





*Dedicated*  
*to every dark soul*  
*who seeks redemption!*





# **The Scavenger**

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# **Soul Collector**

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**TIME TRAVELLER**



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## 1<sup>ST</sup> Chapter

### The Shadow Forgotten.

In a huge, highly technological city known as Ergopolis full of iron roads, metallic bridges, underground tunnels, skyscrapers, automobiles, fast trains, flying hovercrafts, and millions of people, lived an unknown man for all, but mainly for his own self.

He remembered nothing. Not his birthplace, origin, how he ended up there, nor even his own name. The only thing existed inside his brain was the survival instinct. Other than that, total absence.

Every time he opened his eyes it was like he was living a Groundhog Day; a vicious circle with the same annoying sounds piercing his ears, the same loneliness, the same unanswered questions, and the same hunger slowly and excruciatingly chewing up his stomach.

Numerous times the thought of commit suicide passed through his mind, to give an end to his wretchedness, but something inside him always held him back. It was an unknown, repetitive voice telling him that all of this was a punishment he needed to endure until he fulfilled his lifetime mission; the true meaning of his existence.

He was quite tall, standing at 6.7 feet, pale, skinny, and covered with scars and wounds all over his body. He had long, black, and oily hair down to his shoulders, a very dirty beard entirely covering his neck, and unnaturally long limbs with broken and filthy nails. His eyes were also black, big, and round like black pearls, but his gaze was completely empty, like an abyss.

He had nothing to wear and, for some reason, didn't want to find anything. He liked to be naked. It made him feel one with the environment surrounding him, which was also why he was barefoot.

He was living in a hole under an abandoned bridge. This was his house; this was also his first memory, waking up in this hole, trying to remember something. Anything.

In the daytime he would always sleep, while at nighttime he would come out of his hole searching for food like a bloodthirsty owl.

All his senses worked perfectly, perhaps even better than they should, which helped him to go undetected. No one ever came face-to-face with him, nor had even seen him. At least, as far as he remembered.

Instinctively, he could avoid even the slightest beam of light. It was like he had no shadow; he was the shadow! Only darkness seemed an ally, perfectly matched with his soul and personality, vast and amorphous.

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After a deep breath, all his senses started to work, slowly, one by one, but to the fullest. First, he heard the same annoying and useless sounds of sirens, tires, and engines. Then, he smelled the wet soil outside his hole, something that made him uncurl from his position and touch the earthen walls around him, feeling the humidity. Lastly, he opened his eyes, facing nothing. No light could reach his hole and absolute darkness prevailed.

With all his senses combined, he was able to create an image of what was outside, near the bridge. Nothing. He was completely alone.

He jumped up and climbed all the way to the top like a feline. He was also hungry like one, having been without food for days and ready to devour the first thing that would come on his way.

Once he stepped foot on the wet soil, he smelled the air again looking for something that he could possibly miss in the first place. Nope, nothing. He was ready to move all the way to the end of the bridge.

The road ahead of him was full of puddles, road signs, and broken lanterns, while the wire fence that lined the sidewalk was ripped off and full of holes.

He walked across the sidewalk and stepped onto the road. Then, he kneeled and pressed his left ear to the metallic tarmac. All the sounds and vibrations were far away, none approaching his area.

He stood up and walked all the way to the opposite side of the road. After he reached the wire fence, he searched for a hole with his hands. Once he found one, he bent over and passed through it.

He went on his way with low visibility, almost nonexistent. While any other would go slow and extra careful, he was running with confidence, feeling the earth through his bare feet as if it were an extension of his body.

His stomach started to roar out of hunger, but it wasn't the first time, so he got used to it. The only thing he had to do was to concentrate on his journey and the pain would disappear, sooner or later, until he found some food, or even better, answers.

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He had been running for almost half an hour when he saw lights in the distance. He slowed but kept moving in that direction. Five minutes later, a new smell reached his nose - flowing, dirty water.

It had been so long since he'd tasted water that, even if it was polluted, it would taste like the purest, crystal-clear water to ever be put in his mouth, refreshing his oesophagus.

A hundred meters farther he also heard it, verifying his strongest sense, odour. For another unknown reason, he found that he could smell everything from quite a distance, even emotions, psychological conditions, and lies!

The closer he got, the more he slowed his walk because of the vibrations he was sensing through the earth. He needed to make sure that those vibrations were only coming from the water.

He then stopped, closed his eyes, and let himself go. He unchained his mind from his body and spread it around the area, scanning every inch. After he made sure that he was alone with nature, he opened his eyes and moved on by lowering his body with every other step.

Crawling, he arrived at the edge of the ground, facing a huge water facility built inside a canyon. There were many and very strong lights around with heavily-armed guards to patrol.

He then realised that there was no chance of tasting the water, - for plenty of reasons -, but he'd gone a long way to get there and he didn't plan on giving up without a fight.

