics, led by charismatic Bible teachers, drew record attendance and saw a spike in donation revenue.

Video had become increasingly affordable, and media distribution once tightly controlled by a mafia-influenced monopoly was now being revolutionized by independent film and music innovations made possible through a new technology known as the Internet.

The Church was forced to adapt, and most did. The biggest financial givers were attending services with their families because they wanted spiritual growth, not because they felt an obligation. This generation embraced technology and looked to the future with hope, not dread.

Willy walked through the colorful sanctuary and saw friendly

faces. The music was very loud, like a concert. The crowd was semi-filled for a Saturday night.

Willy would later write about this experience, The usual paranoia I felt when I walked into a new place, like a stranger in a strange town, wondering if I could take any of the guys I saw in a fight, or if I was getting any looks from the girls, all that seemed to melt away here, at least some of it. I was still scared. I saw people raising their hands, singing songs I had never heard before, and gyrating in positions that made me feel awkward.

Willy, a habitual Catholic, made the sign of the Cross and knelt as he entered a pew and sat. He looked around for “kneeling” stools and found none. Jason came out of nowhere and saw all this.

“Welcome, dude,’ Jason said. “I saw your video, Awesome. Powerful. I felt like God was speaking to me as I watched it. Tell me your name again?”

“Willy.”

“Willy? Jason.”

Jason shook his hand. “Praise God. You grew up Catholic. Half the people here did. Y’got any questions, ask.”

“How did you know that?”

“The sign of the Cross,” Jason replied, “kneeling, and looking for the kneeling stool; all Catholic. It’s not in the Bible, so you

won't see it here. The stuff you do see -- most of this stuff freaked me out when I first saw it, or at least some of it. Welcome. Later."

Willy would later write, I was a little offended at the stab at Catholicism, but. He had love in his eyes. It was Christ's love. I didn't know what it was at the time, I just knew I needed it.

Jason walked off. The music flowed into a sermon. Willy found a seat and watched.

I had no idea what the preacher said that night, but I remember feeling the Voice of God speaking to my heart, telling me I was home.'

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Chapter 49

Willy walked into the church and saw Shadow in the office.

"My man. What's going on?" Shadow asked.

"I was there last night," Willy admitted.

"Yeah, Jayna said you showed up," he said.

"Your musicians are gifted. Do you guys plan to record?" Willy asked.

"Yes, but it's not God's timing."

“How do you know?” Willy asked. “Sometimes we need to take the first step.”

“Did you understand the message?”

“Oh, yeah,” Willy replied. Liar.

Shadow reached into a desktop shelf and pulled out a semi-sealed note. He handed it to Willy. “Jayna gave me something to give you,” Shadow said.

“Why does she care so much? I mean, the video I made...wasn’t that good.”

“Open it.”

Willy did, but was puzzled by its contents. “This is a college enrollment application.” His eyes found the bottom of the page, which required a Department head’s signature. Jayna had signed it. “I don’t understand.”

“Do you know what an audit is?” Shadow asked.

The phone on his desk rang. He leaned over to see the Caller ID.

“Kind of.”

Shadow pulled out another book, with big letters on its cover, “CLEP”.

“Look over it. I gotta take this,” Shadow said.

“Yeah,” Willy replied, his mind already someplace else, “I got a bus to catch. I got a job interview at --”

Shadow became focused on the phone call, and Willy quietly waved and left, with the college application tucked into the book.

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Chapter 50

Angels were with Willy as he went from store to restaurant to business, applying for jobs.

At a fast food restaurant, he waited to talk to a manager. He looked at the workers and the manager. The workers were either teenagers with few teeth, or Latino-looking. The manager was a short fat balding man with bad teeth. He looked at Willy’s application for about ten seconds.

“We’ll call ya.”

At a clothing store, the acting assistant manager said, “We’ll keep your application on file.”

A glimmer of hope appeared in the eyes of the overweight Asian woman, whose kitchen staff seemed to be arguing so loudly that he could barely hear her ask, “Are you bilingual? Specifically, do you speak Spanish?”

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Chapter 51

Exhaustion. The illegal immigration factor had made job hunting in this city nearly impossible. Willy lacked a college degree and only spoke one language. He sat, exhausted, on the bus stop bench. The trash pile next to him was overflowing from the large can right next to the bench, making it hard to sit without getting his pants messy. He sat on its edge.

On the ground, he saw an unfamiliar employment ad paper, Backstage West.

He picked it up and read it, curious. It gave an online address. He folded it and put it in his pocket.

The clouds of heaven stirred as if there was a battle between good and evil being stirred.

Later that afternoon, Willy made his way to a local public library where he signed up for computer time at the main desk. He waited patiently for the person proceeding him to leave. He pulled out the newspaper he found and visited the online URL. He found want ads there.

“Jackpot.”

He finds one that listed “Mature editor wanted for adult content”. It offered an email contact and an 800 #.

Outside at a phone booth, Willy did his best to work around the mess left by the last slob to use the pay phone, and put in

enough money to get a dial tone. He finally connected to their office in California.

A receptionist's voice answered, "Jill Conway productions."

Willy said, "Hi. I'm calling from Arizona I saw your listing on the Internet and wanted to inquire."

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Chapter 51

Willy made himself dinner in the microwave, when Winnie walked in and gave her son a big hug.

"I got a job interview," he said, sending his mom into a happy-face moment.

"Oh, good! Where?"

"California," he said. "A movie company, an editing job. Winnie's enthusiasm dropped. "In California. Chatsworth. It's \$22 and hour to start."

"Sounds too good to be true," she said.

"Well, every other place I went around here was either not hiring or not hiring me."

"Well, you gotta sell yourself," Winnie snorted back.

"That's not helpful, mom. I tried. You and dad have put me in an

impossible situation. Again. First you want me to marry outta high school. The girls were bitches, mom. Bitches! And when I brought Heather home, all you did was sneer at her.”

“She was trash,” Winnie said wit her mom voice.

“How dare you!” Willy replied. “Now you want me to move out, but I can’t get a job, not here, anyway.”

“Where you gonna live?”

“I already bought a ticket. Greyhound,” Willy replied.

“You bought a ticket. Is it refundable?” she asked.

“No. One way,” he said, realizing this conversation was not going to end well. “I hate this place,” he said under his breath.

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Chapter 52

A few days after Willy left Phoenix, the Lord spoke to her heart about her life. As she was wrapping up another evening, it finally hit her.

The nest was empty.

Winnie walked through the house, looking at rooms and out the backyard and sees moments from their family’s past. The song *A Candlelit Window* by Ingrid DuMosch went through her head.

She looked in her backyard and sees her kids, Ziggy, when he was 9, now 32, Emma, 7, now deceased, and Willy, age 4, playing in the water on a summer day.

She glanced at her kitchen table and saw the previous kitchen, worn and beat up, as her children ate breakfast and did their best to disrupt Jonathan from reading the morning paper.

She walked from room to room, turning to walk through the TV room, where she stopped to see both the kids unwrapping Christmas presents, and then Willy, about age 8, showing her how to program their VCR.

She turned down the hallway and saw their family pictures, not as photos, but portals into the past. Tears began to flow down her face.

She walked down the hall and glanced into each room. She saw Ziggy playing board games with his friends on his bed, Emma bursting into the room, diving onto it, sending game pieces flying, and upsetting the boys. She smiled at the memory of it as if it just happened.

She walked to Emma's room and saw her playing with dolls, and coloring. Emma had built an elaborate jungle out of her art supplies, complete with toy animals dangling from the paper trees.

She walked to the last room, where she saw Willy, asleep, and saw her little boy wearing Star Wars pajamas, feigning the flight of a couple toys. With his hands, he feigns one toy blowing up

the other.

She turned once more to see Jonathan sleeping, an opening Bible topped by reading glasses.

She climbed into bed, and as if speaking to God, uttered two words.

“Thank you.”

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Chapter 53

Willy was back in college, at least physically.

In a warm, late summer evening, Willy sat in the back of the classroom, which only had about a half-dozen students in it. Some of them were very attractive females, and gave Willy big smiles as class adjourned. Willy could overhear two of them as they walk out.

“Did you see that guy in the back?”

“He’s gorgeous!”

Jayna heard them too and smirked. “What did you think?”

“A lot different from my last classes,” Willy replied.

“I talked to your old adviser. What can I say? Your first term, and you had bad teachers and bad advising. Please reenroll. If

not here, somewhere. Anywhere. Life sucks without a degree.”

“What about my record?” he asked.

“That form will get you probation, but you’d be in, as opposed to not in. You got dinner plans?”

“No. Just whatever my mother left for me,” he said.

“I’m doing drive thru on my way to church.”

“That place was cool,” Willy replied. “Nice people. I didn’t understand most of it, but, I felt calm, safe.”

“Peace?”

“Yeah. Peace,” Willy said.

“Is that a yes?” she asked.

“Anything’s better than the bus.”

“Gee, thanks,” Jayna replied with a smile.

“I quit my DJ job,” Willy said.

Jayna had a look of delight in her eyes.

“Might have another one...” Willy said.

“Doing what?”

“Editing.”

“For who?” she asked.

“A company in California,” he replied.

“I know people in California. I could get you in almost anywhere,” she said. “Where exactly?”

“Chatsworth,” he said.

Like his mother’s face dropped, Jayna’s face dropped as well.
“What’s the name of the company?”

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Chapter 54

That night was the single most important of Willy’s life.

Pastor Ken gave a sermon followed by a traditional alter call.
“There was a day when I sat where you sit and didn’t understand why I needed a Savior. We’re born in original sin.”

He held up Bible.

“To a non-Christian, this is just another book, and it’s confusing. To someone who has the Holy Spirit living inside them, this is a supernatural love letter from God. And when your time here ends, do you know where you’re going? Do you want a free pass to heaven. The Holy Spirit is like the decoder ring. Once he’s

inside you, this,” he said as he raised it again, “Romans 10:9 says if you believe in your heart and profess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and died and rose again, that you will be saved. All you gotta do is say yes. If you wanna receive Christ tonight, come on up after service.”

Willy could not see the demons trying to prevent him from doing so.

They fired darts into him that hit their mark. Embarrassment and Deception that he did not need this. An Angel of the Lord laid his hands on Willy and conveyed this message:

“Are you willing to be wrong for the moment to have the truth forever?”

Willy looked around at the people who had been so nice to him. The worship band had left a set of lyrics up on the big screen in the forefront of the church.

It read:

“You came to heaven to Earth
To Show me the Way
From the Earth to the Cross
My debt to Pay
From the Cross to the Grave
The Grace to the sky,
Lord I lift your name on High.”
-- Rick Founds

At the forefront of the church where the alter call assembled, the

band practices on the stage playing this song. Clusters of people stayed after service to pray together near the stage area and in seats around the auditorium.

Willy found himself walking toward Ken, who lit up seeing Willy come forward.

“Hey. What can I do for you?”

Willy pointed to the lyrics on the big screen. “What does this mean?” Willy pointed to the screen and to the people praying.

“If you’ll trust me, close your eyes.” Willy closed his eyes.

“Heavenly Father, I pray your reveal yourself to Willy right now. We acknowledge You are knocking on the door of his heart and in Your Name Jesus, I say, let that door open.”

Willy started to cry, his crying turning to heaving.

In his mind’s eye, a flash of life moments which Willy knows are regarded as sins rushed through his mind, followed by a cleansing force, like a powerful river, pushing all the dirt into an abyss, never to be seen again.

Ken had placed his hands on Willy’s heart and shoulder, and prayed for him, praising God under his breath. “Yes Lord. This moment is all about You, Father. Willy, do you want your sins forgiven?”

“Yes.”

“Sins from the past, sins of the present and sins of the future?” Ken asked.

“Really?” Willy asked.

“Really.”

“Sure,” Willy said.

“You do want to receive Jesus into your heart?”

The musicians who were rehearsing could see what was happening, and the bandleader actually played the music softer to allow Ken and Willy to hear each other. The band members began to tear up.

“Yes.”

“Congratulations, you’re Saved. Angels are now partying because your name has been added to the Book of Life.” Ken gave Willy a huge hug.

The Angels in the church were in fact rejoicing, hive-fives, hugs, a celebration of pure victory. The demons look defeated, and silently moved on to another people who were being prayed for.

In heaven, where the the Book of Life rests, a name, William Byron Posta, which was etched in a faint print, from at his birth, became bolded in blood, permanently engraved in the Book.

“Lord,” Willy asked, “I want to be a crown prince of Hollywood. Can I?”

The Holy Spirit replied, “No. I have plans for you that are far greater. My grace is sufficient for you.”

In a nearby office, Jayna is typing something as Jason ran to her office. “Willy just got Saved.”

Jayna stopped typing and praised God. “YES!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Jason let out a laugh of victory.

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Chapter 55

2013.

In the State of Arizona District Attorney’s Office, Willy was noticeably sweaty and dressed in a suit when he reacted to a door opening and a woman, Gayle Stewart, a woman in her late 30s, attractive, black, stood in the doorway to invite him inside. He sat next to his wife Alicia, in her early 30’s. She had shoulder-length black hair.

“Willy?”

His eyes met Gayle’s voice.

“We’re ready. Come on in.”

Willy got up and entered the doorway. Willy glanced back at his wife, who smiled at him. She had a look on her face that indicated great discomfort.

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Chapter 56

The internet had just launched. Society was still adapting to the idea that email was swiftly replacing sticky-notes. Pagers were the widespread form of communication, which means that payphones were still about every 20 feet in major cities, complete with gummed phone ear pieces awaiting the hurried user, to the amusement of the mentally unstable vandal who put it there.

The Atlanta Braves would enter Thanksgiving Day as World Series Champions, while both the San Diego Chargers and San Francisco 49ers were cutting through their schedules like butter until they met each other in early 1996. New Jersey would upset Detroit in hockey, and to round out major American TV sports, the Houston Rockets swept the Orlando Magic. In politics, President Bill Clinton was learning the hard way that one cannot commit adultery without committing adultery. It almost cost him his presidency.

From My Son's Gift by Winnie Posta
Coney Island, NY
2018

I remember the last time I saw my son.

She sat in her bedroom alone, dressed in her bathrobe, her hair

wrapped in a towel, an iPad before her recording her on video and transcribing her voice into written words.

The FBI asked me to be as detailed as possible in case I die before being reunited with my family, since the events of the last ten years. I have been diagnosed with breast cancer. God only knows how long I've got. I'm not afraid. His grace is enough.

As for the last time I saw my son...

It was 1995.

I had just sat down to eat dinner. I made a large salad, toasted garlic bread and pasta with bright red marinara sauce. My house decor was a cross between east coast Italian and west coast Buccu De Beppo. She hears music begin to play on a desktop computer, the stereo speakers Loud enough to fill the house.

Winnie shouted, "Dinner! I'm making you a plate." She began to eat, pouring some wine, and put food on his plate.

Jonathan Posta, was a Caucasian in his late 50's, handsome, rugged; a no-nonsense renaissance man. He clicked on music software that activated a song list.

It played their song Will You Love Me, Tomorrow?. The Posta hallway leading to the dining area and kitchen was covered with family pictures. Among them was a portrait of the Posta's 20th Anniversary, and they had aged a little since then. Winnie's hair was a different style now. Also among them were pictures of the kids including Zachary, Emma, and Willy.

Jonathan emerged from a bedroom where many boxes remained stockpiled. Some items from what used to belong to one of the kid's bedrooms remained on the walls.

Posters of various movie, musical and sports interests are still up, but most of the clothes and other belongings are packed.

He romantically snuck up on Winnie and pulled her up from her chair, food in her face, and led her in a couples dance. She chuckles and tries not to choke. She reaches down, semi-interrupting the dance to take a swig of wine. As they continued to dance, he placed his hand on her back, which she moved onto her backside.

“It’s getting cold,” she said, gazing into his eyes.

He shook his head no, smiling. “Not gettin’ cold,” he said softly, almost under his breath, “...gettin’ warm.”

As they enjoyed the song and seriously considered having sex, they both look around. Willy unlocked the front door and walked in. Jonathan had a look of considerable disappointment on his face.

At the dinner table, a little while later, the three of them were eating. Winnie and Willy were reading the want ads together, and Winnie was using a pencil to circle potential jobs. Jonathan was eating a bowl of ice cream.

“And once you get this next job, keep it,” Jonathan said.

“He’s no longer at that strip club,” Winnie said, “This is positive.”

Jonathan agreed, but still didn’t like the situation. “You know, he graduated from high school. I graduate from high school. Why is it so hard?”

“Illegal immigration,” Willy replied dryly. “This is Arizona, not Jersey. We’re the minorities.” Jonathan got a thousand yard stare of irritation on his face.

“...yeah. Why don’t you try to get him on the department?” Winnie asked, waiting a moment for an answer. She didn’t let Willy lose a moment in his job hunting quest, “Hey, keep going. You need something.” The employment ads were both a blessing and a curse to go through, knowing thousands of other people were using them at the exact same time; some more qualified, some less. At least Willy was a U.S. citizen. (For some jobs, that worked against him.)

“You know what I was doing at your age?” Jonathan asked with a tone of interrogation.

“Yes,” Willy shot back, having heard this speech before.

“Don’t be a wise ass.”

“Why not?” Willy challenged, “Every job anybody would want says Bachelor’s Degree required.”

“Not every job. I don’t have a degree,” Jonathan answered with an argumentative smirk.

“That’s because you’ve been a fireman since before -- fire.”

Willy’s comedic timing would have made him the next Ben Stiller, had his parents been A-list comedians in the 1960s.

“I’m just trying to help,” Jonathan argued back, realizing he wasn’t being helpful.

“OK. Calm down. You need more ice cream?” Winnie asked, noting Jonathan’s dessert bowl and her desire for him to stop hounding Willy.

Winnie continued reading out loud, leading by example in their family’s efforts to get Willy a job outside the adult strip clubs.

“Bus driver...belly dancer...bartender...why don’t you go to bartending school?”

“If I could do that...” Willy’s eyes rolled naturally and brought back memories of his recent school experience.

Jonathan finished his last bite of ice cream and put his spoon in his bowl with a clang-clang, getting off his chair, placing his dish in the sink and leaving the kitchen all in one motion.

“There’s always a way. Keep looking,” he said, as if waving his white flag of accusations. He looked at the large clock that hung prominently on their living room wall.

“Cats are on,” he said, excusing himself from the kitchen, speaking of a game on TV.

Jonathan turned the TV and set it to a channel showing a college basketball game. He then tossed the remote control onto a couch, reached over to a hat rack and grabbed a ball cap that bore an Arizona “A”, on its front, the small letters, “alumni” on his hind side. He then sat down in his worn recliner chair as a car ad ended and the local announcers of the game appeared on TV, the players warming up at McKale Center behind them.

Winnie did a double take from the newspaper, glancing up at the clock, her reading glasses reflecting the kitchen table light like a prism, “Wait - what time is it?”

“Six-thirty,” Willy answered, without having to look at the wall.

“Oh, I have work to do to prepare for my meeting tomorrow,” she said, leaving Willy to hunt on his own. “Here. You know what to do. Get up early and pound the pavement.”

“Yeah. I’ll find something,” Willy said with the confidence of a salesman. “But I’ll have to do it after 11.”

Jonathan and Winnie both froze in response to Willy’s “appointment”.

“Tomorrow morning, I got a game at 11 I can’t miss,” Willy said, as if he was describing a homework assignment.

There was an awkward silence.

“What game?” Winnie asked.

“What are you talking about?” Jonathan asked over his wife.

Now realizing he must explain himself, Willy tried to treat it as if they already knew. “I got a game at 11. Shadow and I are taking on some guys. We’ll be done by noon.”

“No. No. You want my help, you call him and tell him you can’t make it,” Jonathan rattled off, sounding upset. “You gotta find a job.”

“How about you call him?” Willy answered, making it clear that it wasn’t an appointment he could cancel without consequences.

Jonathan quickly realized what Willy was implying and asked, “What’s going on?”

A few minutes later, Jonathan was on the phone, listening with a serious look in his face.

Willy stood there like a criminal on trial. Winnie sat at the kitchen table, paying attention, but also prepared paperwork.

The concern on Jonathan’s face only grew with each moment on the phone, “Mm-mm. Mm-mm. So you think this could be the last time. Mm-mm. Well, you know, Stephen, I don’t like it. I got half a mind to call my son and get this whole mess straightened out. I mean, that place has been nothing but

problems ever since he started working there. Mm-mm.”

Before Jonathan got off the phone, Willy looked like he had lost a quart of blood.

Neither of them had any idea how pivotal their reactions would be. Parents have extraordinary power over the life choices of their kids. Whether history celebrates their life, like Martin Luther King, Jr., or their death, like Adolf Hitler, there was always a defining moment or two in which their hearts' desires were defined within themselves.

Who am I? Why am I doing this? If I fail, what are the consequences? If I succeed, how much is enough?

Willy sought the approval of his mother and dreaded the disapproval of his father. Everyone had a given emotion they based their self-image on until events or relationships later in life cause them to change once again.

But it all starts at home. Here, the Postas provided a stable environment, with laughter and reason, placing a high value on education by example. Both of his parents had at least two years of college. Technically his dad didn't graduate, but after 30 years as a captain on the Phoenix Fire Department, it was an afterthought. When technical consultants were hired by Imagine Entertainment to provide feedback on scripts and scenes from Ron Howard's *Backdraft*, Willy's dad was on the list, receiving VHS samples and other materials by certified mail and private messenger.

A hiring freeze in the department prevented Willy from following in his father's footsteps, but since Willy never wanted to be a fireman, that didn't faze him.

Tonight, Willy realized he needed to leave Arizona. If he was unable to secure work here, he needed to go wherever an employer would take a chance on him.

It would lead him first to Christ and then into the den of hell.

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Chapter 57

January 2013.

A megachurch in Austin, Texas.

“Excuse me, Pastor Scott, Brandon Pfiefer is waiting for you in the lobby.”

About 20, single, a sexual virgin, Brandon had tears in his eyes. The receptionist quietly offered him a tissue box.

Scott emerged from his office as if being interrupted.

“What’s wrong?” Scott asked, recognizing Brandon from youth group and young adult gatherings.

“You got a minute?” Brandon asked, his vocal cords strangulated by his circumstances.

“Sure. Come on back to my office,” Scott said, waiving him past the hallway of this well-financed mega church office.

As Scott tried to put his arms around Brandon, the young man pushed away slightly, “You don’t want to do that. I’ll explain in a minute.” Brandon didn’t try to hide the tears from the view of the office’s half-dozen or so gossips, gazing on, tried to look busy.

Behind the closed door, the conversation was muffled.

Brandon was still trying to piece together how this could have happened to him.

Scott waited, sitting in his chair, now aware enough not to try to touch Brandon, but waiting for the right moment to ask what was causing him to weep uncontrollably.

Finally, Brandon took a deep breath and blurted out, “I’m HIV positive...not just HIV, but HIV three!”

There was a momentary shock, and Scott now knew why Brandon told him not to touch him, probably saving his life.

“How many people know?” Scott asked, deadpan.

“Just me, you and -- the hospital. I came right over here on the bus,” Brandon said, wiping away his tears, their redness remaining. “I went for a physical, and the doctor said he saw some things in my blood work that didn’t look normal, so they took more tests.”

Brandon pulled the piece of paper out of his pocket and showed it to Scott. The paper itself was safe, and Scott took the end of it, reading it.

“Oh m’god,” Scott replied, his sigh turning to tears.

“Pastor Scott?” Brandon asked, with a tinge of disbelief and anger in his voice, “How could this happen to me? I’m here so much, I practically live here. I don’t smoke, I don’t drink, I don’t do drugs. I signed the vow not to watch R-rated movies and secular music. I’m single -- not sexually active yet -- and I don’t even masturbate because you guys teach us not to.”

Scott nodded as Brandon thought out loud.

“So...what the (profanity)?” Brandon’s trust had been wounded.

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Chapter 58

Civic and religious leaders were requested for a closed-door meeting to address Miller Test, the means by which the justice system decided whether or not the law had been broken, and to what extent. Just because a charge or complaint is filed, that doesn’t mean the law has been broken.

On the way there, assassins hired by eastern European pornographers approach American porn makers and asked if they were interested in partnering with “friends” to kill the key witness whose testimony made the U.S. Attorney General’s case.

All those who said no were found dead a short time later.

First, they gathered in a large hall and through a complex network of anonymous writing and voting laptops, they offered input in editing the laws by which they will be judged.

At first, it seemed too good to be true, but they all embraced the chance to work together.

For the first time, religious leaders and porn makers faced each other and were forced to work together.

Word got out: Pat Robertson isn't late, he's dying of HIViii.

There was then an agreement to obey the FCC's decree that until the Miller test is ratified, all non Internet media shall revert back to the Hayes code.

The CIA moderated.

In a separate meeting, representatives of eastern European porn companies told assassins how to locate all those who would not condone the murder of Willy Posta, to murder anyone who wasn't in agreement. This man had to die. It was business, not personal, and not religious. In exchange, this group agreed to pay the United States Government an amount of money equal to its own national debt.

Though the U.S. had a long-standing policy not to negotiate with terrorists, money talked.

News of the suspension of portions of the First Amendment infuriated enough members of Congress and State Governors that when the FBI and National Guard were called in to enforce censorship of Bible publishers and other media, religious and nonreligious alike, there were stand offs that results in a brief series of scuffles. It was Segregation all over again.

But who was right? Was there such a thing? The media was an abstract machine (not to be mistaken with the beast foretold in Revelation), without will or agenda. Those who ruled over the machine realized the problems facing the nation were far greater than commercial competition. Patriotic programming and the most credible news reporters got more airtime than in decades. The same technique used during WWII by filmmakers and news agencies to spin stories up, were utilized again. Given how exhausted the public had become by bad and sensationalized news, few protests gained followers.

Five States declared their intentions to recede from the Union, citing justifiable reasons. The nation was, briefly, at a state of Civil War.

Meanwhile HIV iii spreads so fast that the State of Virginia is quarantined and the Capital is temporarily moved to Boston.

About that time, a biochemical accident happened in Los Angeles, contaminating the city the same way Chernobyl was contaminated decades earlier.

The West Coast was evacuated, but many chose to ignore this and die. The damage reached as far to the east as central

Arizona, forcing Phoenix to evacuate its western regions.

The global economy had gotten so bad, a few Central and South American countries requested to become U.S. territories, 14 in all including a small country with a secret Army base called French Guiana.

As the Miller test inched its way toward refinement, porn makers were found dead. A few religious were murdered also.

Willy was told his life was in danger, and survived multiple attempts. Finally, he was successfully escorted out of the country.

He did not know if his parents left or not, or where they were at all.

Just as First Amendment protests began, TV networks reported an unexpected result of the adjusted FCC regulations: all TV ratings were up 60% or more, on non news channels, and 88% on all news channels.

Work on refining the Miller test slowed to a crawl. Porn remained online, but overnight, was reduced to half the corporate power it once was. For the moment, peace seemed to have been restored. The nation began mourning losing 1/3 of its population and 1/4 of its livable territory.

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Chapter 59

From Our Burden To Bear by Mrs. Alicia Posta-Bravo

It was early September 1997 when I first met my husband at the airport, a day after he was escorted down the coast by U.S. Marshals.

I was there with my father, James, the U.S. Ambassador of French Guiana, and a squad of Embassy security guards. My dad was born and raised Minnesota. My mother is from Brazil, just a few miles south of where I spent most of my life after the fifth grade.

We resided at a Christian boarding school for boys. I attended a small school for girls originally built for staff and their families to attend. I grew up detesting spoiled brat missionary kids, pastor's brats, as much as my husband grew up to loath descendants of the Spanish Armada and the tribes that made up the Latino population to the northwest of us. I spent my early childhood growing up on the north side of San Diego, so I knew the American views of brown-skinned ignorance all too well.

Of course, I had the advantage of long dark hair and olive skin, like my mother. I looked Latina and spoke like an American, so I was able to fit in everywhere except the Cheerleading Camp held in Matoury. I was never dark enough for them. One year I put on black-face make up to make a statement and was disqualified.

When I first laid eyes on him, I was thinking about how annoyed I was at the prospect of boys that had entered my life so far, and the competition I had with some of my girlfriends. Willy

appeared to be under great stress, looking side-to-side, his eyes busily looking around. He clutched to a duffle bag. I instantly forgot about everything but him.

I didn't just find him handsome, I think I hoped with all my heart that the touch from God I felt on my heart as we started talking was real. I had experienced infatuation, both by me and about me, but I had decided I wanted the real thing. A few months before, I decided that maybe God was planning for me to meet a boy who spoke a different language. I already spoke 3, the standard education girls received at our school. I decided to learn four more. It equipped me to work for my dad officially. I used to just tag along. Then, I got paid for it.

I watched him closely as marshals released him to French Guiana security. The lead marshal was George Lewis. He was tall and muscular, in his mid 50's. The head of security for the Ambassador was Sean Miller, medium build, 6-foot, Caucasian. I liked Sean. I rooted for the Padres and he rooted for the Oakland A's when we'd watch Saturday Night Baseball on ESPN at the Security Office on Sunday mornings. (That made sense given the time zone differences.)

“George Lewis. U.S. Marshal.”

“Sean Miller, U.S. Embassy. Welcome to French Guiana.”

George handed Sean some forms.

“Here is your man,” George said, “safe and sound.”

“How’s your man?” Sean asked, sounding genuine, “I heard you had some trouble getting him to safety.”

“He’s dead.” George had learned to delay the mourning of a lost brother in arms until after the completion of a mission.

“I’m sorry.”

Willy was still upset, and shocked by circumstances he felt were surreal. “He gave his life for me.”

“You’re safe for now,” James affirmed. “Willy?”

Willy nodded, still shook up.

“Welcome. I’m James Miles, U.S. Ambassador to French Guiana.”

“French Ghee- an-na?” Willy asked awkwardly.

Alicia corrected him, “Ghee- Ah - Nah.”

“Who picked this place?” Willy snapped back.

James answered, “Carter Smith, you know his son Stephen. You call him Shadow. The FBI arranged for you to be here until things calm down. Let’s get you to your safe house.”

Willy’s eyes seemed to notice a lot of U.S. military walking through the terminal. I couldn’t keep my eyes off his. They were so alive, so piercing.

“There’s a secret Army base nearby.”

“That explains it,” Willy replied. “Secret?”

Alicia said, “The U.S. Government will not comment on its activities. I’m Alicia.”

James added, “My assistant, Alicia. She’s also my daughter.”

Alicia could not see the Angels surrounding the Marshals, security, and Willy and Alicia. The Angels were of various sizes, had natural hair, and had a glow all around them that was connected to an umbilical cord of Light that is coming from high above the roof, extending beyond the sky and the stars, into heaven.

“Hi,” is all Willy said as he shook my hand awkwardly. A part of him that got nervous in humbling situations began memorizing everything around him, he would later recall; GI’s slumped in terminal chairs, awaiting their flights, people buzzing in and out of the restrooms, and a vendor selling coffee at a cart just outside a bookstore; stuff I didn’t notice or remember. “Never had anyone trying to kill me before. So if I say something stupid, it’s because I had a really rough last-few-days. Years.”

Before I could say anything, George said goodbye. “You got it from here, Agent Miller. Willy, stay safe young man. From what I understand, you make movies that people watch and feel God.” George extended Willy a heartfelt smile and patted him on the shoulder and extended his hand to shake it. Willy shook it back.

“Thank you....for saving my life...And...the family of the agent who...took a bullet for me...”

“It’s our job,” George affirmed. “I’ll pass on your sentiments to his family, but, with all due respect, you’re not at your safe house yet. Get moving.”

I was most fascinated by all this, unaware of the full scope of the danger that Willy and the agents just survived. I had no idea how much danger we were in. The U.S. Government was divided in its position over Willy’s deposition, so it was safe to say as many people were trying to silence him as were trying to protect him.

As much as I tried to be suave, I failed miserably saying, “Welcome to my country -- our country. Welcome home. I mean, nothing just welcome. Sorry. I guess I beat you to it. Saying something stupid.”

Willy replied, “Where I come from, beautiful women don’t have to say sorry for anything.”

Good one, I thought.

Dad gave us an order, “Let’s go.”

Sean spoke into his wrist mic. “We’ve completed a sweep of the area. All quiet. It’s safe.”

I remember taking a half-step toward a TV monitor showing

CNN, scrolling sports scores.

Dad (sorry, his name is James), reiterated, “Alicia, we’re going.”

“I wanna see if they won or not,” she said.

“Who?” Sean asked, “ - Sorry sir,” acknowledging the ambassador.

Willy saw what I was doing. Sean moved quickly to get the Embassy SUV.

“Which team?” Willy asked.

“Padres.”

“They won today,” Willy said.

“They did?”

He was not happy about it. “Yeah...beat the Giants. Last thing I saw in a hotel room before getting on a plane.” Later I would learn about his underlying pain as a Cubs fan, noticing his Cubs hat. “Sorry about ‘84.”

I remember my father recalling that Willy and I seemed to have an instant connection, and mutual passion for our favorite teams. “...Let’s go, kids.” After spending that first week with him, I knew I wanted his passion for myself.

“How old do I have to be for people to stop calling me kid?”

Willy asked rhetorically. My husband's sense of humor was so gregarious, he would find humor in almost anything. Men were trying to kill him, yet he found a way to joke. It was his way. Humor.

As the terminal's automatic doors opened for them, a luggage handler stood just outside the door.

I quickly asked the luggage handler a question, in Italian.

"How many languages do you speak?" Willy asked.

"Seven," I responded. "Mr. Ambassador, they found his bags!" Doing a double take back to Willy, I asked, "Impressed?"

"Yeah," he said, a smile returning to his face.

"How many do you speak?"

"22," Willy answered.

Humor.

"Oh really?"

"No," Willy answered sincerely, "just English," he added under his breath, "badly."

The Embassy SUV pulled up, flanked by several other cars and motorcycles all bearing U.S. flags. I subconsciously let out a small giggle.

Dad responded to a message in his earpiece, “Good,” he replied. “We’re in. I’m going to drive. The driver will sit in my usual seat,” he said as if it were an order. The security escort vehicles made adjustments accordingly. He watched the luggage worker load Willy’s stuff into the back of the SUV and closed it himself, handing the worker a voucher. The worker glanced at it and seemed overly pleased. James offered him a half nod and motioned for him to attend his next customer. He then turned to Willy and said, “Get in.”

Willy asked, “They lost my bags?”

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Chapter 60

Richard Brennan sat among peers in a meeting room facing an A.T.F. agent who looked at her pager with great concern. The agent was a female in her mid 40’s, a black woman assigned to monitor Richard while the powers that be, at least for this moment, decided what they were going to do about him and the witness.

“Is that one of those that gives sports scores and news?” Richard asked her.

Her eyes shifted toward him, almost responding as she would to one of her coworkers, but pausing to stonewall him.

Richard nodded as if he understand that she would not speak to him unless it was absolutely necessary. “I’m a Red Sox fan

myself. Can you at least blink if they won, once for yes, two for no? Three blinks if they didn't play?"

At first she only looked back at him. Richard looked away, realizing he was only making her job harder. He knew she knew who he was, so he cut her some slack.

Richard shouted, "Just tell me what you want me to do, fellas!" he said, loud enough to be heard, but in a tone that was matter of fact.

"We're on the same side. If you want me to go down to South America and take care of your star witness, just lemme know."

The agent looked up, as if waiting for a reaction. Richard waited, his eyes on the door and one-way glass behind her. After a long moment, she looked at Richard and said, in a humble voice, "Sox are down 5-4 in the 5th, at Seattle. Wet field, but it stopped raining there a few hours ago."

The left cheek of Richard's face sprang up as he offered a big smirk. "Thanks."

The door opened. A man with a suit and a security badge clipped to his jacket pocket walked in, as the arm of a National Guardsman retreated from the open door handle, and he waited until the ATF agent left behind him, closing the door behind her.

"What do you want me to do?"

The man calmly sat down and ran his hands through his hair.

“Nothing.”

“Is this home now?” Richard asked, referring to this room.

“No,” the man replied. “No, unless you want it to be...no, wait, we need it for interrogating prisoners. Colonial, let me brief you as to what has happened, and you can make your decision then. The young man whose testimony about his involvement in making pornographic movies has become the subject of an international conflict of interest. We’re not sure what we’re going to do. The President is dealing with an inner office issue with an intern that has leaked to the press -- “

“That girl finally told someone about their affair?”

He nodded. “As for this, this nuclear bomb of information...”

“I killed some of your agents. Am I being charged with a crime?”

“No, see,” the man reiterated, “they weren’t. We’re not...the United States Government is calling that a black operation involving rogue agents.”

“I see,” replied Richard, his eyes trying to read the man.

“We understand you rescued the witness and led him to safety.”

“Did any of your men see us walk right through them?” Richard asked.

“What?”

“Leaving the house, as officers and vehicles converged on the scene of a house blown up in the middle of the day, in the middle of a residential neighborhood, did your agents report anything unusual like two suspects including a possible assassin and a witness, walking right through them and away from the house? Did any agents report our whereabouts before I walked in here and asked to speak to you?”

“No.” the man replied, taken aback.

“So it was an angel. We got led out of the city by an angel just like Peter in the Book of Acts. The reason I’m telling you this is this. Be careful what you say and do next. Because God is listening.”

The man ran his hand through his hair again and said, “The United States government is prepared to offer you this. Have a good journey.” The man set a passport on the table and an envelope that contained cash and other documents. “

Richard looked at everything. “What about my boy?”

“I presume you’re referring to your son?”

“Yeah,” Richard said.

“We’ll have him delivered to you, once you get there.”

“And if I don’t agree to go?” Richard asked.

“Then you will be charged with murder, treason and dereliction of duty and held in federal prison until we get around to your constitutionally required speedy trial.”

“What do I do when I get there?”

“Watch over him until we decide what we want. And, that may change, per Administration.”

“You know, under normal circumstances, I’d end you right here and now. But, I’ve recently become a follower of Jesus Christ and He’s telling me to go down there and keep an eye on this boy, forever if need be.” Richard extended his hand to shake.

The man was reluctant to shake it.

Richard kept it out and stared at the man until he overcame his fear and put his hand into Richard’s palm.

The former Cabinet member gave the man a hard handshake, and with his other hand, pulled his security card from his own jacket.

“Here. Find a new home for this, will ya?” Richard said, placing the pass code card for the U.S. nuclear system on the table.

“What is that?”

“There’s two more in the world, one worn by the president and

the other by a third party above your security clearance,” Richard shot back.

The man became immediately rattled, as Richard let go of his hand. “Can I go now?” Richard asked.

“Open the door,” the man said, sweating and feeling unnerved as he held the plastic card in his hand.

The door opened. The soldier guarding the door was flanked by two more. Richard stood in front of them and said to the escorts, “Soldier, please escort me to the location in this envelope. Have my personals, including my son, follow me there.”

“I’ll take care of it, Colonial,” the young guardsman said.

“And Blake,” Richard said, speaking back into the room, “if anything happens to my son, or you guys make any changes without consulting me, I’m gonna come back here and kill you, and everyone you work for. Is that clear?”

“I don’t have the authority to make any deals beyond getting you out of the country on the conditions in your hand.”

“Thanks for the honesty,” Richard replied.

Richard disappeared down the hall, surrounded by military escorts.

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Chapter 61

Office of Assistant District Attorney, State of Arizona, 2013

Staring at a computer screen, typing, Michael Hill looked up to see Willy and Gayle enter.

The nameplate on his desk read ‘Michael Hill’. Five luxurious chairs not including the one Michael was seated in had seat cushions that gave the office a certain corporate smell.

“Welcome, Willy. Welcome home,” Michael said, rising from his seat, standing behind his desk, his chair rolling back slightly, balancing against the back of his knees.

“Thank you,” Willy answered.

“How do you feel?” Gayle asked.

Willy thought about it and let his thoughts flow out of his mouth, “Thomas Fierelli is dead, and I’m no longer a dual citizen. And the majority of the industry I wanted to work in since I was a kid has either left the country or is dead. I’m married to wonder woman, I’m a dad, and my films are credited with the miraculous power of God. So, from a selfless perspective, good.”

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Chapter 62

New York City, 2012.

At the United Nations Building, delegates gathered in the main forum.

The economy had gotten so bad that several countries in Central and South America had asked the United States to make them territories. Mexico's congress assessed that the country could neither afford a civil war nor endure an invasion by any number of neighboring countries. Its military was feared by few aside its own civilians. Since its biggest foreign police problem was controlling dual citizenship and the exodus of citizens from its borders, the decision was made with the United States to unite the nations without losing its cultural identity.

Further, Cuba was about to change leadership and this made every neighboring country nervous. Like the Japanese empire and China a half-century before, rumors of invasion ran wild throughout southern Mexico.

The last nation to be formally acknowledged by the United Nations as a providence of the United States was French Guiana.

The U.N. Ambassador of French Guiana cast a vote from his seat. The moderator announced the results. "The vote is unanimous. French Guiana has been acknowledged as a territory of the United States."

TV News reported that fourteen Central and South American countries asked to become U.S. territories, as a result of the economic depression that had affected the world.

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Chapter 63

Downtown Phoenix, Arizona, February 2013.

Just outside an expensive restaurant on Thanksgiving Day, crime lord Thomas Fierelli exited with two bodyguards. After taking a few steps, he collapsed onto one of them.

In the parking lot, an unmarked police car with two undercover cops opened. They emerged from their car, and flashed badges as they examined Fierelli.

His men were unsure of whether to protect the body or back off, taken aback by the badges. Their boss was dead. The autopsy would be that he died of heart failure.

Within hours of the death of Thomas Fierelli, U.S. marshals contacted Willy Posta.

Willy Posta was in his pajamas at his South American home, along with his 10 year old son Jonathan-Daniel and 8 year old daughter Taylor playing in the room, checking his morning email. He received an urgent message from the U.S. Marshal Service. Alicia, with a cleaning towel in her hand, saw the expression on Willy's face.

“Oh my God.”

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Chapter 64

2013.

Office of the State of Arizona's Assistant District Attorney

Michael Hall said, "Phillip Kiel sends his regards."

Gayle asked, "Can I get you anything?"

"Water, please. I forgot how dry it is here."

Gayle walked over to a sink in a half-kitchen within the office and pours a glass of water. Willy sat down. Gayle brought it over to him, where a table stood next to Willy's chair. He took it and held it, drinking a lot of it.

"Thank you."

Gayle asked, "Good to be home?"

"This hasn't been home for..." he replied, counting under his breath, "18 years."

Gayle said, "Well, welcome back."

"Thank you. So surreal being back. Streets I walked down while growing up here. Good thing I didn't have to drive."

Gayle asked, "How did you get here?"

Michael answered for her. "Helicopter," Michael said, grinning at Willy.

Gayle asked, “Helicopter? I thought the airport’s been closed for months.”

Michael answered, “The hospital has a landing pad.”

Gayle asked, “But don’t you have to be an emergency vehicle?”

“It’s a Presidential escort.”

Gayle responded, “Oh-oooh. You givin’ free rides?” She laughed at her own joke. Willy and Michael reply with polite smiles.

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Chapter 65

Willy glanced at the wall where all the State D.A. and Federal D.A. pictures were mounted. He looked out the window of Michael’s office and sees a decontamination truck below, which look like a fire truck, spraying a light gas into the air as it goes slowly down the street.

Pedestrians shield their faces slightly, waving the air mist away.

Michael said. “This is the case that Bill Barr never got to prosecute when he was in office. Now the country’s got two priorities, porn and terrorism, which ever seems to cause more harm. Right now porn is the big bad wolf, since Bin Laden was killed.”

“How long have you been back?”

“Mm?”

“This office,” Willy specified.

Michael said, “Just got back. Ink on the fire chief’s authorization letter is still wet.”

Willy saw the logo on the side of a truck on the street that bears the letters ATFP. “Surreal seeing the ATF’s logo with a P on it.”

The wall of Attorney General framed pictures he had seen as a younger man had been added to.

Michael flipped through the old transcript.

“I want to re-record your deposition now that Thomas Fierelli is gone.”

Willy asked Michael, “Can we speak privately?” He turns slightly to Gayle, adding, “I’m sorry.”

“Sure,” Michael replied.

Gayle respectfully replied, “Be in my office,” under her breath.

Michael nodded. Gayle exited the room. Michael waited for Willy to speak.

In the reception area of the office, Alicia was trying to bide time. She browsed an old set of magazines on a table.

The magazine headlines said

DID WE DO IT TO OURSELVES?

CIVIL WAR!

GEORGIA and SOUTH CAROLINA DISCUSS RECEDING FROM UNION...AGAIN

Other magazines showed these headlines:

UNITED: ARMED FORCES DECLARE NO DIVISION

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS SPEAKS TO GLOBAL RUMORS

Alicia pierced her lips, looking concerned about the history of Willy's homeland.

Behind closed doors, Willy said loudly, "The 28th and 29th Amendments need to be repealed."

In the reception area, Alicia read an article. The headline was:

PRESIDENT SIGNS 27th AMENDMENT: SAME-GENDER MARRIAGE LEGAL

Alicia winced slightly as she read. She puts it down, irked, and picked up another magazine. Opening it, she read another story in it.

The headline was:

HOUSE DEBATES ADDING PORN TO UNPROTECTED FREE SPEECH CLAUSES

Alicia rolled her eyes and lowered the magazine as a receptionist, Bethany, returned to the front desk. She was an older woman, in her early 60's. Gayle poked her head out the door and saw Alicia, looking bored, if not agitated.

Gayle asked, "Mrs. Posta, can I get you anything?"

"Maybe something good to read?"

In the Michael's office, Willy pulled out a folder.