"Where people are, goods are too," he said to himself, instantly starting to look around and building a plan.

The water facility had four different level of dams, several spotlights scattered around, and one control room on top. Most of the guards were walking on top of those dams and in the surrounding area, while the control room was unprotected, - the spotlights were moving automatically.

One with the earth, as he was, he started crawling once again, heading to the control room. When he arrived, - five minutes later -, he started to observe the automatic movement of the spotlights manufacturing a pattern inside his head.

When he finished with the pattern, he started to elaborate the control room, his main destination. Three people were inside, - the glassy wall on front and the lights inside revealing their presence. Once he completed with his way in and out, as well as the escape plan in case of emergency, he made his move.

Without paying attention to the lights, - he had their movements memorised, - he started to jump from one dark point to another. Every time he paused, his mind was calculating his next move, automatically, like a well-tuned machine.

He reached the control room in no time and without been exposed, a pretty impressive feat. His body was now one with the wall next to the door, hidden in the shadows, while his hearing was collecting data from the inside.

It took him five seconds to realise that the people inside were drunk, something that made his job a lot easier. They were laughing for absolutely no reason and shouting like bullies. A simple diversion would be enough.

He looked around to find something like a rock, but the place was very clean. Before he quit searching, he saw a pen, collected it, and turned to plan B, knocking the door.

The laughs and voices stopped from the inside, but none of them made any move to see who or what it was. Seconds later, they started again, this time cheering and drinking.

“Useless shit-machines,” he whispered to himself, shaking his head, disappointed.

Before he acted again, one of the insiders did him a favour and started approaching the door. The unknown man hid himself among the shadows, waiting.

The man from the inside opened the door and went out, walking away with trembling, drunken steps. Once he arrived at the nearest corner, he unzipped his pants and started to pee while singing.

“One day I’ll be gone of this world, full of love and happinesssss, one day I’ll be gone, full of-”

“Alcohol in your veins!” Said a whispering voice in his ear. Right after that, an arm wrapped around his neck started choking him.

The man tried to breathe but the strength of the arm was unreal. He tried to call for help but his vocal cords were stuck to his carotid. Finally, he tried to fight back but he was too drunk to control his body. Seconds later, he passed out.

The unknown man placed the body down on the ground, quiet and slow. After that, he took his place once again among the shadows. He knew it was only a matter of time until his fellow drinkers looked for him.

“Hey, Jake, mate,” one of the other men shouted from inside the control room, “your beer is getting warm!” The two guys from inside started to laugh.

Of course, Jake could neither answer nor care about his drink; he was sleeping peacefully on the ground with his dick out and pee all over his pants.

“Hey Jake,” the same man said again, this time from the doorstep. “Oh, look at that, my pen!” He crouched down to collect it.

Before he touched the pen, everything went black due to a hard and lightning-fast kick to the back of his head.

“What the fuck?” the last man said with a thick Scottish accent, approaching the door.

The only thing he saw was his friend falling down, not the kick, nor the man who provided it. That’s why he thought that his friend had just passed out, - probably it wasn’t the first time.

“Rob, ore you okay, mate?” He asked, trying to help his friend.

When he realised that he didn't have the power to lift him up, he looked around for his other friend, Jake. Once he saw his second friend collapsed on the ground, he angrily exclaimed: "Why do you both fucking drink if you can't stand it!"

Not for the slightest moment did the thought pass through his head that someone was there, responsible for all that had happened to them.

"Dickheads," he spit in the end, entering the control room to call for help.

Three steps after he entered, the lights went off and the door closed. That was the moment that a bell rung inside his head, but it was too late. An arm wrapped around his neck and cut off his breath.

"I'd love to see your eyes, but you won't die, so," he heard before he passed out.

The unknown man placed the unconscious body on the floor and, without turning on the lights, started collecting the food from the table. The last thing he took was a sealed bottle of rare spirit called 'Metahorse'. Without hesitation, he exited the control room and made his way back to his hole exactly as he'd arrived; unseen and undetected.

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On his way back, he ate all the food he'd found, something that made him extremely happy. The only thing that remained was the spirit, which he would enjoy inside his hole hoping to help him sleep without nightmares.

Unfortunately, he heard noises near his bridge. He slowed his walk and lowered his tall body. The closer he got, the more he could sense fear, greediness, agony, and joy all mixed into one scene.

When he arrived near the wire fence across his bridge, he saw exactly what was going on. A big van was parked at the end of the road with its headlights on. In front of it

were a couple lying on the ground, eight muscular men surrounding them and laughing, with caps, gloves, full-face masks, and metallic maces in their hands.

“Please, please, I beg of you,” the man was saying, terrified, “I’ll give you money, everything you need, just-”

“Shut the fuck up, asshole,” the bigger guy said, interrupting him, “we have money, we aren’t thieves!”