"This is a memo from Francis Gurry, the president of World Intellectual Property Organization, a division of the United Nations. It says, in so many words, if the United States' policy on Bible publishing does not revert back to what it was prior to 2013, the U.N. is going to recommend sanctions against the U.S."

Michael read it, and his face went from disbelief to concern. Michael asked, "I thought we were on the same team."

"Not about this. We worship the same God. But. When it comes to trading the first amendment for the banning of all mentions of sex in the media, just to silence commercial pornography, that's going to far. The only reason you got away with it for some long is that the ratings went up."

Michael answered, “I disagree. Ratings have gone through the roof, and the death rate is at less than 2 percent.”

“Where was this zeal when abortion was legal?”

Michael replied, “It’s still legal.”

“And yet not a single Planned Parenthood employee was charged with murder.”

Michael shot back, “Because it’s legal.”

“Jack Kevorkian.”

Michael replied, “What he did was illegal. Assisted suicide is illegal. Abortion is not.”

“And yet you can’t make a case without me. I finish law school December.”

Michael replied with a sincere tone, “Good for you,” but he was still annoyed. “I’m not here to talk case law with you, I thought we were gonna talk about you testifying. You are still a federal witness.”

“You did a lousy job of protecting me. Christian missionaries protected me.”

This drove Michael’s eyes to read the memo again, and he handed it back to Willy.

Michael responded, “I could be wrong, and I’ll double check, but I’m pretty sure this has no authority here. I answer to the President of the United States. And his orders are for me to assemble a case against the heads of the major studios and put ‘em in prison.”

“That’s another thing -- Aren’t they all dead?”

Michael replied, “You have no idea who hunted you, and who still wants you dead, and to what lengths we’ve gone to protect you for 18 years. Enough of them survived and have reestablished their facilities in Oregon, Utah, Washington, and parts of Canada. Most of the pornographers have gone to Canada and Mexico. The assassins who murdered the porn industry’s leader years ago were hired by an eastern European mafia who profiteered in everything from human trafficking to prostitution, men and women. They still see you as a man who cost them a lot of money when the western markets closed to them. And that ex-Colonial I told you about, Richard Brennan? He’s been reactivated. And I don’t know whose side he’s on. He may not even know whose side he’s on.”

“Then why did a couple of executives from Fox Faith and Warner Brothers pay me a visit?

Michael was surprised by this. “Really? Whu’ they say?”

“Before I get into that, I think you deserve to know that my next stop is Boston to meet with the President Elect.”

Miles away, in Boston, this first-term President of the United States, Jean-Luc Mallard sat in the chair behind his desk, looking out the window at the night sky, the seal of the President on the floor, but the walls containing a few pieces of classic art -- not the traditional decoration of the Oval Office.

With his Bible open, Jean-Luc prays quietly.

“He’s giving serious thought to this,” Willy replied. “But, like you and me, he doesn’t want to take this country from bad to worse.”

Michael asked, “How do you know Jean-Luc?”

“We coached together back home.”

Michael asked, “Back -- you mean in -- OK. What I hear you saying is my orders may have changed, or will, so maybe we should wait.”

“Yes sir.”

Michael looked intently at Willy, and for a moment, was not an attorney, but an old family friend. Michael had worked side by side with his father on arson cases. “You look so much like your father.”

The mention of Willy’s father sent Willy’s face into a slightly down cast position, with a forced smile on his face.

“Thank you, sir.”

Michael asked, “Speaking of -- how is he?”

“I don’t know, sir.”

Michael asked, “Evacuated?”

Willy’s hands whisked into the air, “I don’t know,” his hand flipping away from each other. Italians always seemed to talk with their hands.

Michael nodded, sensitive to Willy’s feelings. “What did the guys at Fox and Warner want?”

“To talk. They saw my films. I loaded them onto Youtube and...”

Michael smiled, “I’ve seen them. You have a gift.”

“Thank you. My mom used to say that.”

Michael did not ask about Winnie. “Well, thanks for coming in. And, when you get done in Boston, come back and see me.”

“I’ll try...one other thing before I go.”

Michael got up as Willy got up, and the two shook hands.

“My parents. We went to the house where I thought they were living, and it was deserted.”

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Chapter 66

French Guiana 1998

I fell in love with my husband the first week we met. I was assigned to stay with him until it was determined he was safe from anyone who wanted to kill him.

I had spent my school days surrounded by spoiled boys who walked around with a sense of entitlement. The one boy I did think was cute, who treated me nice, turned out to be gay. But, off they went every year, some not returning when their parents got transferred, and some getting kicked out for selling drugs, and my dream of meeting Mr. Right became somewhat of a lost cause. My mother didn't help, telling me that I should be faithful to God and the Church and the right guy would come along.

Yeah, right mom. Well, he did, but nothing like I thought. Willy was so interesting. And, the fact that U.S. military were both after him and protecting him, and the fact that my dad was called and asked to hide him, was all very exciting!

If I had to identify my personal flaws back then, one would be this. I was too lazy, emotionally, to decide what I wanted. I always considered myself a person with purpose. Well, here and now I had one. Protect this guy at all costs...and if that means having sex with him, great!

No, seriously, I felt connected to him from the first moments I spent with him, and when he processed the shock of having to leave his family and surviving the attempts of people trying to

kill him, he didn't waste time showing me how he felt about me.

The school was located next to an incubator where a medical company was able to use DNA to tell people how long they had to live. The Army loved this because tourists were drawn there and not to the base. It was the perfect distraction.

The caravan of Embassy vehicles trekked across a beautiful coastline. Willy and I talked like two college kids who just met at a ministry retreat and couldn't stop talking. Dad sat in the passenger seat as Sean drove.

Willy told me how he let go of his pain from the Cubs loss in 1984. "See, and my theory is, Lee Smith should never have pitched to Garvey. The man had already batted in most of their runs for the Series, and Lee tries to force a fastball down the middle of the plate to a fastball hitter. Had he walked him, he had Craig Nettles, who was batting .186 For the Series, in the on deck circle."

"You think they would have beaten Detroit?" I asked.

Willy replied, "Heck no - but...I don't know."

My dad spoke up. "Willy?"

"Yes sir?"

"Call me James."

"Yes sir. James."

“Do you understand what is going on?”

“Not really,” Willy said, “I thought I did.”

“OK, I’m going to explain it to you. I need you to listen. Your movies seem to have some kind of a supernatural power to them. Everyone who watches them says they feel God. Everyone. Christians, Catholics, even people who say they are not religious. And those who don’t love God, feel His judgment. There are reports of people going into cardiac arrest after watching your film. Now, I understand you worked as a porn editor for a while, right?”

Willy gave me an awkward look. Little did he know how familiar I was with that, given the amount of human trafficking I know about.

“Yeah.”

James said, “You’re the right witness, but the timing is terrible. The internet is making the pornographers rich. The dynamics of the case are changing so much that our government doesn’t really know what it wants to do with you. You see, if your testimony is heard by a jury and is ruled admissible, the major studio executives can be held liable for genocide. Nearly every porn actor has engaged in life-threatening behavior.”

Over time, just as in the case against the Five Families of New York and New Jersey, agents of ATF and OSHA gathered to watch a slide shows of investigation subjects. A large bulletin

board showed the family tree of industry players, and how they are organized.

James explained, “OSHA has been working with the ATF, anxiously waiting to go in and invade the entire industry. But there’s pressure coming from too many places, including Congress, so they’re not going to play you yet. But they want you alive, so they placed you in the Witness Protection program. Problem. More people are profiting off of the product than see it as a threat. It’s the Civil War all over again, kind of.”

“It’s 1998. This is really happening?” Willy asked sardonically.

James replied, “Like I said, until things calm down, you’re going to stay with us at a school where Rev. Carter, Shadow’s dad - works.”

“Wow. I made one video.”

James said, “And while you’re here, you’re gonna finish your college degree. I have a video for you to watch from Jayna Andrews. She’s making arrangements for you to enroll at Arizona State when you go back.”

Dad’s cell phone rang. “Hello? I see. I see. Thank you.” James ended the call. “Willy, we have an apartment ready for you, but we’re going to keep you at my home for now. I just got a call. The price on your head has doubled. We’re taking you to a different location with more security -- my house -- while we keep an eye on the apartment. If nothing happens in a week, we’ll move you in there.”

At my home, we got to know each other saying up late, playing board games. Willy seemed to love to play the game, even though I always beat him. We played Monopoly. No boy ever wanted to play me again after losing to me once.

At one point he opened up about what turned him on by saying, “Nothing sexier than being dunked on by a pretty girl.” He also added that he never had it happen to him. With the roll of the dice, another game ended.

“That’s it. I’m done. You’ve beaten my eight times in a row.”

“You’re probably sick of me talking. I’ve told you my whole life story. I wanna know about you. When did you start playing basketball?”

Willy said, “I’m not sick of you talking.”

“Willy, you wanna skip the get to know you stuff and pretend we’ve know each other for years?”

Willy shook his head no. “My mind just went to sex.”

I cracked up laughing. Mine too, but he wouldn’t know that for a while.

My mouth broke into a wide, innocent smile when I asked him, “Tell me how you got saved.”

He got this thoughtful look on his face, and I reclined back,

leaning on my side elbow, ready for anything.

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Chapter 67

Landon Fox paced slowly across the lecture hall and captivated his students with a masterful telling of this story.

“This is the part of the story I like the most. The innocent young man who wanted to work in movies has come back from the edge of himself, and has an encounter that can only be described as a God-thing.”

Christmas 1997.

Willy drove his car home from California to Arizona. He stopped off for gas when he got into his old neighborhood. He pulled out his wallet, flush with cash and a recently issued credit card, something he had not used yet at the gas pump. He saw all the people lined up inside the convenience store to pay for their gas and, wearing his sunglasses, he felt above the rest of the populous.

Since things had been so rotten for him the last time he was here, he was looking forward to going to his parent’s house, as he now referred to it, and showing off.

He saw a familiar face pull in to use a pay-phone booth. He had attended the church with this guy, Eddie. A tall, charismatic student actor, Eddie looked like a tough guy until he spoke, revealing a big personality and a blinding smile.

If you only knew what I do now, Eddie, Willy thought.

As if God Himself wanted the two to see each other, Eddie paused before getting back into his car and locked eyes with Willy, looking cool leaning against his bright red used convertible with the top down.

“Willy?”

Willy nodded with the same grin as Jim Morrison.

“WILLY????” Eddie’s face flashed with excitement. “Hey, man! How are you? I haven’t seen you in...”

“Been working,” Willy replied. “L.A. Making movies.”

“No way!”

Willy enjoyed the moment until it quickly turned depressing.

“You work with any stars? Anyone I would know? You know, famous? Don’t be shy Drop some names.”

“Um, well, maybe nobody you’d know. I work...in porn.”

Eddie immediately remembered the circumstances around Willy’s departure from the church. The board decided it no longer wanted to have a senior pastor as its executive director and committed a hostile take over, forcing the senior pastor and one other staff member to resign.

Willy had been contracted by the church to make videos. He had secured funding to make his own film, and in exchange for his private venture, the church was paying him a small salary to make video a mainstay during the worship services.

Politics ended that, and Willy was quickly a man without a country.

“You know what, man? I feel like you’re supposed to come tonight. You’re in town and don’t tell me you got plans already.”

Willy admitted, “No, just seeing my parents.”

“They know you’re in town yet?”

In fact, they didn’t. Willy was planning to surprise them.

“No,” he said.

“Don’t tell ‘em yet. Come with me. There’s a revival happening at a church a buddy of mine plays worship at. It’s geared toward people who experienced spiritual abuse. The whole thing is about looking past what man has done to us and focus, refocus, on what Jesus is doing.”

Willy took a deep breath. Eddie nodded and reached to open his car door, opening it. “Hold that thought,” Eddie said. “Take this. It’s a card. Got all the important information on there.”

Willy held the card and read it.

“You got peace?”

“No,” Willy answered. “I’ve witnessed things you couldn’t imagine.”

Willy and Eddie parted ways and Willy decided to stop at his parents’ home to see his mother. She was surprised, delighted, and embraced him. They both tried not to cry.

Willy showed her the card and described having seen Eddie. Winnie didn’t miss a beat.

“Go. I’ll prep your father before you get back. Late dinner, dessert. Sleep in your old room. When you gotta go, go.”

Willy walked into this church for the first time. He had seen it from the highway before. It was enormous. Angels of the Lord were present, though invisible to him. He found Eddie just inside the lobby, and was welcomed with a long hug by the tall man.

“Why is it when you hug me, you make me feel like I’m eight years old hugging my father?”

“Because I’m tall?”

“It’s rhetorical.”

“I’m glad you’re here,” Eddie said. They sat a seat apart neat halfway down the auditorium seating.

Speaker after speaker talked about how they were wounded by church leaders, some by sexual abuse, others by control and cult-like manipulation. But they all said the same thing: God is very effective at managing His own house. He had, did and would continue to restore anything that was lost to religious leaders' pride, prejudice, selfishness or negligence.

Given that it was a Pentecostal service, the musicians held an alter call, inviting anyone forward to an area designed for slaphappy body blessings. Willy had seen too much show business to want to partake in that.

He turned to Eddie and said, “This part is a line of crap. If this is all they’re gonna do, I’m going to go soon.”

A man in his 80’s, Marty, a Jewish man who was raised to be a Rabbi, was now a pastor at this Christian church. He approached Eddie and asked him about Willy, “Are you that same kid that one church hired to make videos...what was it, a couple years ago?”

Willy was taken aback, and, so was Eddie.

“Yeah. Do I know you?”

“My daughter in law is Jayna Andrews.”

“Yes! I know her! She helped me get back to school...at least she tried.” Willy shouted over the music. The sounds of people making holy laughter noises and shouting out to God rendered

Willy's response relatively unnoticed.

"Come here," Marty motioned, leading Willy off to the side of the auditorium, standing on an isle, aside from the majority of the crowd.

"I'm gonna tell you something. I studied to be a Rabbi all my life. When I was 60 years old, I became a Believer in Jesus Christ. Now, I'm sitting over there, and I felt a voice speak to me, and tell me that you are chosen for a specific purpose, and that your films have been touched by the hand of God. They heal some, and others fall flat on their faces. He also said, you got lost. So, He asked me to come over here tonight and tell you, it's over. You're going back to work for Him."

"Thomas Fierelli?"

"No," Marty replied, chuckling, "no. Why would that guy want anything with you? Uhhh..." Marty replied, as if God was still speaking to him. "The Lord is explaining it to me. You were once forced to work for that no good hustler, and you took a job in entertainment, but it wasn't what you thought it would be, and now, God's gonna set you on the right path. Here and now tonight."

"Man, aside this, what do you do?"

"I'm retired with the F.B.I."

Willy's emotions kicked into tears when he heard a song start to play, reminding him of a time before all that he had seen on porn

sets, and off. Porn Valley had destroyed the city made famous by the teen movies of the 1980s.

“I’m not sure he can still use me,” Willy said. “I made porn.”

Marty had a look in his eye only warriors who had won major victories in battle had seen. “Doesn’t matter. God’s bigger.”

Willy and Marty talked for a long time after the music ended. Marty told Willy how to make an anonymous call in regards to all the illegal activity he saw while editing and working as crew on porn. He made a call from the church office.

He spent the night at his parents’ home, and the next morning, an F.B.I. agent knocked on the door.

He sat Willy and his parents down and explained what had happened. Willy’s testimony could potentially be the key evidence that could make the District Attorney’s case in a long-fought battle.

They emphasized that the case was very sensitive, and that they needed to be prepared to go into protective custody if those who would be prosecuted decided to defend their interests.

Before the agents were finished speaking, an explosion outside the house got their attention.

Willy asked them how anyone could have learned his involvement so fast and planted a bomb. The agents explained that there are spies listening to them, and sometimes, especially

in cases where the stakes are so high, information travels fast.

They asked Willy, in front of a burning car -- it belonged to a neighbor, if he was still willing to do a deposition. He made it clear that he would, for he believed Jesus was giving him a light unto his feet. The agents said they were both Christians and understood what he was saying, citing Psalm 119:105.

And so it began.

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Chapter 68

Willy slept in his new home in French Guiana.

He dreamed he was on a theater stage, walking slowly down a dark hallway which appeared to be the behind-the-scenes corridor of an empty comedy club stage.

On a large wall screen, there was a projected image of Sam Kinison performing.

Willy followed the light to a projector being operated by Sam, who is sitting on a chair, leaning over the projector. As Willy approached him, Sam did not acknowledge Willy. Sam looked glorified, his eyes sparkling, his skin looking healthy, his hair flowing; how he might have looked without drugs.

Willy stood right next to him, watching the video. The footage got to the most famous moment of Sam's life, when he asks a man in the audience if he was married.

On the screen, Sam had focused on a man in the audience. “You seen the face of a married man? Argh! Augh!!! Augghhhh!!!!” The video turned off.

Sam looked up at Willy and straightened his posture slightly.

Sam said, “Glory to God.”

“I can’t tell if I am dreaming or not. It feels so real.”

Sam said, “You disappoint me.”

Willy’s mouth went through a series of possible responses, unsure if he heard Sam right.

“What?”

Sam said, “You heard me. Your movies have the supernatural power to heal people, and you are trying to impress those guys.”

Willy and Sam were now standing together in a room with a large oval table. Willy looked around the walls of the room. It was decorated with special edition movie posters from films that earned the studio money and/or awards. It was atop the black building at Universal Studios, the entity made powerful by the influence of the mafia.

Willy looked at a particular chair at the table.

Sam said, “Sit it in. It’s okay.”

Willy did.

“Where am I?”

Sam replied, “Not important. How does it feel? You just signed a million dollar contract to produce films for a company that makes movies that all your friends and family will see.

He formed a fake smile and asked, “How’s it feel?” Willy looked at the table and the chair. He shrugged.

Sam asked, “Is it all you thought it would be?”

“It’s just a chair.”

Sam motioned for him to walk to a window overlooking the city. Willy stood next to him, traffic on Lankershim Boulevard happening below. Usually dreams were slightly out of focus. This was crystal clear, if not, too vivid. It made him feel uneasy.

Sam said, “Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” You understand?”

Willy nodded, feeling almost queasy.

“Why do I want it?”

Sam replied. “Your mother wanted it for you. We all want to

please our parents.”

Sam motioned for Willy to follow him.

Suddenly they were on the main stage of the Academy Theater in North Hollywood, California.

Sam and Willy stood alone on the stage where the podium glows under the hot lights. Sam held an Academy Award. He handed it to Willy and motioned for Willy to step up to the mic.

“This feels so real. This is so heavy.”

Willy held the trophy and stepped up to the mic. “Is...”

Willy wasn’t sure if the mic was hot. His utterances were broadcast throughout the auditorium. “Yeah, wow. Mic’s on. Um...what should I say?”

Sam said, “Get it out of your system.”

“But...there’s no one here. And I haven’t -”

An audience full of movie stars seemed to fade in to the empty seats.

Willy’s eyes found his parents in the crowd, tearfully smiling. Willy looked around, and saw Sam standing behind the stage curtain. Willy began to tear up, a repentant sinner. “Forgive me Lord, for putting this --”

Willy changed his grip of the Oscar so that he could throw it.
“God Damn You!”

Willy hurled the Oscar into the music pit below. Willy wept and fell to one knee. Willy heard another voice, of an older man.

“It’s okay, Willy.”

Willy looked up and saw the stage filled with actors from the past who had won Oscars, but who seem to share a greater crown. Cecil DeMille put his arm around Willy like a grandfather would.

“Many of man has been misled by the song of Satan, telling you that this was more important than that.”

An actress pulled a gorgeous crown out, and showed it to Willy. It lacked jewels on top of it except for one small one.

Cecil said, “This crown awaits you, your reward from the Lord. The jewel is the short film you have already made, that is filled with the Authority of the Father. The rest await your creativity and heartful worship.”

An actor who Willy does not recognize stepped forward.

The actor said, “Earthly treasures have no value here. First seek first His Kingdom and all righteousness and this will be added to you as well.”

“My mind hears you. I believe you. My heart aches to be the

next --”

An older actress raises her hand so that it finds Willy's mouth and stops him from talking.

The actress asked him, “Do you know who I am?”

Willy shook his head no.

“In this room are the most famous people in the film industry for most of the 20th century.

Willy looks around. He recognizes Walt Disney.”

“Mr. Disney?”

Walt smiled and offered humble nod.

“Is that all?” the actress asked.

Willy looked around, but could not name a single face.

She said, “Many of the men you hold as heroes will never enter where we are, for they have yet to call Jesus Lord. Before them, there were famous men whom the world has forgotten. After you, there will be famous men who the world will also forget. But the name of the Lord is forever. Do you understand?”

“Yes ma'am.”

Willy ripped his shirt open. “I know the truth in my heart. Why do I still want it so much?”

The lights faded and the people seemed to fade with it. Sam remained.

“What’s going on?”

Willy then saw something that made him terrified. Sam knelt. Willy turned around and saw Jesus, the glorious King.

Sam said, prostrate, “Hail, Lord.”

Jesus’ presence was very soothing. He said to Willy, putting His arm around him, “Let’s go for a walk.”

On a sunny morning on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, on Hollywood Boulevard, the street is empty. Jesus and Willy walked down the street and saw the names written in the sidewalk.

“I don’t know what to pray for. The desire to have my name here is burning me up.”

Jesus stopped and looked down. Willy saw his name, on a star. Willy laughed at first, then got quiet, realizing he was standing in the presence of Jesus Christ. Willy took a long look at his name and at Jesus’ face, back and forth.

Jesus said, “Who do you say that I am?”

Willy broke up into tears, part frustration, part laughter.

“I knew you were going to ask me that!”

Jesus laughed along with Willy, like a brother.

“This isn’t real.”

Jesus corrected him, “We’re in your future.”

Willy took another long look at the star.

Jesus said, “Willy, feed my sheep.”

Willy looked down at his name once more, and looked up. Sam was standing there now.

Sam said, “One more stop.”

They stood in a rich man’s bedroom.

It was the death bed of Larry Flynt.

Sam and Willy stood bedside as Larry breathed through a respirator. Sam said, “You were given the mantel he rejected,” and then turned his head to speak directly to Willy, “Prophet, open thy mouth and speak.”

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Chapter 69

As Willy are his first breakfast in his first home away from home, a man his age in a Hawaiian shirt, shorts and sandals

opened the door, as if he owned the house.

“Good morning,” he said in an American accent straight out of Chicago; definitely a hint of east coast. “You must be the prophet. Your films are causing mass healings in a church up the street.”

Lou walked straight over to the cabinets and reached up to grab a cereal bowl. “I own this house. I just got off the phone with the U.S. Marshals, and they say the coast is clear. But, between you and me, until we learn more about the guy we picked up just before you got here, it’s not over yet.”

Lou poured himself some cereal and began to munch at the kitchen counter. Willy chewed slowly trying to hear him.