“Yeah, we’re not,” the shortest of the eight continued with a slimy voice, “we’re just having fun!” He started laughing like a maniacal joker.

“I have power, I can-”

“We know that, prank,” the tallest guy interrupted him once again, this time hitting him in the shoulder with his metallic mace.

The man started to scream out in pain while his girl watched in terror. The eight guys started to laugh out loud, full of joy and happiness.

“Please, please, I’ll-”

“SHUT HIS FUCKING MOUTH!” the big guy screamed to the fellow members of his gang.

Five people approached him and grabbed his hands and his legs. One of them sat behind him and closed his mouth. “Watch,” he whispered into his ear.

“I’M SO HORNY!” The big guy said once again, handing his mace to the slimy joker.

In that moment the girl realised that her worst fears were about to become true. The big guy grabbed the girl by the hair and started to drag her toward the van. She wanted to scream but she knew that would change nothing, so she started to silently cry. When they arrived at the van, the muscular guy threw her on the hood, ripped her clothes off, and started to rape her.

“Kill me,” the woman said out of disgust.



“I could never, ever kill a sweet pussy like yours,” he replied instantly, “I’ll keep it forever, lock it down, and protect it as a unique treasure!”

“No,” she whispered desperately.

“But this motherfucker,” he continued, nodding to her man, “will die for sure!”

“NO!” she screamed in fear.

“Boys,” he gave the signal without ceasing her rape.

The man understood that his life was over once the gang members released him. A second later, all seven of them started beating him with their maces. They began with his body, breaking almost all of his bones. His blood was spreading all around the road, their hands, faces, and shoes, but this was something that they were enjoying.

“Cowards,” thought the man hidden in the shadows.

“Don’t even think about it,” a voice inside his head said, reading his thoughts.

“Seven to one,” he thought back.

“They don’t deserve your blade,” the voice spoke again, “they are worthless!”

“What blade?” the unknown man wondered.

“First you must remember!”

The joker was the one to give the final blow, smashing the man’s head. All eight started to laugh while the woman couldn’t believe her fate.

The muscular guy stopped fucking her, took his dick out, and slapped her in the face. “Time to go,” he said before he grabbed her violently by the wrist.

The big guy opened the back door of the van and tossed her inside. He then entered the driver’s seat and started the engine. The joker sat next to him while the rest got in the back, closing the door behind them. Moments later they started driving away.

The unknown man could hear the engine for more than five minutes, the van's horsepower was that high, - along with man's unnatural hearing. When the sound had completely disappeared, giving its place to the typical annoying sounds, the man passed through the wire fence and headed for the dead man's corpse.

Without a second thought, he looked for a place to hide it. The problem was that man's body was so smashed that he couldn't lift it, only drag it. So, his only option was to bury it under his bridge, near his hole.

And so he did. He dug a hole with his bare hands five meters away and, when it was big enough for the dead man's body, he grabbed him by the legs and dragged him into his grave.

When he'd entirely covered the man, his next job was to cover his blood, something that he did with dirt. Then, he returned to the wire fence, picked up the bottle, and jumped into his hole. The time had come for him to enjoy his loot.

Before he opened the bottle, he started groping the embossed label in the dark. He recognised the mechanical horse in the centre. On top were the words 'Overproof Liqueur' while the bottom held the trademark 'Metahorse'. On the label on the back he read the percentage first, 'Vol. 69%', and then the promotional line: 'Palate's Feast, Mettaleriol's flower extraction'.

"Enough," he said to himself and opened the bottle.

Instantly, the smell of dirty metal and garbage reached his nose. That didn't bother him. The percentage was all that cared about; 69% was more than enough for him.

He brought it to his mouth with the intention of drinking half of it in one sip, but once the liquor touched his tongue, a memory came into his mind.

"Father..."

He heard a little girl's voice and he flicked his head trying to remove that voice. For some reason knew that this memory wasn't good for him, even if it was his first.

"Father, father," he heard again, repeatedly.

The darkness around him gave way to a nice, colourful room. All the furniture had different colours and there were dozens of drawings on the wall. In front of him, sitting in a wheelchair, was a thirteen-year-old girl.

She was staring him straight in the eyes, crying her heart out. Her beautiful face had turned into a mask of misery, conquered by endless pain.

The man vomited the liquor, - along with the food he'd eaten earlier -, and everything disappeared. His next move was to throw the bottle out of his hole. He curled up by hugging his knees while tears started to run from his eyes.

After some moments of inertia, he closed his eyes and wished to forget this memory, somehow, luckily in the same way he'd forgotten everything from his past, even his own name.

Maybe that was the reason he'd lost his memory; pain. What he didn't know was whether it was his pain, or a pain that he'd caused!

Perhaps, eternal oblivion was the only way out for him, the only way to forget his past, a past that had to be forgotten. Unfortunately, he'd already opened his Pandora's box...