“My name is Lou Azula-Villaneuva, or, Lou Blue. You can call me Lou. I understand you pulled an all-nighter with Alicia. Sweet girl. If my gut is right, you two prob’ get married, have some kids. Or, you get killed and we all go home.”

Lou pauses to laugh “I’m kidding. Sorry. I got bad jokes. Anyways, welcome to French Guiana.”

“Thanks, it’s pretty here.”

“Our economic infrastructure is deeply mired in opium. The Army base has been a blessing, but I think you’re gonna show us how to make movies, God’s way. Am I wrong?”

“No...not sure how to answer,” Willy said through chewing his

food.

Lou shoveled the remainder of his cereal into his mouth and swallowed his milk, then saying all at once, “This is who I believe you are. You show all the signs of a prophet. You don’t want to be here. You didn’t ask for this gift. You had other ideas for your life. You have been given a gift, custom made by Jesus Christ Himself. And those in power in the world want to kill you. I believe you are a prophet.”

“Great. Most prophets were beheaded.”

“Not you, bro,” Lou said, shaking his big, dark-skinned head, “you’re gonna out live everyone you know except maybe your wife.”

“I’m not married,” Willy replied as groundskeepers who were working on the trees in the yard made it hard to be heard in the house. One man poked his head toward an open window in the kitchen and shouted something to Lou in French.

Lou answered him in French, and the man carried on with his work.

“Your wounds from the Spanish and Mayan and Aztec and Navajo descendants persecuting all the non-brown-skinned people you experienced in Arizona are going to be dealt with here. When you’re surrounded by brown-skinned people who show you Christ’s love, who speak French, it’s gonna help.”

“Where are you from?” Willy asked, trying to pronounce every

word.

“Chicago. My parents are chaplains in the Army. My dad’s still active but my mom retired. I’m one of eleven kids. They all left. I followed my dad into the ministry. I’m talking too much, aren’t I?” Lou said, finally pausing.

“Yes!” Alicia yelled down, sounding tired and agitated. Lou reacted accordingly, bringing his voice down and closing the kitchen window.

“You’re one of those name-it-claim-it-guys,” Willy said.

Lou took a long look at Willy. “Alicia, I’m taking your man here to see the church up the street.”

There is a serious pause and then, “I’m coming with you!” she yelled down.

Willy was at a loss. “What...what?”

“You need to see for yourself what God is doing with your films.”

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Chapter 70

Lou, Alicia and Willy walked down a dirt road to a church that is crowded with foot traffic. Willy sees a state-of-the-art power line and phone line connected to the structure, mounted from a distant pole connected to the main line. Someone wealthy paid

for this.

Inside, people fanned themselves and watched a video projected from a laptop. The video Willy had uploaded to Google Video, was now running on Yahoo! Video, projected to a room full of attendees, led Pentecostal style by a man using a small microphone plugged into a small speaker.

Willy cannot see the Angels sitting and standing throughout the church. People are speaking in what Willy's recognized as tongues, and sick and paralyzed people are responding to the otherwise invisible Light that penetrates the video, gushing onto the crowd like a gentle, mist-like rain.

They cannot see that they are becoming soaking in a gentle, blue, almost purple-like water, creating a pool of healing waters on the ground. To the human eye, this building is dry, with a dirt floor.

“How do we know it isn’t some form of sound wave manipulation? I was a DJ for years, and a movie editor for the last two. I know how this works. My movie...” Willy observed, his face cracking an egocentric smile, “what are they doing?”

Lou sees a specific man in the crowd and motioned to Willy, “You need to see this for yourself.”

Lou motioned to a man whom everyone seemed to greet with a big smile. Older women grabbed him and hugged him. Older men patted him on the back.

Lou told the man in French who Willy was.

“Le prophete,” the man said. Lou translated, “I was the most feared drug dealer in the city. I caught my men watching your video, and they said the voice of God was speaking through it. I became jealous of them and told them to move so I could see it. And, sure enough, I heard the voice of God. He told me that He was bringing provision to this country, and that those who were once our enemies, will now be our neighbors. And He asked me to follow Him. He showed me how to grow crops, in addition to opium, but He showed me many more valuable, and what countries to sell them to, and make more money than growing opium the way I was. No more violence! No more slave labor! No more murder! Not as long as I am here.”

Lou looked at Willy and added in English, “This man was one of the country’s most wanted fugitives. He gave up a lot of names and gave back all the money he made off farming opium.”

“And they just let him go?”

“No, he’s on house arrest, under the custody of the church.”

“I’m so happy!” the man said, walking past Willy to greet people walking into the church.

“The devil is dead!” one woman said in French, sitting near them, hearing their conversation. “That man caused so much violence through drugs, and I was an addict. I felt God speak to me through this, and I no longer feel the chains of opium!”

Lou translated. Willy got the gist of her story from her eyes without translation.

“Good,” was all Willy could muster.

Back at the house, Willy is on the phone with his father. “So...I don’t know if I’m ever gonna leave this place. But I was thinking, what if I made movies here? They seem to have an effect on people.”

Jonathan responded, not sure what to say. “I guess the only thing I have to say is...one day, all of this is going to end. You pray about what you’re going to do after your movies are no longer the reason why these people go to church. Pay attention to what God’s doing.”

“OK,” Willy answered. “Dad...”

“Yeah?” Jonathan asked.

“I love you.”

“I love you too, son. And I’m damn proud of you for standing up and doing the right thing. Most people don’t. You manned up. Couldn’t be prouder. You should be on Oprah or something.”

Willy swallowed his tears and his personal satisfaction, having achieved the satisfy winning his father’s approval.

“Thanks, dad. It feels really good to hear you say that.”

“Eh, one more thing. Mom and I were talking about...the way I talk to you,” Jonathan said, sounding like a different man. “I was having a hard time finding the right words and your mom helped me come up with this. You ready?”

“Yeah!” Willy said, his face glued to the phone. Alicia’s dark hair curved around the open door, seeing how her boyfriend was doing.

“You are not required to audition for my affection. Your actions are not subject to my approval to be loved by God. Live your life. Get married. Have some kids. Be happy. And I don’t care if you ever make another movie or not. You follow God, and I’m proud. Grandkids would be nice.”

Willy laughed, his spirit feeling a much-needed rejuvenation. “Working on it,” he said, looking at Alicia, who is now sitting on the edge of the bed in his room.

Willy said goodbye and hung up. “Now what?”

“The man they caught,” Alicia said, “says he is a retired Colonial hired by European interests in the porn industry, but because he is a Christian now, he saved you instead of killing you. The U.S. Government was going to blackmail him into finishing the job, but he tricked them into returning his son to him. Now, he lives nearby. He said he’s going to keep an eye on you.”

Willy is emotionally exhausted. “This is nuts. In movies, they roll credits. Life just keeps going.”

“Take a nap,” Alicia said, sounding like an order.

Willy, having moved into this room already, nodded.

As he laid his head back, he watched Alicia put his clothes into the closet. Then he gazed at her as she lay next to him.

Then she asked him, “Have you considered what you might do with your life if you didn’t make movies? I mean, the Americans make filmmakers into gods, little g. But what if you could be happy doing anything else? You have nothing left to prove.”

“As you were saying that, I was thinking back to my days playing basketball. I loved the game, but I was never going to be allowed to play pro ball. Even the college programs were geared toward NBA standards.”

Alicia didn’t spoil the surprise. “Let’s pray that God opens a door for you. I think as talented as you are and all the other stuff about you that makes you great, you need to take a break from this.”

“Do I seem burned out?” Willy asked.

“To a crisp.”

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Chapter 71

Willy dreamed of his days working alongside his sister 3 years earlier.

1995.

Willy walked into the Pirate's Cove bar through the back door where the cleaning crew had entered. He saw cleaning equipment but no workers.

Emma emerged from the office.

“Why did you quit?” she asked Willy.

“Why haven’t you?” he shot back.

“I did,” she answered. “I’m now the stage manager.”

“The what?”

Woke up scared, and told Alicia about how his sister died.

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Chapter 72

In Michael’s office in 2013, Michael and Willy looked out the window, and saw the city below.

“People are starting to come back,” Willy said.

“Yeah...but I don’t think this country will ever be the same again,” Michael replied.

“Good. I didn’t like it the way it was.”

Michael said, “You shoulda been here for the ‘60s. Are you still gonna testify?”

Willy didn’t answer with an immediate yes. “I’ll know after Boston. Here’s the way I see it. Right now, we’ve forfeited free speech so we could put porn back into Pandora’s Box. And the States are waiting around wondering what’s gonna go next.”

Michael asked, “What would you rather have?”

Michael tried to speak as Willy spoke. “This can be done without doing it the way we did it. Men did it wrong. Nobody consulted with God. Nobody went to the Word. Nobody did a Berean. Men took the easy way out and asked for God to justify it after the fact. The result? We went from 300 million to 200 million in a month, and half the country still believes there is a state of Civil War. Even after the president gave an address. So, now, after all that, the President still wants to go after what’s left of the major studios for their role in making pornography. The facilities they used were either incinerated or contaminated, so now we’re going door to door investigating anyone with a web cam. And the only reason why people are tolerating it is because there are more jobs now than before. People finally had their fill of all the crap, and writers were forced to tell stories again. The ratings didn’t go up because you were right, the ratings went up because you forced Howard Stern and his decades of disciples out of their comfort zone. They didn’t get creative because they got inspired, they got creative because they didn’t have a choice. And that’s not a good thing. Some say it is. Some call it a new golden age of media. I call it fascism. And the only reason they got away with it is because the ratings went up. Had the ratings

gone down, Civil War II would be the longest running reality series in TV history.”

Michael was more than a little defensive. “You’re exaggerating. I was on that committee. What should we have done?”

“Wait. Wait on the Lord. 1 Corinthians 10:13. Need me to quote it?”

Michael shook his head no. He looked convicted, just short of guilt.

Willy said firmly, “You called me. And I’m not going to give you the detailed answers you’re asking for, that the Lord gave me, like I’m Moses or something, because you guys are too satisfied with your golden calves to hear a word I am saying. You’re gonna reject and keep rejecting God’s opinion on this until you are forced, with your starving, screaming, agonizing throats on the ground, pleading for His help. It’s always been that way. You dig a hole and throw people in it beg God to rescue you from the consequences of seeker-sensitive governing. Have those who finance your job gotten the world to be the way they want it yet?”

Michael dipped his head, chuckling at what Willy is saying, reducing the tension to humor. “Just like your father. Call me from Boston...and I’ll look into where your parents might be. And if the present-elect has any news for me, I’m here. And...”

Michael grabbed a business card and handed it to Willy.

“If you need to pray with someone, and you can get to a

phone...”

Willy offered a grateful smile.

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Chapter 73

Just outside, in an outdoor parking lot, Alicia asked Willy, “How did it go?”

“He’s got a good heart. Onward to Boston.”

They entered a hospital that had access to their helicopter. On the way, Willy saw a familiar site. It was covered with decontamination fabrics and fans, but the facility had been abandoned for years. Power had been restored for their visit.

They walked to the elevator.

“Did you let the pilot know we’re coming?” Alicia asked.

Willy was texting as they get into the elevator. “Doing it now.”

Willy’s eyes were drawn to a part of the hospital. “Why do you keep looking over there?

“Was the last time I saw my sister.”

//////////

Chapter 74

Mickey bravo walked into the Pirate's Cove nightclub for what would be the last time. He was surprised to sees a cluster of men seated throughout it.

“This is private property. Who are you guys?

An Italian man resembling a middle aged version of actor Al Pacino was dressed in a suit and sat in a chair, motioning for the light to be raised. His badge caught a reflection off the ceiling lights and this smacked Mickey right in the eyes.

“Detective Warfield, Phoenix Police. These men are with another agency. Executing a search warrant of the premises and anyone in it.

Paul motioned for the entourage to search Mickey. “Sit down.”

Mickey clumsily grabbed a chair and sat in it.

“I got so many charges to file against you I knew I'd run out of toner if I printed all out. But the one thing that kept coming back at me as I was reading your case file was motive. Have to. Your whole life until now has been have to. Your father, your leutenant, using that term loosely, because you are of course, criminals, are have to's.”

Mickey interrupted, “Nobody put me up to anything. It was all me.”

“Of course,” Paul replied sarcastically. “You're not smart enough to engineer half the shit on your record. Mickey, you

ever heard of the story Les Miserables? They just did a movie version with Liam Neeson. I cry every time I see it. A thief, a hungry man who spends 20 years in prison for stealing bread, gets paroled. On his first night out, he knocks on doors, nobody will let him in. One door opens. A priest. He feeds him, gives him a warm bed and in the middle of the night, the guy wakes up and tries to rob him. Takes candle sticks, back then a symbol of wealth. The priest catches him. The guy knocks him out with one of the candle sticks. Cops brings him back the next morning, and ask the priest, is this the guy who robbed you? Priest says no. I gave em the candlesticks as a gift. The thief is stunned. They uncuff him. Priest hands him the candlesticks back and says, Never forget this. With these candlesticks, I am buying your soul I take you away from Satan and give you back to God.

Paul snaps his fingers and an agent places a document in front of Mickey.

“Witsec. Also known as Witness protection. Or jail.”

“I need my father's blessing,” Mickey replied.

Paul replied, “Don't let me stop ya.”

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Chapter 75

In early 1997, Emma laid in bed, with Mickey Bravo at her bedside. Willy came to visit her.

There was clear tension in Willy's face toward Mickey.

Mickey said to him civilly, "Hey, Willy? How's it goin'?"

Willy did not spare Mickey any sarcasm. "We only had two girls overdose in the dressing room, so it was a good night. What are you doing here?"

"I asked him. And cut the 'tude," Emma said.

Emma turned to Mickey and said, "Gimmie a minute."

Mickey smiled at her and walked out to the waiting room.

"Do I blame myself for introducing you two, or getting you a job there, or letting you --what are you thinking? He oughtta wear a sign: 'I abuse women'. But he's not like that with you."

Emma rebuked him gently, "No. Come here. Sit. I need to tell you something."

"Don't tell me you're pregnant."

Emma said, "I'm pregnant."

Emma waited for Willy to digest the words.

"Tell me you're kidding."

Emma replied, "It gets better. I'm dying."

On this late winter night in the hospital waiting room, Mickey was sitting, talking with another family, playing with a child, maybe 3 years old, of the other family. He saw Willy and tried to talk to him.

Willy walked toward the hospital exit, angry. Willy was about to walk out when he stopped at a nurse's station. Mickey was trying to get his attention, semi-subtly.

“Can I please speak to a doctor about my sister? Emma Posta?”

The attending nurse replied, “I’ll call someone. We are unexpectedly busy tonight...”

She grabbed a paging phone.

“Willy...Willy...Willy...” Mickey said, louder and faster, making it clear he wanted to talk to him.

“Oh, now you want something.”

The nurse cautiously responded to Willy after paging the doctor, aware that Willy was growing increasingly hostile toward Mickey. Even a security guard noticed.

The nurse said, “It may be as much as a half hour. I’m sorry. You’re welcome to wait in the--”

Willy stormed off, but managed to answer the nurse. “No thank you. I’ll be back.”

“Willy...Willy...Willy...Willy!” Mickey said, trying to put a hand on Willy to get his attention. Willy reacted violently.

Just outside the hospital, striding toward a bus stop, Willy raised his voice to Mickey, “You touch me again you’re risking your life.”

“She told you she was sick, right?” Mickey asked.

“What sexual disease did you give her? And oh, congratulations on the baby. I am sure you’ve heard it before. Now’s your cue to get out of her life.”

“What?” Mickey asked.

“What?”

“She’s not really sick. What baby?” Mickey asked.

“Wait. I’m confused. She told me she was pregnant.”

“Oh, God. Not good,” Mickey said. Mickey got a very serious look on his face. “Willy, I know we’ve had our differences, and you may not believe this, but. I love her.”

They were standing next to a bus stop that had covered seating.
“Let’s sit. There’s a lot you don’t know about me.”

“No, my problem is I know too much.”

Mickey asked him, “Shadow ever tell you about me and Jenny?

We went to his father's church together when we were kids."

Willy shook his head no.

Mickey told the story, "We were at church one night and this girl I was in love with had a seizure. Since everyone was doing Pentecostal worship, no one knew the difference until it was too late. It was 1985. A minister was pushing people in the face, and they were collapsing into the arms of ushers. Sound familiar? A young woman had a seizure, and no one could tell the difference until she was beyond help."

"She die?" Willy asked.

Mickey nodded, the pain of the memory firmly in his eyes. "After a brief coma. It killed me, Willy, that God would let that happen."

"I'm new to the whole Christian thing, but I know enough that God doesn't need us to be," Willy said motioning air quotes with his hands, "devil's advocates. I've heard you say many times you figure if you run a clean enough strip club, you can rescue these girls by giving them a job taking their clothes off for strangers. Wooow, that makes sense."

Mickey replied, "Judge me if you want, Emma saw some things she shouldn't have. The people I do business with have asked me to get rid of her. I am trying to arrange for her to get out of the country."

Willy was cynical.

“You’re going to save her by getting her out of the country. All by yourself.”

Mickey answered, “No. I am turning State’s witness.”

“You. Are. Turning. State’s Witness.”

Mickey said, “The club’s being taken over by a silent partner...I can’t say who but your brother knows.”

“Same guys who got me involved in that drug bust that ruined my record and got me kicked out of college?”

Mickey replied, “I’m sorry about that.”

“You get my sister pregnant, put her life in danger with drug dealers, and you made it so I can’t go back to school. Well, apology not accepted and I hope you rot in a jail.”

Mickey said, “...I’m going to be a father...”

“I regret the day I walked into your club and asked for a job.”

Mickey accepted Willy’s spite, for he knew he deserved it. “Somewhere in the Bible, it says something like, we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. You wanted to know why I went into this business, that’s why. I figured if I could control the temperature in hell, I could make it less miserable.”

“This bus system is awful.”

Mickey said, “It stops after 7:30.”

Mickey pulled out his wallet and hands Willy \$40. Willy refused it. “Cab fare. The hospital can call one for you. Go back to college, and go back to church. If you stayed at the club, you’ll wind up getting hurt, maybe dead. God has bigger plans for you.”

Mickey extended his hand in friendship. “And for your sake, you’re fired.”

Willy refused to shake his hand. “I quit!”

Mickey replied, “You can’t collect unemployment if you quit. You never know. Bye Willy.”

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Chapter 75

Prison.

Mickey Bravo made his way through visitation security. He was motioned to a chair where he looked through the glass at a man that he almost didn’t recognize as his father. Angelo, who he calls Pop. Pop gave him a warm smile, though his body looked like he’d experienced war.

Mickey spoke first, “I got something to tell you.”

“You better,” Pop replied, “It’s been 9 years since I last saw ya.

That's two presidents. Four and a half Olympics. You look nervous. But happy. Healthy.”

“Happy?”

“Yeah. Happy. Like you’re in love...are ya?” Pop asked, a touch of hope in his voice.

Mickey braced himself. “I...don’t know how to tell you this. I’m embarrassed that I didn’t come to see you more. And now, I...wish you could read my mind. This is so hard.

A sly smile appeared on Pops face. “Let me guess. I got saved in here, y’know. Some guys in a Bible study I started going to. Now I run it. There’s me and one other guy. But the Holy Spirit has given me a gift of discernment. So, lemme give it a shot. You fell in love with a girl whose father is a retired fireman and whose brother is a detective with Phoenix PD.”

Mickey’s face drops.

“And because of the junk you were dealing in, you made a deal to stay out of here. And now you’re here to tell me goodbye cuz you’re going away.”

“How could you possibly know all that?” Mickey asked.

“Who do you think you’re talking to?” Pop asked. “So, what do you want?”

“How could you possibly know about what the hell happened to me?”

“Not important. Why’d you come here?” Pop asked again.

Mickey lowered and raised his eyes again to meet his father’s steady stare. “Felt like...I needed closure. Like I abandoned you.”

“Guilt?” Pop asked. “You feel guilt?”

“Yes.”

“Look at me. Son, Michael,” Pop said, ”look at me. Put your ear to the phone, tight. Listen. Cuzz I need you to hear what I got to say. Of all the money I ever made, of all the power -- the shit-idea of power I thought I had -- I’m going give you the most valuable thing I got to give. As your father. My blessing. Of all the wrongs I ever did, I’m not in here because of anything I sold or anyone I knew. Not for drugs, none of that crap. I’m in here for murdering your mother. And she was a good woman. Now, my blessing is this: you listening to me?”

Mickey nodded subconsciously, tears forming in his eyes.

“These words will keep you out of here. I swear, if I ever catch you in here, that’s your last day on earth. Not another son of my will spend another goddamn day in prison. And the way to stay out of here is to obey the Word of God as a husband and father yourself. I learned that too late. It’s not too late for you. Look at me. Husbands. Love your wives. As Christ loved the church. Say it back to me. I don’t care if people are staring. Say it back to me. I’m going to die in here without ever meeting my grandkids. You say the words back to me. You will understand ‘em later. Husbands.”

Mickey can barely form the words beyond a whisper.

“Husbands.”

“Love your wives,” Pop said, echoed by his son, “As Christ loves the Church. And gave Himself up for her. To make her holy.”

Mickey tried to change the topic, “Pop, I...” Pop wasn’t having it.

“Say the words. Not for me. For your wife, your kids. For yourself. To make her holy.”

Mickey reluctantly takes a breath and repeats, “To make her holy.”

“Cleansing her with the Word,” echoed by Mickey.

You take your wife to church. You hear me? You remember me saying guns and gold and girls and all that when you were a little boy? Remember that? All my talk?

Mickey nods. “Yeah.”

“Nonsense. Worship the creator, not the creation. Now go live your life. I give you my blessing in the name of Jesus Christ.”

Mickey nods, wipes the tears running off his face. “I’ll send you stuff.”

“Pictures. Grandkids. That’d be nice. Those things are like porn in here. Not in a sex way.”

“Right,” Mickey replied, “I will. Maybe, someday, we’ll all find a way to walk in the park with my kids.

Tears run free down Angelo's face. "I'd like that."

Angelo stands and bursts into short sermon, almost shouting. "Son! Avenge my sin!" Angelo shouted, the guard leading him out of the room. Angelo's hand raised with an emphatic hand-point at Mickey. "Love God and yourself!" Mickey leaves, and the two exchange a sorrowful Thumbs Up.

One of the guards had music playing in a nearby station desk. *Only Grace* by Matthew West was heard throughout the cell block by sheer coincidence.

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Chapter 76

At a funeral home, the gorgeous day was mired by sadness. Hundreds gathered to remember a young woman named Emma Farrah Posta. An easel with a poster showed her photo. There is a closed casket. Bishop Andrews delivered the eulogy.

At first, Willy thought this would be one of many stunts that Emma would do that would come to nothing, until...

Early in the morning, shortly after Willy had quit the club, two police officers stood at the front door. Jonathan Posta answered the door.

One of the officers stated, "Captain Posta, we're here to inform you that your daughter has been found..."

Willy sat with his family, his dad Jonathan, dressed in his

fireman's uniform, mother Winnie, older brother Ziggy dressed in his police uniform as tears flowed.

"Before the Holy Spirit made a home in my heart, I couldn't understand a word this guy was saying..." Willy would later write.

Bishop Andrews read from an open Bible, quoting Romans 8:28, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Willy stared at the easel, where his sister's name is printed, and where her years lived was separated by a dash. "1976 - 1997".

More than 15 years later, Willy was flying over the East Coast, looking at the damage and rebuilding below.

Alicia presumed he was remembering. They exchanged deep statements. She snuggles into him, partially because she's cold.

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Chapter 77

1997.

Willy had finally gotten a job. Out of town. Out of state. Off the planet.

At a Greyhound Bus station in Phoenix, Arizona, Jonathan, Winnie and Willy sat as his bus departure time approached.

Ziggy arrived as well, unexpectedly.

“Hey!!!” Ziggy shouted.

The family responded with a rousing, “Hey!!!”

Willy added, “I didn’t expect to see you.”

“Finally got a real job, huh?”

Willy replied, “It’s an interview.”

“Oh, long way for interview, isn’t it?”

Ziggy looked at Jonathan and Winnie, who looked tired. “Give us a minute.”

Winnie said, “His bus leave in twenty minutes.”

Ziggy and Willy walked around the terminal. “Do they know where you’re going?”

“For now, I’ll be staying at motels for a few weeks. I got enough saved.”

Ziggy asked, “To go edit porn? They know that?”

“They don’t just make porn. They do all kinds of other stuff too. I talked the lady in charge of it a few days ago to make sure.”

Ziggy said, “Let me ask you something. Why you? They don’t

know you. You don't have a reputation for being a renowned video editor. You made one video, that I know of."

"I asked them that. They said all the editors have been drug addicts or alcoholics. They damage the equipment or they don't know how to satisfy the needs of the client."

"And what if the client is the devil?" Ziggy asked, daring to ask the questions no one else was willing to ask, if it meant saving his brother's life.

"I don't know, detective. All I know is the assistant manager at Taco Bell wouldn't even look at my resume after I told him I wasn't bilingual."

Ziggy nodded and shared Willy's disgust for the system. "OK. I love you, bro. Be safe. Call me if anything...just call me." Ziggy handed him another professional card.

"Thank you. Plus I might be going back to school there. I heard Spielberg went to Long Beach, where ever that is."

Willy hugged his parents, and bid them farewell, as he got ready to board. Winnie was all tears. "I love you."

Aboard the bus, Willy puts his earphones in and prayed, closing his eyes as the bus pulled out. He opened a Bible signed by Shadow.

Shadow's signature was followed by, "Where ever you go, the Lord is with you, and so are our prayers. Come home soon."

First Corinthians 10:13 said, “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”

Willy read his Bible silently until he fell asleep.

“God did give him ways out, but in his own mind, as he would later write,” Professor Fox said, “I was going to come back the conquering hero in the form of a movie producer. Years later, people would ask me how I could, as a Christian, wind up editing porn. Free will.”

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Chapter 78

In a dream, Willy walked through his church and sees people hitting each other with Bibles and pointing fingers at everyone else. His eyes adjusted to seeing tiny ferocious, mischievous demons racing around the church, poking at people, and highlighting their physical flaws.

A man with crooked teeth is held as a mob forced his mouth open and pointed to his teeth, pointing and laughing.

A young man was pointed at by a group of older, frowning women, who surrounded him in a circle.

A couple carrying a baby carrier pointed to a couple standing

without children and laughed mockingly.

The woman without a child appeared to nearly cry, holding her womb in pain.

The preacher spoke from an open Bible, and ripped a page out.

This page bore a single word on it: LOVE. He crumpled it up and wiped his backside with it like toilet paper.

The musicians played music, and to male musicians, an Elvis-concert-like cluster of women surrounded each one, giving them attention like a secular musical artist.

Some of them dangled small pieces of paper in front of them with phone numbers written on them.

A woman singer sang to a cluster of adoring men.

A light, seeming to come up from under the floor, shined on her as if like water, showering her with attention.

Of these men, one motioned for her to enter a large birdcage-like unit that bore his face mounted on top of it.

Another man motioned for her to step into a large trophy case, onto an adult-sized trophy mount.

An older man in a suit, fat and bald, raised his business card toward her, and motioned to a TV where she was seen singing in a large concert.

Willy turned to see a fat, bullish man standing next to him, holding a shovel. This was a man he knew at the church he had attended, a man named Roger.

He wore a nametag that said, HEAD CUSTODIAN.

He yelled at Willy, “You do what I say or I’ll have you banned from the church. Now dig!

Willy took the shovel and started to dig. The foundation came up very easily and Willy discovered it was brittle. The more he dug, the Earth shook. The people noticed. They looked at him, as if the building’s earthquake-like shake was his fault.

He then turned to see a large hand appear over the crowd, as described in the Bible’s Book of Daniel. It wrote on the ceiling: “Without love, you have nothing.”

The people continued to attack each other, pointing at each other. Some appeared to be exhausted from point and held signs which say: “It’s all about me.”

Willy woke up, seeing Boston Harbor in the distance.

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Chapter 79

Landon Fox started the pre-midterm lecture, “What I’d like to do now is put ourselves in the ambience the attitude of the times. We’re coming up on a hundred years since Roe Versus Wade gave women the right to abortion --”

There was a general response of disgust.

“We need to remember they didn’t have the same views we have today. Or the same technology. In 2021, the synthetic womb was invented.”

In a 2030s-era supermarket strip mall with a pharmacy and a Planned Parenthood location, an empty store fades in to be a parental rights store, with company partner logos, like Johnson & Johnson and Bristol Meyers in the window.

“Companies that profited off of diapers and baby formula had not yet made it possible to pay women to deliver the babies in exchange for a fee, forfeiting their legal rights as the mother. All of these things had consequences that led to where we are today. Remember, they hadn’t happened yet.”

Landon held a remote control to a music player.

“I chose this song to represent an anthem of this era. The cure for HIV as it existed in the early 2020’s hadn’t been marketed yet.”

There was an awkward silence from the students as the song played.

The screen bore these lyrics:

“She leads a lonely life
She leads a lonely life

When she woke up late in the morning light
And the day had just begun

Landon changed the screen in sync with the lyrics.

She opened up her eyes and thought "Oh, what a morning"
It's not a day for work
It's a day for catching tan
Just lying on the beach and having fun
She's going to get you
All that she wants is another baby
She's gone tomorrow, boy All that she wants is another baby, yea
All that she wants is another baby She's gone tomorrow, boy
All that she wants is another baby, yea

So if you are in sight and the day is right
She's the hunter you're the Fox
The gentle voice that talks to you
Won't talk forever
It is a night for passion
But the morning means goodbye
Beware of what is flashing in her eyes She's going to get you
Students react thoughtfully, some slightly offended, some
exchanging glances with classmates.
All that she wants is another baby
She's gone tomorrow, boy
All that she wants is another baby, yea
All that she wants is another baby

Landon looked around and examined the faces of his students.

She's gone tomorrow, boy All that she wants is another baby, yea
All that she wants is another baby She's gone tomorrow, boy
All that she wants is another baby, yea All that she wants is
another baby
She's gone tomorrow, boy
All that she wants is another baby, yea
All that she wants
All that she wants

There was writing on the dry erase board behind Landon, and he stopped the song and tugged on the screen to reveal the board.

27TH AMENDMENT: PROTECTION OF SAME GENDER RELATIONS

28TH AMENDMENT: OBSCENITY (PORN) ADDED TO RIGHTS NOT PROTECTED BY FREE SPEECH

Landon said, “Many possible interpretations, but the one we’re going to examine is the way this person helped spread life-threatening diseases with her body. Sex was one way, uncleanliness was another. It leads us into a very important date in American history. Most, if not all of you weren’t born yet. October 12th, 2014.”

Landon plays an old news broadcast. Protestors carrying free speech signs marched behind the anchor woman, Stephanie Rodriguez.

“Stephanie Rodriguez, reporting from Santa Monica, KCAL9 News. I am standing at the entrance to what used to be the

exhibit hall for the adult movie area of the American Film Market. Just a few days ago, the California Supreme Court issued an injunction that effectively banned the adult filmmakers from holding their event. This is as a result of the ongoing legal battle between leaders in Congress and special interests groups in the entertainment industry --" she had to adjust her mic to be heard over the noise of the people behind her.

The protestors chanted "free speech" over and over.

"...who are trying to determine the boundaries of safe work environments in regards to the production of pornographic movies. As you know, the State has produced a star witness whose identity is not yet revealed. Our sources tell us that he is a former editor who witnessed many violations of OSHA regulations, and that his testimony has been considered such a threat to the major studios who are corporate partners with the adult movie companies, that it has forced the State Attorney General's office to place him into a witness protection program for the time being as a precaution..."

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Chapter 80

January 1999.

In the school's basketball gym, Willy was shooting by himself, and was upset. Lou Azul, the school's staff pastor, walked in. Willy acknowledged him but said nothing.

Lou said, "Wassup Jacob."

“Jacob...you’re implying...what?”

Lou specified, “Genesis. Wrestling with God. I got someone who wants to talk to you. If I bring him in, you promise not to rip his head off.”

Willy appeased Lou. “Yeah.”

Lou introduced, “Nic?”

An older Frenchman walked in wearing an exercise outfit. Nic spoke with a French accent “I was at the screening last Friday. I thought what you did was very good for a beginner.”

“Beginner,” Willy muttered under his breath. “Not in the mood for this Lou.”

Lou said, “Willy...put down the ball, man.”

Willy let the ball roll free and walked over to shake Nic’s hand. “Sorry. I had a bad week.”

Nic replied, “For that I am glad.”

Lou pointed at Willy not to react to Nic.

Nic explained himself, “I’ll make this quick. The school needs a basketball coach, an assistant. Our head coach is having heart troubles. We need someone to teach these boys. On paper he’s the head, but in all other ways, you would be.”

“No. Sorry. I’ve got a movie to edit.”

Nic countered, “I understand it is being incinerated.”

“What? Where did you hear that?”

Nic answered, “Your fiance?”

“I’m not engaged.”

At the house where Willy had been living, Alicia was sweeping the floor while on the phone.

Willy walked briskly into the house from the back door. The windows in the kitchen and dining room looked right into the back yard and the side yard.

He didn’t notice Lou and Nic walking close behind him at a distance.

“Where’s my movie?” Willy asked urgently.

“I threw it out.”

Willy, now a little panicked, asked, “Did the trash come yet?”

“If you want to marry me, suck it up and do what God has Called you to do.”

Willy was taken aback. “Who said anything about marrying you?”

“Every time you look at me.”

Willy blushed, tuning out the two men behind him. “I kinda don’t have a ring to offer you. Or a job. And I think I have to ask the Marshals for permission.”

“Promise me you’ll never make another movie without the Lord. That thing you made was hollow. It was imitating Hollowood.”

The windows were open, so Lou and Nic were watching and listening to this from outside.

Lou remarked, “Hollowood...catchy.”

Nic added, “So, what do you say, Monsieur Willy?”

“What? What is with this guy - I’m sorry, but I’m not qualified to coach organized basketball.”

Nic rebuked him in love, “Not true. Did you not play with the legendary Shadow, Stephen Smith?”

“Yeah but --”

“Good enough,” Nic said. “Practice starts Monday at eight. Please arrive an hour early.”

Nic walked away. “Thank you, Father. That went better than I expected,” he said to Lou.

Lou said to Nic, “I’m not a priest --” Lou turned back toward Willy, who is dumbfounded. “What?” the pastor asked.

“I just had the worst experience of my life. I miss my family, my movie career is in the can, and now this weirdo comes outta nowhere and tells me I’m the new coach of the high school basketball team? I don’t wanna coach a bunch of wetback Mexicans! I don’t even speak Spanish.”

Lou corrected him, “Hey. First of all, they’re French speaking Guianans, not the knuckleheads you had in Arizona. Second of all, you’re the assistant coach, not the head coach.”

“Kill me,” Willy said in sharp sarcasm.

“You know what? You’re right. Go back. Go back to the States, or what’s left of them,” Alicia said, getting in his face. “Try to make up with all those people who want to kill you and take your chances with what’s left of the movie industry.”

Alicia put the broom away and left the room.

“So, are will still engaged?” Willy asked sarcastically.

She replied from another room, through the walls. “Yes!”

Lou opened the screen door and walked into his house. “Brother, I know what you must be going through. But this isn’t about you. God reserves the right to answer you as He sees fit.”

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Chapter 81

It was an overcast morning when Willy found himself in a locker room, holding a map which detailed the school campus and found the coach's office. Two men are in it, one preparing papers and CDs on a desk, and the other leaning against the doorway. The older man is Phillippe Shuzette, and the younger is Jean-Luc Mallard.

Willy saw the men in the coach's office and looked confused.

Phillippe saw Willy and asked, "Coach Posta?"

"Yeah."

"Phillippe Shuzette," he said, extending his hand. "Your film saved my life."

"It did?"

Phillippe said, "I watched it, and God healed my heart condition. And showed me all the foods I need to slow down on...and told me to heed a doctor's advice and get on fish oil pills."

"What was your condition?"

Phillippe answered, "Heart disease. My doctor said there's no medical explanation for it."

"Wow...so are you still coaching?"

Phillippe replied, “Oh, no. I’m going to sit out the season just to be on the safe side. Jean-Luc here is one of our graduates. He’s attending a college in Brazil. His dad’s a Naval officer and his mom is on the Board here. I vouch for him as an assistant.”

Willy directed his question to Jean-Luc, “You speak French?”

“Oui,” he replied.

“Good, ‘cause I don’t. You native? Your accent sounds like California.”

Jean-Luc said, “I was born there. Go back and forth all the time. My grandparents still live there, in Del Mar. Yeah, I specialize in defense and free throw shooting. And I spent the last two summers in San Diego coaching girls teams. One scout compared me to Josh Pastner. So, whatever you need to run practices or come up with plays, I’m your man.”

Phillippe asked, “You know who that is?”

“I...yeah. I grew up in Phoenix. I knew guys who played with Mike Bibby - Pastner’s roommate at Arizona.”

“Cool,” Jean Luc replied, more than impressed.

Phillippe said, “We got all their stuff here from coaching clinics, so, whatever you need, say the word.”

Willy held a binder, flipped through it and saw practice schedules and plays. “I’ve never held one of these before.”

Jean-Luc smiled and walked passed Willy. “C’mon. I’ll show you ’round.”

And so Willy Posta began his career as a basketball coach.

Jean-Luc ran the practice drills, a whistle in his teeth, and the team ran in place, a scene straight out of every basketball movie Willy had ever seen. I voice in his head spoke, ‘Hoosiers wannabe! Seen ‘White Men Can’t Jump’ too many times?’

Willy read through a packet of coaching guidelines, and looked around the court.

Phillippe walked up from behind him. “How’s it going? Are those helpful?”

“Yes. Very. Stuff I would always do when Shadow and I would play...now I know why. Olson breaks this up into a science.”

Phillippe replied, “And most of what’s here is straight out of clinics run by John Wooden.”

“No kiddin’. It works.”

“You think we got any talent?” Phillippe asked.

“Doesn’t matter. When everyone does their job, and plays their role, they win 99 times out of a hundred over a team built around one or two guys. Besides, at this level, winning isn’t the goal. Showing scouts and coaches they can play within their

system is what counts.”

Phillippe offers Willy a huge smile and nod.

Their first game ended in a five-point loss. The team played a nearly flawless game but was outplayed in the final minute and lost to critical free throw shooting. The alumni are thrilled. They hadn’t seen their players do this well in years, if not decades. The team that won was the four-time defending city champion. But Willy wasn’t satisfied.

“In Ping Pong, you can lose 19 times and still win under normal circumstances. But this isn’t Ping Pong. If we lose again, it’s going to be because we only had four players on the court,” he said to the team. “I’ve seen you guys play when you’re relaxed. If this was the U.S., you’d be scouted by the pros. But as long as you play like the losing team will be shot afterward, as long as you have stage fright, you’ll never live up to your potential.”

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Chapter 82

Willy did not have to tell Alicia that he had found something other than filmmaking that he loved to do, something he was good at, and he would be at peace giving up filmmaking. She saw it in his eyes. Willy began to see film itself as a means to an end. What message did he want to convey? And was film the best way to convey it?

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Chapter 83

The score was tied at half time, 37-37. Willy gave a speech that got underneath their skin. “Relax! You are the better team. You guys are trying to not lose. Stop it. Now. Go out there and make mistakes. I don’t care if they score or not. We haven’t fouled much at all. Deny the basket. I have a deep enough bench to foul out all of you for the next two quarters. Do it. They don’t have the talent or the manpower to beat you. The refs reward aggressiveness here. Go out there and make nothing but lay ups until we have a double-digit lead. Then take all the 3s you want. Everybody got that?

The team celebrated a big win, setting a record for margin of victory, winning 144-39.

At the end of the season, the team made an incredible run through the playoffs. They didn’t win the national title, which means they lost their final game. Willy’s name was now famous for more than his “worship film”.

The team sat in their locker room under towels and disappointment. Jean-Luc entered holding a stack of unopened mail. Willy marched through as if nothing had happened.

Willy shouted, “I will give you five more minutes to mourn this game. But I don’t think anyone is going to take that long. Jean-Luc has something for all of you.” Willy had noted earlier how cool it was that ESPN and Fox Sports had a whole South American network that covered this area, and that the people were just as hungry for success as his hometown had been.

As Jean-Luc handed out the mail to each player, they light up in disbelief and delight.

“Last year, you finished 14 and 16. This year, we just made it to the South American quarterfinals. I’d say that’s a major improvement. And for those of you returning next season, so am I.”

Phillippe ducked his head in and got Willy’s attention. There was a loud buzz of post-game excitement from the crowd outside. “Coach - Posta?”

“It can wait.”

The professional arena was overflowing with fans supporting their high schools, and to Willy’s surprise, was also filled with scouts from non other than the NBA. Word had gotten out: the one who got away was here, and he was winning...that guy who made religious films...

Phillippe left the locker room and walked over to two men dressed in suits, holding team memorabilia. The crowd was so loud they had to shout to be heard. The next game’s players were warming up on the court behind them.

Phillippe said, “He’s talking with the team. He might be a while.”

They both pulled out their business cards. Jason Rogers and Sylvester Cobb.

Jason said, “If you could tell him that Fox Faith and Warner Brothers would like to meet him for lunch, maybe tomorrow. That’d be great.

Phillippe took their cards. “I will. I’ll give these to him right now.”

Sylvester added, “We’re staying in town at the Hyatt. Have him call either of us and we’ll have a car come pick him up.”

As the sunset, over the bar of the Hyatt Hotel, Jason and Sylvester pitched Willy on making a deal with their companies. Apparently they were going to be the vice presidents of a new subsidiary funded by their respective parent companies. It was an identical deal offered to many an indie producer who had identified a niche market later absorbed by a larger company.

Willy was dressed in a dinner jacket, and constantly shifting in it and adjusted it.

Jason said, “First, we’ll hook you up with an agent. And a couple producers you can bounce ideas off of. Then, we’ll help you find an apartment in LA.”

“Company car,” Sylvester added, his voice cool and calm.

“Yes,” Jason agreed, as if he almost forgot, “company car.”

Jason pulled out a deal memo.

Sylvester posed the question, “So, how does that sound?”

Willy wasn't emotionally prepared for this. He had just committed himself to a new life, one that didn't need to be a movie star. And, something else, much deeper, disturbed him.

“Well...how did you guys find me?”

Jason said, “We paid someone who knew where you were.”

Willy became concerned. He was now sure they didn't know that he was in a witness protection program, give or take. “Who, if I may know? Because this is really bothering me.”

Willy looked over his shoulder at an Embassy security agent, and waved to him. The agent nodded back. Willy turned his head back to Jason and Sylvester. Willy did not see Lou Azul appear and tell the agent he was joining Willy. The agent motioned to where Willy and the men were seated.

“Hey, sorry I'm late,” Lou said, extending his hand out to shake theirs.

Jason asked, “And you are?”

Willy answered, “My agent.”

“Lou Azul. They call me Lou Blue.”

“Lou Blue?” Sylvester asked aloud, making sure he heard him right. “Why do they call you that?”

“Because it rhymes,” Lou explained. “Azul means Blue in Spanish. So...did you order yet?”

“No,” Willy ensured him “you’re timing is perfect.”

Lou sat in his chair like a party crasher. “So. How did you find my man Willy?”

At home, Alicia looked on, concerned. Willy paced with the phone in his hand, waving his arms emotionally. “So, you took their money and let them know where I was at. Why? I know you wouldn’t do anything to hurt me. So...”

Jayne Andrews explained herself eloquently. She was wearing a bathrobe, and wearing a towel over her hair. Bishop Andrews was behind her, making tea for her, which he handed to her.

Jayna said under her breath, “Thank you.”

She took the towel off her head and revealed the effects of chemotherapy. “It’s what you’ve always wanted. You got a meeting with two studio executives. I made them give me their personal info and I passed it along to the FBI in case something happened to you.”

Willy asked, “So, assuming these two guys are sincere, how do we know somebody didn’t follow them down here to kill me?”

“Because I know Sylvester’s son from the church. He’s one of our missionaries.”

“OK,” Willy said, relieved. “But still -- how much did they give you?”

“I told them you were going to need \$100,000 to finance your senior thesis film.”

“They gave you \$100,000?” Willy asked.

“Yeah, I deposited the check in your name yesterday.”

“How could you do that without my IDs?” Willy asked.

“Hey, cloak and dagger, can you stop a second and listen? There is a trust fund here with your name on it. Don’t withdraw the money. Take a finance class there so you know what to do with this. You’re gonna need \$100,000 to get a \$1 Million dollar insurance policy to rent the camera. First, you need to finish a decent script. I saw your last film. God touched it, but it was rough.”

Willy heard her loud and clear. “Wow. Thank you.”

Jayna’s bad cough forced her to pull the phone away from her mouth. She regrouped and asked, “Did they offer you anything?”

“Yeah,” Willy replied, the shock still in his voice. “Hollywood on a platter. I turned them down. Told them I was getting what I needed here. You got a cold?”

“No. I’m battling cancer. It was in remission and now it’s back.

And it's winning.”

Willy realized he's never going to see her again in this life. “No. NO.”

“I even tried watching your film. I've still got cancer,” she said, only half-joking.

Willy is alone shooting baskets at a city park at night as Lou Azul found him.

Willy saw him walk into the light. “What's up?”

“I know you had a bad day, but I got something to tell you.”

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Chapter 84

Outside Pirate's Cove adult nightclub and video rental, the day was unfolding like any other. People went to work, people were born, people died. It was an average day.

Mickey Bravo parked his car in his usual spot.

Shadow was watching Mickey from inside the window of the club's office. Mickey entered, and was heard walking up the stairs and opened the door. He saw Shadow and went through several facial expressions; shock, fear, surprise and slight relief. Shadow's presence was a peaceful one, but Mickey knew this was not a social call.

“Hey, Shadow. What are you doing in my office?”

Shadow replied, “I used the key you leave for your girlfriends.”

“You still got it?”

Shadow replied, “No, I put it back.”

“Can you get out of my chair? Mickey set his stuff down. “What do you want?”

Shadow said, “I have a message for you.”

Mickey put his hands on the safe as if to open it. “What’s the message?”

Shadow said, “Willy Posta’s debts are paid in full. He no longer works for you or those you work for.”

“Hey, put \$1500 on my desk, and I’ll make sure it gets to the right people.”

Shadow rebuked him, “Been there, done that. No. It’s paid.”

“How is it paid? And besides, he doesn’t owe me. He owes the organization.”

Shadow said, “I can tell Ziggy Posta that your cover is blown. You turned State’s witness, you got Emma Posta pregnant. She’s alive. I’m sure Thomas Fierelli would love to hear all that.”

“Where did you hear that?”

Shadow chuckled, “Oh, come on man. I got cops and FBI agents in my church. A room full of people who’d love to put you outta business.”

“They have. Next week, I’ll be out of the country as well. Hopefully, where Emma and I can raise the baby together.”

“What?” Shadow asked, surprised.

“You don’t know? Part of the deal. Phoenix PD and the F.B.I. are going to use this club as a nest to gather evidence against my clients. Yeah. Would you believe it?”

“No,” Shadow said.

“You know what? I don’t care, you judgmental jerk. If the people in your congregation only knew you as I do. Now, I’ve got a few loose ends to tie up here and I’m gone.”

Shadow huffed from his nostrils, “Like Carlito Brigante, huh? You see the end of Carlito’s Way? The dude gets killed.”

“If I stay here, I die of stress.”

Mickey moved around his office, exchanging some items into the safe, closing it, and then pulling some trash bags off of a shelf to throw away shredded paper remnants from an office trash can. Mickey then walked down to the trash dumpster, allowing Shadow to follow him. There was a day when the two men were

friends in the same youth group.

Shadow asked, “How many people have you told?”

“I told Willy, Emma, a few cops.”

As Shadow followed Mickey out the door, they are both surprised to see the two Hispanic men in suits, standing next to their parked Cadillac El Dorado.

Mickey slipped on the ground, braced himself, got grazed by a couple bullets, but not hit directly. Shadow got shot several times.

Mickey stumbled to his knees and saw Shadow on the ground, struggling to breath. He took Shadow’s hands into his own and looked him in the eyes. “Shadow? Shadow! Hey. I’ll call for help.”

It was too late. Shadow took his last breath. Shadow’s soul and spirit rocketed upward like a vapor, upward past the stars into the realm of God’s Throne. The light of the highest level of heaven enveloped him.

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Chapter 85

2014.

The city of Scottsdale had since raised a memorial for Shadow.

Willy and Alicia stood quietly and took pictures of it. Los Angeles had Magic Johnson. Wrigley Field had Harry Carrey. Scottsdale had Shadow. As Willy finished taking pictures on his phone, he pulled it to his ear. “Got it, son?”

Taylor was heard in the background of Jonathan-Daniel’s web cam.

“Yeah dad. Thanks. Taylor wants to know if we can come visit,” Jonathan-Daniel said.

“Umm...not this time. Sorry. Grown up stuff. Besides, we already paid the sitter.”

“Um...” Jonathan-Daniel interrupted Willy, “what if I already bought two tickets for Taylor and me? Actually...Taylor did.”

“You what? With what money?”

Taylor shouted off-camera, “Paypal.”

Willy and Alicia reacted with mutual parental disapproval. “You shouldn’t have done that,” Willy said.

Alicia tried to keep him cool. “Yeah, you should have done that. But...we’ll manage.”

Willy said, “I wish you hadn’t done that...all right. I’m gonna have some nice people in uniform come by and visit. Wait for

them. They'll have badges and stuff.”

Jonathan-Daniel's face went from being mischievous to scared, “Really? Are you mad?”

“Yes,” Willy replied. “Go to bed. I love you. Call you tomorrow. Do good on your tests.”

Jonathan-Daniel replied, “I will. Night mom!”

Alicia said, “Night, baby. We'll talk about your punishment when we get home. Love you!”

Willy ended the call. “Spent 18 years waiting to go home, and now that I'm here, all I wanna do is go home.”

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Chapter 86

Most of the wars throughout world history begin and end over dinners behind closed doors.

Boston Harbor looks beautiful on this clear sky night. Willy and Alicia landed and were escorted into the office of the President.

“Hey! Coach!” Jean-Luc shouted, “Now we can eat! Mrs. Paige!”

An attractive woman in her 50's entered through a door and stood at attention. “Yes, Mr. President?”

“Tell the dining hall we’re ready. Thank you.”

“How are you?” Willy asked him.

Jean-Luc laid his eyes on Alicia. “Mrs. Posta? You haven’t aged since the wedding.”

Willy noticed the wedding photo of him and Alicia among Jean-Luc’s other family framed pics in on the wall-sized bookcase. Willy took a hard look at it.

Jean-Luc jested with Willy, “You, however, look very old.”

Willy laughed. “What’s for dinner?”

In the dining hall, they ate pizza. Jean-Luc and his wife Mandy, a dark-skinned beauty, dined with Willy and Alicia. In some ways, it was a prophet dining with the king. In other ways, it was a much-needed night out for both couples.

Jean-Luc said, “So, Willy, you know why you’re here, man. Coach?”

“I just came from Phoenix. The air there is good enough to breath again.”

Jean-Luc and Mandy reacted with comments of relief, “Good, good.”

“Mike Hall is the ADA prosecuting this case.”

“Whud’he say?” Jean-Luc asked.

“Well, that depends on you. They know they screwed up with the Senators from Delaware and South Carolina issuing orders to military commanders who ended up detonating bio-weapons on U.S. Soil, so nobody wants to relive that mess. Nobody is sure what to do next.”

“What do we do?” Jean Luc asked.

“Well, first thing’s first. Repeal the last two amendments.”

“No problem,” Jean-Luc replied sarcastically. “Then what?”

“Then see who still wants to be a State and who doesn’t.”

“What do I do about porn?” Jean Luc asked.

“Well, what is Congress willing to do? They passed the last two.”

Jean-Luc replied, “I asked you here because everyone in Congress considers you a prophet of God. Prophet, open thy mouth and speak.”

“I’ll tell you what I told Mike Hill. Go to the Word. People are so uptight about offending each other -- there are some cultures that get offended by eating pizza -- so what. Offending Man is not a sin. What does Jesus actually say?”

Jean-Luc quoted the Word without reading it. “But I tell you that

anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:28.”

“Good. Right. Agreed. And of course, because that’s directed at men, women can commit adultery without sinning --”

Jean-Luc and Mandy both chuckle at the objection. “Uh, no.”

Mandy added, “No...it means women too...”

“Actually, Jesus was quoting Leviticus 20:10, and speaking to mostly married Jewish men. Here’s where I think the Church and most of its pastors have been getting it wrong. They have been using their own legalism to interpret what is supposed to be pretty simple. What people do amongst themselves in their own space is between them and God. If I look at a picture of my wife, clothed or not, and get aroused, I am not committing adultery. But, by definition, that photo is my porn.”

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Chapter 87

Landon Fox lectured, “The legal definition of porn is,” motion to a dry erase board where he wrote it out, “The depiction of sexual behavior that is intended to arouse sexual excitement in its audience.”

“The legal definition of obscenity is an indictable offense at common law, although not charged to have been exhibited in public, if it be averred that the picture was exhibited to sundry persons for money. Can you see this in back? OK. Lemme know

if you can't. As you can see, these are different. And notice how money is identified here and not here..."

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Chapter 88

Jean-Luc replied, "I'm not sure I agree."

Willy explained, "Porn is different things to different people. What turns you one may not turn me on, or you, or you, or the dog, but it's all considered porn by legal definition."

"Again, I disagree."

"Why, because you learned it wrong?" Willy argued, "I know there popular response to it is 'I know it when I see it', but in 1981, the Supreme Court Justice who made that declaration recanted it. Let me voice that there is a strong indirect connection between porn as we know it, and our desires to look at it or read it. If I write my wife a note that says, "Honey, you're sexy and I want to make love tonight," Willy said, his adrenalin pumping over this topic, leaned toward Alicia, humorously saying, "Hint, hint," redirecting his speech to the rest of them continued, "And that note excites her, or she drops it, and someone else picks it up and somebody else is aroused by it, then by definition it is porn."

Many proclaimed, "I agree!"

Jean-Luc, "I don't...or do I?" He did a double take with his wife.

Paraphrasing Willy, Alicia said, “He’s saying porn is not necessarily obscene. And what excites one person does not necessarily excite another.”

Mandy nodded. “Oh. Willy, she’s a good interpreter,” Jean-Luc said.

“Seven languages, JC. Where was I...porn. The word comes from the Greek term pernanai and it means ‘writing of prostitutes’ in English. And it predates photography by more than six-thousand years. Books of nude drawings were passed around among royal figure since the day when Adam and Eve raised their large family into the nations that would mate with fallen angels. Now, the likelihood of finding any of these mentions of sex, whether drawn or formed in words, dating back that far is remote because of the materials we used to record them on. Other factors, wars, natural disaster, fires, and whatever...they get lost, destroyed, buried...”

Jean-Luc nodded in agreement to this.

Willy continued, “It’s been with us long before photography or the internet. I refer to video as a mirror with a memory.”

“Agreed, “Jean-Luc said, “a mirror with a memory...that’s good. You should be a -- ”

The women listened closely.

“Hey, focus Mr. President,” Willy said. “And what people are really concerned about is obscenity. Why?”

“Because it causes people to sin...?” Jean-Luc answered, ending with a tone that sounded more like a question.

“No. We sin anyway. We’re forgiven automatically as explained in Romans 10:9. The issue with pornographic obscenity it is the basis for our society’s moral boundaries. You realize in some parts of the world, like western Europe, they don’t have a problem with it.”

Jean-Luc pondered this. “True...”

“For example,” Willy explained, directing a hypothetical question at Mandy, “Do you find your husband attractive?”

“Yes,” she replied.

“You got any pictures of him that turn you on?”

“Pretty much all of them,” she said.

Willy grinned at Jean-Luc, and said, “Lucky man.” He then looked at everyone else and said, “And, if my wife looked at the same pictures and was not aroused, would that offend you?”

“No,” Many replied, “but why would that offend you?”

“We’re drifting off the subject --” Jean Luc said.

“No, we’re not. You wanted my input. Shut up and listen.”

Jean-Luc's eyes showed a hint of being taken aback. "I've listened to one too many inaccurate and awful sermons teaching this wrong."

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Chapter 89

Landon Fox lectured in week 10 of 16.

"Men preached without Bibles, and without making reference to the Bible. They'd wear headsets under stage lights and speak to large crowds, preaching that the more money they donated, the more God would bless them. This was, technically a violation of the 1933 Securities Act. But because it was done under the pretense of religion, the SEC did not prosecute most operations unless there were overwhelming complaints."

"President Mallard campaigned on this issue. He was going to tackle the problems we faced when we adopted the 27th and 28th Amendments, and he had the right man within his reach to do it."

Willy certainly held the President and their wives captive as he continued, "And now that the country seems to be asking for my opinion, I'm going to tell ya what I think. The original commandment was created because people were getting sick from having sex with family and animals -- back when it was genetically normal to marry your sister or cousin...and before that, the Bible records humans mating with creatures that were partly angelic, possibly demonic."

Jean-Luc got a disgusted look on his face.

“You think they weren’t attractive? Satan’s problem wasn’t that he was ugly. And the angels who followed him lost their glory, not their complexions...what that translated to physically I don’t know...but considering what we’ve seen in suggestive imagery since then, I don’t believe an entire ethnic group of women was gang raped by fallen angels. Sin is usually appealing to human senses. God’s commandments are to protect us. Then, enter Jewish law. Over 600 man-made laws tacked on. Confusing and nearly impossible to follow. Then, Jesus. He breaks it down. If your heart lusts, you’ve done the act. The day he said that, two rabbis held the popular schools of thought. One guy said be faithful to your wife and if you can’t, bummer. The other guy said have as many wives as you want and issue them certificates of divorce if they are remotely displeasing to you.”

“When Jesus laid down the law, everyone’s jaws dropped. What? Be faithful to my wife? There were temples used by the Romans that were used by pagans religions that included sex with prostitutes as a part of their rituals. Sounds like a good deal until your equipment falls off.”

There was a shocked laughter from his choice of words.

“Enter Paul. Should I marry, should I not...deacons must have only one wife...and a Scriptures that say it is best not to marry or that he’s stating his opinion, rather than God’s Word, and most people can’t tell the difference. Then, Mormons, the greatest act of Biblical plagiarism the world has ever seen, and they wanna imitate King Solomon, where every man gets a bunch of wives.

And the results? Sexually transmitted disease goes through the roof and a college football team with a stupid logo because they forgot to build the whole thing.”

Mandy did not get that last comment, as Jean-Luc and Alicia burst into laughter. Willy took a drink and a deep breath. Jean-Luc explained it to Mandy, “BYU uses the letter Y as its sports logo because they never build the B or the U...tell ya later.”

“Anyway - sorry. Where was I?” Willy asked.

Jean-Luc replied, “Dangers of polygamy.”

“Ok. Polygamy...okay. Enter photography. The original term of porn referred to poetry that was deemed by its society as obscene. As you know, that changes over time from society to society. In many countries, topless women are the norm.”

Jean-Luc interjects under his breath, “It’s getting worse.”

“No, your sensitivities have increased since you became a Christian. Which is my point. Most Christians get the willies when it is suggested that Jesus went through puberty, whereas the world is not offended by porn, by writings about sex, pictures of sex, discussions about sex, even the commercialization of sex. The only ones offended by it are people who feel they are being stolen from as a result of its existence.”

“Interesting,” Jean-Luc responds, his eyes pull-focusing inward, as if the Holy Spirit was speaking to him.

“I’m trying to keep this from blowing up into a Sex Ed class. Honey,” Willy said to his wife, “If I watch a pornographic movie of a man with other men, would you be offended?”

“Depends.”

“For research. I’m a police detective investigating special victims or I’m a doctor researching sexually transmitted illnesses.”

“No,” she said.

“Because I’m considering going bisexual and I wanna learn how it’s done,” Willy asked, role playing.

“Yes. That would offend me. I’m not sharing you without anyone,” she said plainly, smiling.

“Two animals have sex,” Willy said. “If I watched video of two animals having sex, two non-humans.”

“No,” Alicia said.

Willy changed the dynamics again, suggesting, “A woman and a cow having sex. I know, humor me, makin’ a point.”

“I’d get you to a doctor, but no.”

“Computer animated man and woman.”

“No. As long as she looked like me,” Alicia said, forcing everyone into laughter.

Jean-Luc said, “They have those now!”

“They’ve had those for a century and a half. They were just hand-drawn before. Now they’re kind of a porn version of Jib Jab. You put in pics of you and your spouse. Look at the Scripture.”

Jean-Luc pinched the bone of his nose, and squeezed his eyes in reaction.

“An audio reading of a romance novel about a man and woman having sex?” Willy proposed.

“No,” Alicia replied.

“What’s your point?” Jean Luc asked.

“All of those are porn by definition, but not all of them are obscene. In centuries past, all obscenity trials were about the written word or stage performances. Mozart was controversial for putting a banned play to music. And not all people are turned on by the same stuff. And now, the obvious, a man and a woman having sex, are you offended?”

“Yes,” Alicia said.

“OK. Agreed. And I won’t,” Willy said, making his point, “but not because of the adultery factor. Our sins are taken away from

us as far as the east is from the west. And we have a few vaccines for a limited number of diseases.”

Jean-Luc quickly quoted Scripture. “Psalm 103:12.”

“It’s too bad Jeopardy! is off the air. You’re a machine,” Willy said, poking fun at his former assistant.

Jean-Luc, Mandy and Alicia laughed again.

“Ephesians 5:21 says ‘Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.’ That means I am faithful to my wife out of love for my wife born out of obedience to Christ, not because I’m afraid Jesus is going to beat me up. Not because I think a lightning bolt will strike me if I read a book or watch a movie that some cult leader puts on a no-list. Or I’ll lose my Salvation for it -- another false teaching that pisses me off.”

“Wait. Say that again?” Jean-Luc asked.

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:21.” Again role-playing with Alicia, “Honey, would you be offended if I was working as a policeman, investigating sexual crimes against children. And the evidence included pornographic images. Would you be offended?”

“No. But I would be praying for you a lot.”

“That’s like that one movie--” Jean-Luc snaps his fingers twice, trying to recall name. “Eight Millimeter.”

“Yes,” Willy said, “Now, part of the job. Overload of pornographic images, many of them of children. I know, gross to all of us, but second-biggest demographic of adult content in the commercial market.”

“Really?” Mandy asked.

“Yes,” Willy said.

Mandy was saddened by this. “What’s the first?”

“Homosexual. Gay movies outsell and out-profit all other genres. Beastiality and feces are a distant 3rd to kiddie porn.”

“Ooh...sorry, Coach. I can’t handle any more,” Jean-Luc said.

“Well, then put on your seat belt, and take some anti-acid because now we’re getting to the heart of the matter: The Miller test rewrite was never finished. I’m here to rewrite it.”

“I never would have expected that. I mean, I always thought it was--” Mandy said.

“Men exploiting women?” Willy asked.

“Yeah,” Mandy said.

“That exists, but it’s not the dominating force in the corporate porn industry. It’s a woman’s industry. And the Miller test is what was used by the courts to gauge liability. Guilt or innocents. It never got rewritten because everyone got killed.

And when the ratings went up, they figured, if it works now, don't fix it. The First Amendment took a beating and our nation got downsized. And yeah, I'm still mad about it.”

“Willy?” Mandy asked sincerely.

“Yes?”

“I don't mean to interrupt, but, what exactly was in your deposition that was so valuable? I've always wanted to know.”

Willy looked at Alicia seeking permission to tell her the dirt.
“Only if you say it's okay.”

“Go ‘head.”

Jean-Luc was impressed, “Wow. Man of his word. Ephesians in action!”

Willy offered back a humble smile. “And before I forget, my kids want your autograph, Mr. President and First Lady.” Jean-Luc and Mandy laughed.

“I worked for a woman named Jill Conway. She herself performed in adult movies, with men and women. I would sit in an edit bay and shuttle back and forth on an analogue editing system...”

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Chapter 90

Chatsworth, California, 1996.

Willy worked on a video edit bay, the kind used just before desktop computers and editing software were phased in.

Junk food littered his desk. Willy would later write, Porn has a shelf life of about three views, often recharging in the mind of the admirer.

The problem for those who might otherwise need to avoid looking at it is its allure; its attraction is so strong, it's like a neon light to a flying insect. It's bright, it will kill you and you can't resist.

Now, there are two sides of that issue. One is that the image itself is harmless. If the image was completely produced by a computer animator, then no sin has been engaged in no matter how you interpret Matthew 5:27-30. The other side is that our own efforts to maintain purity in regards to our heart's desires about sex, acted on or not, is uncontrollably affected by the manipulative power of sexual imagery.

The latter was untrue, but every female in the church who suffered from an insecurity, every obese woman who mandated in her own mind that any man she is interested in must overlook her physical negligence and show her affection enlisted the twisted dogmatic interpretation of the religious law, straight out of the kingdom once ruled by a pagan queen named Jezebel; Every church leader who sought to take a politically correct position amidst often hypocritical female members' opinions and prejudices, would elect to follow a graceless assumption that

all men lusted after women, uncontrollably, apart from the freedom in Christ described in Paul's epistles, and nullifying Jesus' work on the Christ.

This was ridiculous, but it was the position the Church had taken, for the most part. And, predictably, my attempt to reconcile this false teaching was rejected by my industry colleagues. The publishers and distributors of Christian brands in most English-speaking marketplaces including the United States were not ready to listen.

As for the pulpit, those who disagreed did so quietly, choosing to stay off the subject. So what sexual expression was tolerated by the 21st century Christian alliances? Anything permitted by the senior pastor.

If their personal tastes and preferences allow it, great. If they do not, then, to be viewed as holy by the fellow folks-condemned-to-hell-around-them-apart-from-Jesus, they must submit to the views of the executive directors of the 501 3c Tax Exempt Religious Organization.

Landon read to his students, "The painful memory of his departure from that church haunts Willy. In his mind's eye, he relives the events over and over. It drives him to succeed in what he is doing."

"From a suite next door, a young man about Willy's age emerged and came into his suite, tired and covering his eyes, slumping into an old worn chair."

“The editors who made the more disgusting stuff, the stuff that was really hard to watch got paid more. Editors usually didn’t last long. They either burned out from the content or they got another job. I was luck to the extent that I made friends with the vanilla makers.”

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Chapter 91

Alicia, Mandy and Jean-Luc listened closely and as a worker refilled coffee cups.

“That’s what we called heterosexual content that was choreographed,” Willy explained

“Choreographed?” Jean-Luc asked, surprise lifting his eyebrows.

“Oh, yeah. And rehearsed. And if the actors don’t seem like they’re into it, we have actors who do the pleasure noises in ADR.”

“What’s that?” Mandy asked.

Alicia replied for him, “Additional Dialogue Recording.”

“Anyway, the big problem is that the conditions of the average productions set are not safe.”

“In what way?” Mandy asked.

“The majority of performers are infected with life-threatening diseases. Producers do their best to hide this, because if people really knew what their chances of getting sick are, or their chances of dying after having sex with their coworkers, the only porn out there would be by way of CGI.”

“What’s CGI?” Mandy asked.

“Really?” Jean Luc asked his wife, surprised that she didn’t know.

“Computer-generated-imaging. Animated porn. So, from a law standpoint, producers were violating so many laws that the government wanted to prosecute them for genocide. Since I witnessed pretty much every producer they wanted to put away breaking these laws...”

Jean-Luc nodded, seeing the pieces fall into place from a prosecuting attorney’s point of view. “Third-party witness -- apart from the victim.”

Mandy asked, “What about the fact that it caused divorces?”

“Can’t prove that in court. Especially when most juries use the same product and don’t get divorced as a result. It’s like saying watching football causes people to commit murders because they see violence, and therefore go do it. Or because they played in bumper cars at a carnival, they were subconsciously influenced to go crash into other drivers in real traffic. It’s a possible motive, but in court, it’s not provable unless it’s part of a confession by the defendant.”

Mandy then asked a question that Willy just answered, but hadn't yet expanded on. "But what about Dr. James Dobson's interview with Ted Bundy? He said he raped and killed women after watching porn?"

"Again, it was by way of confession. By itself, the use of a media product prior to committing a crime is categorized as circumstantial."

"Columbine?" Jean-Luc said, sounding more like a question.

"Good example. F.B.I. reported after ten years that one kid was suffering from deep depression and was under-medicated for it. A second kid followed him blindly out of peer pressure. A third kid decided not to join them that day. Meanwhile, everything from pop music to science fiction costumes to bowling got blamed. Depression manifests in girls as tears and in boys as anger. Some stay quiet, some don't."

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Chapter 92

The course was two-thirds over.

Landon wrote on the dry-erase board the words "Man's Law" and "God's Law".

MAN'S LAW:
Subjectivity
Cultural opinion

Money

GOD'S LAW:
Free Will
Grace (Christian)
Holy Spirit (Christian)

“In a film, William Posta stated that there is an indirect connection between sexually arousing movies, and subjective audiences, but not direct. There were not enough addictive factors at work to categorize this as an addiction. Habit, sure. Luxury? Yeah. Obsessive-compulsive, maybe. The powers that be during that time rejected this. Publishing companies in Texas and Grand Rapids Michigan, not to mention the Christian music industry in Nashville and Australia, took this stance to protect their own financial interests. The fact is if they had to backtrack and admit they just about everything they wrote, sang or taught on this subject, specifically on this point, were to be reconsidered, much less repented, they would lose billions of dollars. The funny part is, over time, that's exactly what happened anyway. People have a funny way of exercising their free will and determining who's right on with God, and who's full of shit.”

The class let out a collective laugh.

“Visual stimulants can be religious, funny, shocking, horrifying, romantic, suspenseful, and enlightening. Like my videos of this class. Kidding. But these are not, nor can they ever become, a chemical addiction, assuming that the chemical was a foreign substance, something other than adrenaline. And not confined to

men observing photo-recordings of women.”

“The number-one selling genre is homosexual, which includes women having sex alone or with other women.”

“In the late 1980s, hotel chains partnered with some adult content providers, at no cost to the hotels, and allowed guests to buy adult movies. The profits went through the roof. Wall Street and Hollywood both noticed.”

“However, instead of corporate America trying to defend their actions in being corporate partners with porn companies, they decided to play the role of rescuer, providing filters and family friendly Internet tools to protect customers who said, ‘I can’t handle it.’”

“It was compared to a bar tender being aware that their patron needed to stop drinking, or they would be held liable for whatever crime was committed by the drunk person.”

“Posta also proved that it was not sex serial killers like Ted Bundy were getting high off of, but power. Control. Same exact thing the women who used their beauty to seduce men were exercising. Power. My free will over yours. Do as I say and you can have this much of me.”

“When people weren’t getting it from the people around them who made up their social circle, they went to these clubs and paid for doses of intimacy. They paid for the fantasy of sex in the form of a virtual partner.”

“Posta’s film challenged the common belief at the time that men were easily and helplessly seduced by the smallest dosage of intimacy, directly initiated by or indirectly implied by the virtual form of sexual fantasies.”

“He made a very convincing case, given that his previous work was considered touched by God, that not all pornography was obscene, and that its affect on people was subjective.”

“This was rejected by the Christian Right of his time, and later accepted, years after he died. It led to the law the way it is written today. Many of you are aware of it. You were born with it the way it is.”

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Chapter 92

“So bottom line, what do we do?” Jean-Luc asked.

“Make commercial porn illegal to sell in the United States. The U.N. has already stated its support for that. But allow them the right to produce it, in a highly regulated environment.”

“Make it, but don’t sell it,” Jean-Luc said, astonished at the simplicity. “Wow. Is there legal precedence for that?”

“Sure. Medicinal marijuana. If it was provided free by the government by prescription-only, for patients suffering from things like cancer, and I-don’t-know, stuff where the pain is unbearable...do you wanna tell someone who is dying of cancer

-- a church going military veteran who has served his country and his family, who's going home to Jesus, that he can't have a medicinal product approved by the F.D.A.?"

Jean-Luc was gripped in deep thought over this idea. "Take the corporate incentive out of the equation. And regulate the rest."

"Right. Once the major studios are no longer backing the porn producers, it dies. And to prevent it from becoming an underground product, let 'em sell it outside our borders. The Internet is not going away. People are still going to make it and market it. Just remove the liability. It's the same as radio was, just with more layers."

"But they're not gonna wanna give up their profit," Jean-Luc noted.

"But what's to stop Americans from logging onto a web site that is broadcast from outside our borders and watching it anyway?"

"Actually, we have control over that part, honey," Jean-Luc explained, "just like some countries don't allow stuff we see in their airspace."

Willy nodded. "And, the amateur industry already has the corporate side on its knees. When you give 'em enough ways to make money, they'll go along with it."

"I don't understand all this, but that doesn't sound like a bad idea, "Mandy said, "Alicia, I'm watching you make faces. What's your opinion?"

“I’m just sick of it. He’s been making films for almost 20 years now and they’ve been hits all over the world.”

Willy interjected, “They’ve been critically acclaimed. I haven’t really made any big money yet.”

Alicia asserted her opinion by adding, “In some parts of the world, our last name is revered. But the problem is, he won’t let this case go.”

“Don’t go there,” Willy said to Alicia, offended.

“Is there anyone still trying to kill you?” Jean-Luc asked.

“I don’t know. The U.S. Marshals that I stay in touch with say there are. That’s partially what this trip was about. To find out.”

“And if everyone who was going to be prosecuted is either dead or left the country, is there anyone left to prosecute? I mean, as far as I know, porn has ceased to exist in the United States. They moved north. Is there a need for you to testify?” Jean-Luc asked.

The conversation then turned lighter as the night went on.

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Chapter 93

“I’m not saying they were a bad team,” Willy argued, “I’m just saying they didn’t deserve to be in the playoffs.”

As the conversation turned, Mandy said, “I still say the countries that have become U.S. Territories have made a mistake...what if they change their minds? Civil War?”

A few minutes later, Alicia tried to be heard over the others as the conversation turned again. “--And, and, it’s nobody’s fault. Two Senators who had no idea what was going on gave conflicting orders.”

Jean-Luc said in response to another topic, “It will take us at least six or seven more years to decontaminate the rest of the country....sad to say that helped me get elected...”

Willy replied in response to yet another topic, “Best point guard ever...? Well, he didn’t play in the NBA...he was better than Michael Jordan before drugs destroyed him...”

Jean Luc laughed as he debated with Willy about baseball, “Babe Ruth would never curse his old team. What was it Ozzie Guillen said? There are no curses, just crappy teams...”

Willy sounded like a man at peace when he said, “Well, now, we really don’t have a reason to leave. I’m living my dream where I am.”

After dinner, the dishes were being taken away. Alicia said, “If I had my way, we’d confront these people face to face once and for all and get it over with.”

Willy agreed, “That’s not a bad idea.”

Alicia was taken aback, “Are you being serious?”

“Last I heard, they all moved to Vancouver. Assuming the Canadians don’t mind having them there, problems solved. This is about money, not law. They want the right to make their product and sell it. Amateur porn doesn’t violate God’s Word, as long as it’s between married people. And for those who don’t know Christ, it doesn’t matter.”

Jean-Luc whispered into Mandy’s ear. Mandy gently interrupted. “Can we take our discussion into the next room? The boys need to talk about something.”

Alicia gave the boys the evil eye as she asked, “So, what will we talk about?”

“Dessert,” Mandy said, as if declaring a girls-night-out in the next room.

Alicia and Mandy giggled and left them to talk.

Willy went from feeling like his former assistant coach’s guest to a kid in the principal’s office. “What’s up?”

“I had a talk with the President of Canada. He doesn’t want them either. Apparently, porn is like prisons. Everyone wants the revenue, but not one wants one in their backyard.”

“Let me guess,” Willy said, “The AG’s are comparing notes and Canada is going to kick ‘em out too.”

“They’ve seen what’s happened here and they don’t want that in their country.”

Willy nodded and his eyes and hands did a no-duh dance. “I can understand that.”

“I had an idea, and I met with our Armed Forces Commanders. And, we’ve agreed that we’d like you to go to their annual trade show and offer to show them how to make worship films. Like a workshop of some kind.”

Willy chuckled cynically. “They’ll never buy it.”

“You don’t understand. Come in.”

Richard Brenner walked in and Willy recognized him immediately. Willy became afraid of him instantly. He jolted from his chair and got up as if to escape from Richard, whether that meant out the door, out the window, or through a wall.

“Calm down, Willy!” Jean-Luc shouted.

“Stand down, Willy,” Richard said with his dad voice. “I’m not here to hurt you.”

Willy took a moment to accept that the man had remained standing peacefully at the far end of the room - at attention.

“But you are the same guy who tried to kill me, right?”

“Yes. One of many. For what it’s worth, the people who hired

me, and the people who took your deposition were on the same side. They went back and forth, but you and me, we stated the same.”

“Sit back down and let me explain. You too, Richard, sit,” Jean-Luc said.

“Yes, Mr. President,” Richard said.

Willy remained on edge, but sat back down anyway.

“Shortly after we caught him, years ago, long before I got into politics, our chaplains led him to Christ. He’s on our side now. And in, right now, today.”

Richard added, “And, for the record, I am sorry for how things went. Perhaps in time you can forgive me. As it is, I killed U.S. troops, including some kids I helped train.”

Willy asked, “So, no prison?”

Jean-Luc explained, “He’s agreed to help us. This isn’t your Atypical ex-Marine trying to pass himself off as a third-rate bounty hunter. Colonial Brenner was one of the major players on the National Security Council. Remember A Few Good Men? Richard was like that guy Jack Nicholson played who told Tom Cruise he couldn’t handle the truth. He was hired by Edward Leonard and the Flynts, along with many other producers who profited off the porn industry to hunt you and kill you.”

“So, why is he here?” Willy asked again.

Jean-Luc replied, “I want you to go to Vancouver and disciple the pornographers who will listen. Offer to show them how you do what you do. And, in addition to protection by the Secret Service, I want Richard to accompany you. When they see the man they hired to kill you standing next to you, armed and ready to give his life for you, they may just listen all the more.”

Richard added, “And I am ready to. The question is, are you?”

“No, but let’s do it anyway.”

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Chapter 94

It was just another tall building in a big city, this time Vancouver. VCA had been among the founding partners in the porn industry. They were to the industry what Warner Brothers or Universal Studios were to the non-porn industry.

Now they were in Canada.

It was an overcast day when Willy got out of a car and looked up at the building. The building itself was just another steel structure. The offices now occupied by this company were used to do telemarketing.

At the reception desk, Willy and Richard, flanked by several Secret Service Agents, entered and stood in front of the desk.

A young woman, mid-20s, pretty, saw them.

Richard said to Willy, “Pull out your ID. They’re not gonna believe you at first.”

“May I help you?”

Willy said, “Willy Posta to see Edward Leonard.”

The receptionist saw the Secret Service agents and quickly picked up the phone, offering a smile.

Edward Leonard is about 50, thinning hair, and casual clothes. The door was propped open, and Edward saw the men enter his office. Staffers pretending to need to walk from office to office to see who was there mill about the hall.

“Willy Posta?” Edward said, “...wow. Never thought I’d see you alive again. And Richard? Can I have my money back?”

“It was confiscated by the ATF. Sorry,” Richard replied.

“I bet you are. What do you want?”

Richard rebuked him, “You better cut that attitude, scum bag. I got no patience for scum like you anymore.”

Edward pushed a button on his desktop phone. “Wow, that was rude.”

“Better get used to it,” Richard said. “We brought more security than you got.”

“Oh, really? Where?”

Richard opened the door. Willy and Edward saw the Secret Service agents holding four security guards against a wall. In the commotion, the door jam came loose, and the office door almost closed. Richard grabbed it and held it open.

“Uh, never mind guys. Everything’s fine in here. Can you please ask them to let my guards go?”

“Stand down,” Richard ordered, letting the door close.

Willy said, “I was sent here by the President to show you how to make movies the way God has worked through me.”

“You’re offering to show me how to make movies?”

“Yeah,” Willy said.

“Go for it. I’m interested in money. Show me.”

Willy said, “There’s a trade fair in town this week. I’m speaking at a couple sessions. I brought some of my films.”

“Y’know, I’ve seen your stuff on Youtube.” Edward quickly pulled up Youtube on his computer.

“But, when I play it, it’s just another movie. I don’t feel the power these people are talking about.”

Willy told him why. “Proverbs 12:7 - The wicked are overthrown, and are not. But the house of the righteous shall stand.”

“So, because I’m unrighteous, I can’t feel it?”

“I can’t feel it either,” Willy replied, “but when thousands of people have the same reaction to it, I’ve learned there must be something to it.”

“You sound so religious. But you crap the same way I do.”

“No, he craps bigger than you,” Richard said.

“All right. I’ve had enough. I would like you to leave. I know where the trade fair is. Thank you and please don’t come back.”

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Chapter 95

A billboard prominently displays a promotion for “North American Film Fest 2014” and a date denoting a week of activities.

Willy went from living in a witness protection program to being the keynote speaker at a Canadian media festival, his family in tow. Only about 20 people sat and listened to Willy talk, and watching his films on a video projector. They seemed bored, not in awe.

Session after session, the crowd grew thinner and thinner, and later he learned a few people didn't speak English. He learned by email that most guests downloaded his speech from the event's website and posted encouraging feedback, thanking him.

But he didn't know that yet.

By the time he was done with his commitment to the President, Willy looked tired and discouraged. Alicia turned off the projector.

“Let's go get dinner,” she said.

“Can we go check out the pool?” Jonathan-Daniel asked.

Willy realized that he had become so emotionally invested in this presentation, he forgot about his family. “Sorry...I...”

Willy looked at the empty seats and heard industry-related chatter coming from booths and rooms near his. “I thought we'd have more. 18 years and nobody cares.”

Willy noticed Secret Service agents and a traveling crowd focused on a man walking in his direction. “Wow. Somebody from the White House is here.”

Alicia looked to see if any faces in the crowd look familiar. “You see Jean-Luc?”

“No.”

Alicia broke the tension. “Come on kids. We’re going to go eat. You coming?”

“No. I’ll catch up.”

Alicia grabbed Willy’s face and kissed him. “There’s more to life than movies.”

Willy noticed patrons and the staff in the bar stopped and watched the news. A Special Report came on. “Filmmaker Steven Spielberg is dead.”

Willy was immediately stunned.

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Chapter 95

At the hotel’s bar, Willy stared blindly at a drink, as TV shows Entertainment Tonight’s coverage of Hollywood II: Vancouver. On another screen, he watches “Arizona vs. Washington State” college basketball.

A man took a seat at a bar stool near him. There was one chair between them. The man ordered a drink. It is promptly placed before him. It looks like iced tea.

Willy watched Arizona score, and then Washington State score. His reaction was in contradiction to the man next to him. Willy glanced at the man, and then does a full-double take.

It was actor Jim Caviezel in a suit. In terms of global fame, Jim

was not the most famous actor in the world. But in terms of the Christian genre, this born-again practicing Catholic and Pro Life advocate was the most beloved and famous actor in the business.

Though it was a hard pill for him to swallow watching another brother in the Lord, actor Jamie Fox win the Oscar for Best Actor during the year *The Passion of The Christ* came out, it was hard to argue that Jamie Fox didn't become Ray Charles in that biopic, just as much as Jesus filled the sandals of the lamb of God for three hours of screen time. It was argued that those who made the film were persecuted over its success, perceived by members of the modern day Jewish aristocracy, as being an in-your-face event, and the price paid was denying it much industry praise.

The fact remained Jim, like Harrison Ford's career after *Star Wars*, would work more and be used more by God than before *The Passion of The Christ*. Every A List actor had one or two movies they were known for. A few had more. Director David Lean was credited with 19 films, most of which set industry standards for every aspect of production and commercial success. Yet by 2020, few people outside film schools remembered who he was.

These thoughts rushed through Willy's mind as he sat next to an A-List Christian actor, whose TV series on cable and CBS had mellowed out his critics. Willy knew what it was to be both loved and hated for his art.

“...Pac 12 basketball.”

Jim offered a slight grin and nod, but acts like he doesn't notice Willy.

““Cats?”” Jim asked.

“Yeah. My mom went there. I grew up in Arizona.”

For once in a long time, Jim said this to someone else, “You look familiar.”

“So do you...lord...”

Jim’s face quickly soured at what sounded like an old bad joke.

Willy extended his hand, which Jim politely shook. “Willy Posta. Person of Interest was well done.”

Jim offered a civil nod.

“Thank you. I’ve seen your work. Awesome. Surprised to see you out and about. You promoting a film?”

“I wish. Kinda ensuring that I’ll never work again.”

“Why is that?” Jim asked.

Willy’s train of thought was interrupted by the game: a UA player did a dazzling dunk on a Washington State player, but was called for an offensive-foul.

“OOOOOOHHHHH!” Willy snorted, “Wow. No Way!”

They both watched the replay.

“Yeah, good call...did you hear Spielberg died?” Willy said.

Jim sounded shocked, “No -- what did you mean by ensuring you’ll never work again? Spielberg died?”

“Yeah -- it’s got to be all over non-sports channels. I just spent 9 hours describing how I make movies to a bunch of folks who are committed to lazy filmmaking, and I have no idea why the presence of the Lord seems to be felt by some people when they watch my work...trying to teach how I do what I do...I don’t even know how I do what I do...and it was all a big waste of time.”

“I know what you mean. It’s all about the heart...excuse me...” Jim replied. Jim glanced at his phone, receiving a text message. “I was supposed to work for Steven next.”

“Can I ask you something?”

“What?”

Willy asked, “Why don’t you...how come...you are the most successful Christian actor...” Willy couldn’t finish the question, and stopped to consider what exactly he was going to ask. Jim turned completely away from the game and gave Willy his full attention. “When Mel Gibson said The Passion would be the most dangerous movie of your career, what did you think that meant?”

Jim pondered the question.

“There was a day when I would have given almost anything to get you to be in my movies. And then...”

Jim’s eyes reacted to “And then”.

“I remember something Kevin Costner said in a DVD commentary. He believed stars of the present were supposed to give the new guys a chance. He gave you your big break on Wyatt Earp.”

Jim nodded, but looked a little irritated.

The game was at half time, score tied.

“What’s the question?” Jim asked.

“Why haven’t you done more?” Willy shot back.

Jim chuckled, “More? I’ve done a lot.” Jim raised his hand for the bartender. “Check.”

“Is it because the Academy wouldn’t show you love or because you didn’t like the fact that God exercised His right to use you as He saw fit?”

Jim stepped down from the bar chair and took the check, glanced at it, and put a few \$20s on the bar. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Willy got annoyed and raised his voice a little. “I’ll specify. Jesus - not just the character you played - Jesus - the real Jesus Christ- made you a movie star. What have you done for him? I heard you cursed out your manager for letting you take the part -- because you claimed agents wouldn’t hire you after that. Next thing I know you’re co-starring with Denzel in Deja Vu, and then The Prisoner, and some other stuff along the way. Not bad for a disappointing career. Yet you complained. It’s a bad witness.”

Jim stopped dead in his tracks and listened to Willy.

“Do you know why you got that role? You got drafted to play Jesus for two reasons. When Mel Gibson was mining Jesus of Nazareth, he noticed you looked like Robert Powell standing on a beach in The Thin Red Line. You looked the part. And he knew it would be hard - like the kind of hard most pussies in Hollywood can’t handle. Being Catholic was an after thought. He needed an actor who looked the part and didn’t faint at the first sing of blood or bad press. And who wasn’t gay. You see End of The Spear? No one else did either.”

“He said that?” Jim asked.

“I added that last part about End of The Spear, but does it matter? His wife leaves him after an awful experience in his next movie, but do you reach out to him over his wife leaving him? No, you whine like a premadonna rookie who got benched in baseball after his voicemails get edited. How would you react if your wife left you? In Galatians 2:11-16, Paul rebuked Peter

for enjoying the favoritism from the Jews, guys who were just trying him as a criminal, now showing him some cosmetic love. Kinda like you and J.J. Abrams. You content now, Jim?"

Jim looked down, then at the bartender who looks awkward, staring at the exchange. "You have any paper, pen?"

The bartender nodded nervously. "I sure do. Here ya go."

Jim wrote something down and handed it to Willy. It was his home phone number.

"Just don't call too early."

Jim walked away, toward the entourage of the president. Jean-Luc walked in, with a smile on his face, signing autographs and waving, making eye contact with Willy. Jean-Luc had a look of concern on his face.

Willy gave a condoning nod, motioning that he'll catch up. Jim caught the eye of Jean-Luc, who called out to him. "Wow, is that who I think it is? Jim? Jim Caviezel? The actor."

Jim smiled and paused for a few autographs. Jean-Luc pulled out one of his own.

"Trade-ya," Jean-Luc said, winking.

They shook hands, photos were shot and Jean-Luc motioned as if to let him keep walking, Jim finally able to do so.

Jean-Luc stood behind the large bar chairs and saw the game score. “Close game. You okay?”

“I had forgotten all about it. It’s been close.”

“I mean I heard Steven Spielberg died,” Jean-Luc said. “I know you always wanted to meet him or work with him. What did you talk about?”

“The war. He gave me his number.”

Willy put it on the bar for Jean-Luc to see, Secret Service agents glanced over both men’s shoulders to see. “This was a mistake.”

Jean-Luc said in his presidential soft voice, “There’s a meeting going on upstairs you should be at. Let’s go together.” Jean-Luc took his arm and guided him along with his agents toward a private elevator.

“What meeting?”

Three agents accompanied Jean-Luc and Willy into the elevator, with Secret Service agents coordinating their movements.

“Who’s there?”

Jean-Luc replied, “You remember all those people who wanted to kill you?”

“Yeah.”

“Them,” he said.

Willy began to panic slightly. “Then why are we going?”

Willy looked at the elevator buttons, feeling himself rise toward the penthouse.

Jean-Luc said, “We’re gonna settle this once and for all.”

“Great. Three bodyguards. That should do it,” Willy remarked sarcastically.

“Coach, please trust me,” Jean-Luc comforted in a tone that got him elected. “I’m the President of the Free World. I have a little pull here.”

Willy argued with him, “Mr. President, this is Canada.”

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Chapter 96

Surreal.

Nightmares and dreams collided with reality. Willy walked into a room full of people who made money off the industry he was credited for cutting off.

As Willy saw the door open, he looked dazed. He entered the main hall and saw many people, ages ranging from 40s to 90’s, eating finger foods and drinking, casually.

They all see the president and the Secret Service agents and watched him make his way to where the president of Canada, Toby Gillis, sat at a table.

Jean-Luc extended his hand to Toby, “Mr. President.”

“How are you, Jean-Luc?”

“Not to good. Found out there were some plots to hurt my friend. And the man who made E.T. died tonight, so we’re all a little upset.”

Toby looked at Willy, “We took care of it, Mr. Posta. But I can’t really help the other. He lived a long life. Were you two close?”

“I think I’m gonna be sick.” Willy stumbled to a table and fell to his knees.

“Coach!” Jean-Luc shouted, “Water? Somebody get me some--” Several water bottles appeared and Jean-Luc took an open one and handed it to Willy.

“Thank you. I can’t tell you how sick of this I am. Somebody wanting to kill me because of what I saw,” he said, his voice rose significantly in volume, and the Spirit came over him, an invisible Light that Peter experienced in Acts 2, “pornographers, so they can continue meeting the needs of the people who like cine-sex...even if it means getting people sick and killing others...that’s okay, as long as we profit from it, right?”

Jean-Luc shouts to the people in the room as well, “Anybody

here from NewsCorp or AT&T?”

Several people raised their hands.

“The Secret Service is gonna ask you some questions over what happened this afternoon. Agents escort some people on to the elevator.”

Willy chuckled, “Cool job. I wish I could do that.”

“Go ahead,” Jean-Luc said.

“I want everyone to know that I am not going to testify. Make your porn. But selling it might be a problem. From what I learned in school, and what I’ve learned after 18 years in hiding, which turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me...got married, had kids, and got to make films anyway...”

A man named Sylvaine Cooper, a movie executive and agent, raised a glass while sitting. “But not for us. Not for Hollywood. Not a studio picture. The best you can ever do is a foreign film.”

“So what?” Willy replied.

“You’ll never be one of us,” Sylvaine said.

“Yeah. But,” Willy said. “that’s a good thing. Because you, you arrogant bag of roach poop, live it up. Get drunk on your own fame. Because in less than 50 years, NO ONE WILL REMEMBER YOU. They might see a film, and say, ‘Was okay.’ The same way they respond to eating a bologna

sandwich.”

“A bologna sandwich,” Richard echoed, “that’s funny.”

“Did he just call me a fat bag of roach poop?” Sylvaine laughed and continued drinking.

“And then, when you take your last breath, where ya going? If you think life ends here, or you get to pass on because your parents told you so, you’re in for a very big surprise.” Willy addressed the whole crowd.

“The fact is I wanted to be you. I wanted to be you guys so much that I sold my soul to Satan for a year editing porn. But I learned something. You can’t dance with the devil and walk away...without Jesus. I and know him very well. So, have another drink. The clock on the seconds remaining of your life are ticking. I’m really tired and I’m leaving.”

Willy began to exit when he heard a shout from across the room.

“You’re blacklisted! No one will ever work with you, Willy!”

Willy kept walking, reached the elevator, and turned back, awaiting the car to reach the floor. “Sure you will. If I write you a big enough check.”

The elevator sounded, and the door opened. Willy entered, disappearing behind it along with two escorts from the Secret Service who followed him.

Toby said, “One more thing to add, folks.” The crowd was silent for the President of Canada. “Those of you who partner with the pornographers who moved here to make and profit from porn, you have 48 hours to leave our country or else.”

Jean-Luc complimented Toby, “You do that better than I do.” The two presidents smiled at each other.

Toby replied to Jean-Luc, “It’s a start.”

A few men and women walked after Willy. A Secret Service Agent stopped the first person before they reach the elevator.

“Sir, where are you going?” the agent asked.

“To try and catch up to Mr. Posta.”

“No you’re not,” the agent replied defensively.

The Agent gave the man a stern look.

The executive pleaded, “That’s the kind of producer I wanna work with. I came here tonight to meet the man behind the movies.”

Each of the other people who made their way to the elevator echoed this response. After a few seconds, the room is about half-full.

An Agent made a comment to another agent that Jean-Luc half-heard.

“Brett -- what’s so funny?” Jean-Luc asked.

He answered, “The room is half full. Whenever Jesus preached, the people were divided.”

A sense of judgment could be seen in the eyes of those who remained. A server heard this and set his tray down and made his way to the elevator. Agents smiled at him as he left.

In the lobby, Willy exited the elevator, turned to see many people gathered in the lobby seeking to talk to him, including press, and was shot in the shoulder.

Richard was immediately whisked away from Secret Service agents.

Willy fell, realizing he’d been shot, and began to pray out loud.

“This can’t be it. My kids! My wife! Alicia!!! Alicia!!!”

Agents tend to Willy and looked at faces in the crowd to see who looked concerned versus who appeared to be pleased, and who ran away.

There was a lot of chatter among the agents. Willy could not see much, his vision was blurred by the sudden loss of blood.

“God, Lord. Jesus - I’m scared.”

An agent began to do First Aid. “You called the ambulance?” the

agent said into his mic. At first there was an inaudible response. “Tell ‘em to drive it through the god-damn limo and into the lobby. Get it in here. If they’re not here in sixty seconds, I’ll have their jobs.” He spoke to Willy.

“Lay still, sir. Don’t talk.”

Willy started to feel his connection to this life slip. “I want to watch my kids grow up!”

Willy watched his son and his daughter play in their home at ages 4 and 2. He remembered seeing his babies sleep in their cribs. He taught Jonathan Daniel, about age 6, how to shoot a free throw. Willy recalled walking the beach with Alicia, hand-in-hand. They watched the sunset together. Willy saw Alicia pregnant. Willy saw Alicia breast feeding, smiling at him. Willy remembered showing Taylor how to use a small camera to take pictures of her brother, a natural ham.

An Angel of the Lord stood over Willy, and prayed for him. “Father, please reveal to him the army that stands with him, and take away his fear.”

The Angel stood over the agents attending to Willy, as the paramedics worked to lift him onto a gurney, and connect an IV.

Willy saw warrior Angels, by the thousands, like the stars, and suddenly felt an overwhelming peace. His pulse dropped.

Willy’s connection to reality faded and he could walk without injury.

Loaded into an ambulance, Alicia and the kids were escorted by Secret Service agents out of the hotel.

Richard sat in the back seat of an unmarked car.

An agent commended him. “Good job, Rick.”

“Flesh wound, right?” Richard asked.

“Couldn’t have done it better myself,” the agent replied.

Richard said, “Y’all tell him for my I’m proud of him and make sure I get access to some of his movies while I’m gone?”

“Will do, sir.”

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Chapter 97

Willy saw the Light of God’s Throne.

Shadow appeared before him. Without speaking, Shadow showed Heaven’s view of the Earth, including all the Angels at work on orders from God by way of the prayers of people.

Each prayer was visually identifiable by a caricature of the person who prayed, and a colorful mix of their DNA and their Holy Spirit-filled souls.

Demons were visible as well, an outnumbered collection of

blotches that look like acne on the planet. Shadow motioned for Willy to look at a specific place on the Earth, where a movie is being viewed online by a teenager.

As the boy watched the video, his soul percolates, but a dark slime still seems to consume his heart, quelling the percolation. An inner-battle between these two forces is ongoing.

“Wow,” Willy remarked, “The movie’s causing his soul to stir.”

Shadow didn’t look at Willy. He looked at Jesus, sitting on the throne, the train of his robe consuming heaven. Colors and physical elements never before seen by human eyes surrounded the citizens of heaven.

Willy’s eyes soaked it all in, in awe, as his eyes follow the Light to the feet of Jesus. Before Willy could see His face, he felt a hand behind him and turned to see who it was.

It was his mother Winnie. She gave him a sweet, gentle kiss on his cheek and then walked away. “You’re your own man now.”

In Willy’s heart, there was a leak of blood as he seemed to try to speak to his mother, to hold her, perhaps to ask where his dad was.

In the hospital, Willy was being operated on.

Willy’s eyes then turned back to the direction of the Throne and Jesus is looking right at him.

“I am the vine, you are a branch,” Jesus said. “Willy, feed my sheep.”

Willy nodded. As if seeing himself being operated on, Willy turned to see Shadow standing next to him. Shadow wrapped his arm around Willy’s shoulders and lead him to see something else:

EXT - CANNES FILM FESTIVAL - BEACH SIDE PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY - FUTURE

Landon paused to show his class, “It’s really written like that in the book,” he said.

Willy saw a man giving a speech to the foreign press, with people he didn’t know except for Lou Azul, who sat behind a table with a series of mics.

Shadow said to Willy, “When you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go. Follow Him.”

Willy saw himself on the operating table and seemed to zoom into his body.

The doctors noticed a significant hike in his blood pressure and then he seemed to stabilize.

“Wow! What happened? We got him back!” the doctor shouted like someone just scored a touchdown.

The doctor looked at the RN, who was holding his IV. “What did you give him?”

“I - I didn’t give it to him yet,” she said.

They exchanged a long look.

“All right. We’re wrapped. Take him to IC,” the doctor ordered.

Willy woke up in his recovery room, his room filled with gifts, cards and flowers. A large poster board, drawn by children read, “Greatest Filmmaker of All Time”. The photo was a trick shot of Willy taking a picture of his posing kids, a shot taken by Alicia. In the picture, he seems to be directing his kids to strike a pose, and the caption read, “Daddy directs.”

Willy looked at the picture, and looked up to see a familiar figure, standing next to the bed, looking out the window. It is the Angel. The Angel turned his head and looked at Willy, with love and absolute authority.

“Clear enough?” The Angel asked.

Willy nodded. “Loud and clear.”

The Angel flied up through the ceiling, disappearing. Willy heard a nurse speak to another nurse from outside his room. “Go tell Dr. Shaw the patient in Room 404 is awake.”

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Chapter 98

On a rainy day in Vancouver, a few days later, Willy and Michael sat in a hotel lounge. Willy was wearing bullet wound recovery gear, and having a much-deserved drink.

Michael asked, “So what’s next, home?”

“Yeah. I wanna see if I can find my parents.”

Michael said, “I’m sorry I wasn’t able to locate them but. I do have another surprise for you.”

Michael motioned with his eyes over Willy’s shoulder. It is Emma. Mickey and their son, Joey, stood back a ways. Mickey was wearing a Cross around his neck. His shirt is a Christian T-shirt.

“OH-MY-GOD!”

Emma hugged her brother tightly. “Wanna meet your nephew?”

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Chapter 99

They walked on a trail connecting the park to the hotel.

Willy and Emma walked as Mickey and Michael played with Joey. Michael was already a grandfather, so the former prosecutor and the former pimp enjoyed entertaining Joey. They played cards.

“What happened to mom and dad?” Willy asked.

“You really wanna know?”

“Dying to know,” Willy said.

“Dad’s alive but he’s showing signs of old age. He’s living in New Hampshire where he buried mom.”

Willy breaks into instant tears “So she is dead.

“Breast cancer. She fought a long time, but... she left this for you.” Emma pulled a DVD out of her purse.

“What’s this?” Willy asked.

“Her Will. I haven’t watched it. Dad just mailed it last week and said it was okay for us to come see you. Next thing I know, I got a call from Michael Hill’s office.”

“Sorry...processing...” Willy said, venting long-awaited tears of mourning. “Did anyone...else know...I just spent 15...18 years believing that I destroyed the family by going into protective custody.”

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Chapter 100

In 1996, Ziggy, Emma and an older man, Daniel Lerouche, an agent with the FBI, sat and talked over lunch at a restaurant

patio.

Daniel said, “So, tell me about you? You look like an actress?”

Emma replied, “Actually, I am getting my degree in Political Science. I figure if my acting career never happens, I’ll go into law or I don’t know. Something.”

“How far along are you?”

“One more year,” she replied.

“Good for you. You ever thought about studying overseas?”

Emma smiled, showing curiosity, “No...”

Ziggy changed the subject, “A case has been made against Mickey.”

“What does that have to do with me?” she asked.

Daniel said, “I’m gonna play something for you.” Daniel pulls out a micro audio recorder. “This is a copy of a conversation between Thomas Fierelli and a man we know as Giovanni Lassiter.”

THOMAS

“How much do you think she knows?”

GIOVANNI

“Everything. We gotta assume...”

THOMAS

“OK. Take care of it?”

GIOVANNI

“Yeah. I’ll do it first chance I get.”

“We believe they are going to murder you because of your relationship with Mickey Bravo,” Daniel said.

“So you want me to...what?” Emma asked.

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Chapter 101

At the same restaurant, a few days later, Ziggy, Daniel and Mickey Bravo had lunch together. Ziggy disliked Mickey very much. Daniel had a poker face on as Mickey looked at surveillance photos of him doing various illegal things.

Mickey asked, “What do you want?”

“Turns State’s witness. We’ll relocate you and Emma.”

“Not to the same place, obviously...” Ziggy interjected.

“If you don’t, you will get life in prison times five. My card.” Daniel pulled out his card and handed it to Mickey. “If I don’t hear from you by tonight, deals off.”

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Chapter 102

It was evening at Mickey's home, as Emma cuddled up to him romantically on the couch.

Emma asked him, "So, what do you want?"

"I'm thinking, what else would I do?"

"You could finish school, like me," she said.

Mickey resisted the idea and said, "You want to be an actress."

Emma chuckled at the irony, "I'm gonna have to fake my death. What are you thinking?"

"I'm thinking I wanna get out of here with you and the baby."

Emma sat up. "You're serious."

Mickey nodded, "The more I think about it. Yeah."

"What about your father?" she asked, then speaking to her self out loud, "What about mine?"

"Can't tell 'em anything," Mickey said.

"Why?"

"What d' y' mean?" Mickey asked.

Emma answered the question with a question, “Why do you want to do this? Just to avoid prison?”

“No. I’ve worked this gig for ten years, and every day it gets harder and harder to walk through that door,” he said, dreading the ambiance of walking through the front door of his own business, “1 Corinthians 10:13 says God always gives us a way out. This is it. I refuse to look back at this moment with regrets. The very people who want to put me in jail are offering me grace. And I’m going to be a daddy. I can’t say no to that.”

Emma hugged him tightly. “I’ve been praying for this.”

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Chapter 103

Winnie Posta spoke to the camera, around Christmas, 2008.

Decorations were visible in the background.

“Willy, as you can see, mom here. I know you’re alive. I’ve been sent pictures of your kids. They’re beautiful! I’m sorry we may never get to see them in person. First, I want you to know how much I love you and how proud I am of you. Your father and I are in New Jersey where I am being treated for breast cancer. The doctors tell me I have a 50-50 chance of survival with the kind I have. But no matter what I want you to know I loved being your mommy. And I know you’re going to make...you. Are. An excellent father. And husband. Hi Alicia. I wish we coulda met in person, and been to your wedding. But, those are the breaks. If we can ever come see you in person, know we

will. If you don't ever see me or dad again, it's because we can't. Next, I know you've been through a hard time...hell..but God has a plan for your life. Know it, believe it and never doubt it.”

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Chapter 104

2008. File-sharing web sites are ruled compliant with US Copyright law. This results in global content-sharing of retail products once classified as piracy.

This action alone ends the profitability of the porn industry. The remaining porn producers who had hired killers to silence Willy Posta reached deals with the US Attorney's office for a cease-fire of George W. Bush's 2001 War on Porn.

Willy Posta was immediately released from Witsec.

2014.

Willy watched the video of his mother's Will with Alicia and the kids. Tears flowed.

“Now listen, in a moment, you're gonna see some numbers on the screen. These are bank accounts and PIN numbers to your father's retirement account. I understand you are finishing school, so you'll know how to invest it. If you wanna make movies, or just treat your wife and kids to a vacation of a lifetime...whatever. It's yours. Ziggy says he's happy and it's all yours. It's about a quarter of a million dollars.”

Willy's eyes didn't budge. Alicia noticed this.

No Easy Way Out

We're not indestructible
Baby, better get that straight
I think it's unbelievable
How you give into the hands of fate
Some things are worth fighting for
Some feelings never die
I'm not askin' for another chance
I just wanna know why
There's no easy way out
There's no shortcut home
There's no easy way out
Givin' in can't be wrong

- Robert Tepper

Students turned in the Final Exam -- and then sat down again. Landon used a wireless microphone this time.

“Again, if you are done with your Final, you are free to go. If you choose to stay, I want you to join me in welcoming the son of Willy Posta, Dr. Jonathan-Daniel Posta”.

A man in his 50's stood to applause.

Jonathan-Daniel said, “I assume they were among the 100 Million casualties from what was regarded as the biggest

biochemical accident in U.S. History. And, two Senators with limited information, ordered separate units of our military to exchange friendly fire, sparking what was mistaken as the first shots in a second Civil War.”

Students listened in silence with wide eyes.

“The world was a different place after that, for corporate America had gotten the message Loud and clear: it had been said best by Benjamin Franklin, “Those who would sacrifice liberty for security deserve neither.”

“Jean-Luc spent his presidency in Boston, while the White House was decontaminated. Among the bills he signed into law were those that made OSHA the third-largest government agency in the country, joining the ATF.”

“The increase in manpower allowed many police and sheriffs officers who had been laid off by their local departments to go back to work. This created an influx of jobs not seen since Roosevelt. Thanks to web cams and videophones, companies that had profited off laziness and neglect were easier to prosecute. Every industry was impacted, and some companies were driven out of business.”

“And because of this, the U.S. and several Central and South American countries decided it would be best to form one union, instead of competing with each other. The drug cartels didn’t like this at all, but with my dad’s movies getting people high and healing by the power of the Holy Spirit, cinema seemed to replace what people had previously used drugs for.”

“Over time, other men of God seemed to have the same gift, and a new genre was born.”

“Congress managed to repeal the 28th Amendment, which had added obscenity to the list of speech not covered by the 1st Amendment, but they were stuck with the deal they made with the devil, trading the same-gender marriage amendment to achieve their goals.”

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Chapter 105

Hope Place Church.
Phoenix, Arizona, 2020.

Willy exited the car. Alisha waited in the passenger seat, fidgeting with her smartphone. The ghosts of memories filled his mind as he walked across the parking lot toward the front doors. To the occupants of the building itself, it was just another day at the office.

The radiation that had destroyed Los Angeles hadn't reached as far as Arizona. But these people in this building had no idea what awaited them.

Willy walked inside and hunted with his eyes. At first the lobby was quiet. Art and signage on the walls indicated the presence of a grade school, apparently a renter of the vast campus no longer owed by the founding family. The Bishops were a memory of their own making.

As his eyes moved around, his feet slowly made their way through the halls where he heard the voices of the past and present. Classroom noise, music, nearby traffic, and an unmistakable voice.

Church splits happen when its leaders become obsessed with power and overreach to control other people's options. Humans inevitably choose whatever maximizes freedom, but those who crave power or seek what it can do in terms of leverage will verbally deny open freedom in lieu of loyalty to a cult leader. She used gossip and sexual harassment to build up a following and to drive people away. You're either for us or against us, her father would say. He died a few years ago.

Here, she was the eldest of three daughters of the founding pastor. She finally got the life she wanted and she was miserable. Like the Emperor in Star Wars, she ruled her Empire with an electronic keyboard and a mediocre singing voice. As Willy cast his gaze into the lone open door in the lobby, he saw her, clinging to what was left of her youth, opening mail and nursing several snacks on her desk. A framed picture of her latest mate and her giving a fake-smile was among a few other pictures perched and mounted around the office.

He stood there, confronting the orchestrator of his torment with a silent stare. His presence gained her attention. Faye Bishop's line of vision was interrupted by Willy's.

“Oh! Hi! You startled me. Wait...” her demeanor adjusted as she reached for glasses, putting them on, “Willy. Posta! Wow. How

ya doin'?"

At first Willy froze. He had rehearsed this a thousand times. You scum. You awful person. Disgrace to ministry and to God. I'll see you in hell. Pick a tell-off line, she deserved them all.

His face forced a smile.

"You just gonna stand there? Come on in!" She pried herself out of her chair and grabbed a cane with which she leaned on heavily to walk. As she made her way outside her office and set on eyes on him, her demeanor was welcoming at first.

Willy hunted for words. "Do you remember when I was here?"

"Uh-huh," she replied, her tone sounding more like a question.

"I was subject to gossip and sexual harassment by your family, many members and you. You condoned it. You Enabled it. As a senior executive officer in this church, this was on you."

"Stop. I don't wanna hear it. We've had people come and go, to each their own motive. I'm not going to get into any of that. I'm not responsible for it. It's best to leave the past in the past, ok," she said, like a threat. Deflection. She was a master deflector.

Righteous indignation rose in Willy's soul and he heard the words emerge like a shotgun blast, "You hurt me. You. Hurt. Me. I give you to God. And I hope it's painful."

Faye shook her head, pretending not to be affected by the verbal

blast of sound waves penetrating her with deafening conviction, by the Lord.

“You have no idea what painful is. Good to see ya, Willy. Say hi to your parents for me,” she said, retreating into her office, attempting to close the door over, hindered by stuff.

“My mother’s dead,” he uttered, his eyes finding a mural on the wall, a tribute to Faye’s slightly-younger sister May. She had died a few years earlier.

Willy knew her as a vile gossip. The wall presented her like a Saint.

“Is there something else you need?” Faye asked, as if to challenge him.

“I was just leaving.” Faye gives up on trying to close the door and limps back out to the lobby where she sees him reading the mural.

“She died of cancer. That miserable enough for you?” Faye asked, wielding a victim’s voice like a sword.

“She hurt me too. You all hurt me,” Willy replied. This time Faye did not answer. Willy’s head turned 180 degrees when he felt the presence of another person.

The third sister, whose words sent him out of the church, slandered as a predator. Dana limped as if from a stroke, while her now over-age 50 eyes locked onto Willy with the tenacity of

a tightening fist.

Willy wasted no time, a plan unfolding in his mind. He looked directly at her and pointed, “you hurt me,” his body turning and walking toward the exit.

He did not turn around to see them again, but heard a commotion and an abrupt shriek. Dana had collapsed with a stroke upon hearing his words and Faye shouted at her sister’s jolts, fumbling to grab her phone.

Willy kept walking.

Leaving the building, he looked around and took it all in one last time. It’s just a building.

As he made it to his car, he saw his wife, leaning on the open window of the passenger side, looking both calm and stunning. “How’d it go?”

Years before, Willy had enjoyed a song by Chris Daughtry made famous as a farewell anthem to artists who’d been voted off the show. It ran through his mind. Willy was going home. Finally.

“Do not commit the crime for which you have served the sentence,” the priest in The Count of Monte Cristo reminded him in his own inner-voice. “You have more treasure than any man. You have a woman who loves you and a child. Take the money and your family and go live your life!” Dumas’ words echoed in his mind hundreds of years later.

“I’m ready to go.”

“Where we goin’?” Alicia asked.

“You know in sports games when the star player is asked what he’s going to do now and they always seem to say they’re going to Disneyland?” She nodded.

“I’m going to Cooperstown. Baseball Hall of Fame. I’ve always wanted to go there, with the love of my life.”

Alicia’s face lights up with a blend of delight and tears. “Hey.” She said, laying her hands on his face, “If you love me, take me to Cooperstown.”

“Cooperstown,” he said, correcting her.

“Cooperstown. Got it. Let’s go. I’ll message the kids to meet us there.”

As Willy pulled out, he saw an ambulance screaming its siren, entering the church campus parking lot a short distance away.

He drove away.

Alicia asked, “What’s in Cooperstown?”

“The soul of America.”

The End.

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