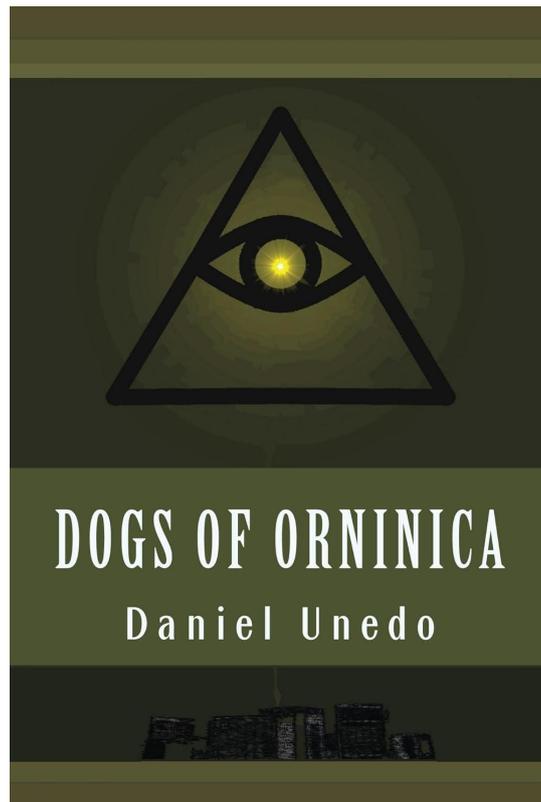


# Dogs of Orninica

Daniel Unedo



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Millennia ago, the humans departed Earth, leaving behind their loyal canine companions. Today, the dogs have evolved to become the dominant species on Earth. Their greatest nation, Orninica, has fully embraced the lessons left by man and built towering concrete metropolises patrolled by all-seeing drones and fueled by the military industrial complex.

Their major religion is built on the back of Batman comic books unearthed in the ruins of a human basement centuries ago, transcribed, and then lost. The world has embraced social technology with open arms and virtually everyone wears an iYglass device everywhere they go, while big-budget dreams (with commercials) are beamed to their headsets as they sleep.

The unceasing quest for profit has taken this vast empire to the brink of collapse, and now in its waning days, the leaders of the nation's affluent corporations make a desperate effort to begin a new war, hoping to stimulate the economy and keep the wealthy elite in power for another day. Unfortunately, the only enemy they have left to wage war on is a nation of primitive nomads with no advanced weaponry. The leaders of the free world must now concoct a plan to arm the simple savages and ensure a long, profitable war.

This satirical cautionary tale is made up of a collection of correspondences from every corner of society, including a grovelling judge, an egotistical actor, an Internet revolutionary, a cunning banker, a foreign spy, a peeping police officer, a profane soldier and a professor. A humorous book for the Occupy generation and budding anarchists everywhere.

Living self sufficiently in the Mediterranean mountains, Daniel Unedo's writing is largely informed by the elaborate authoritarian power structures that impede human freedom at every turn. He strives to hold a mirror up to the tragedy that is the modern human dystopia, and at the same time, escape to fictional worlds where people can overcome the crushing injustices in the real world.

## Prologue

The following book is a collection of correspondences from every corner of Orninican society; some public and some private. The accounts cover the three-month period leading up to the historical find that would change the lives of the dogs of Orninica forever.

# Chapter One: Professor of Antiquities

Monumental new developments in the world of archeology this week. Brace yourselves friends of history, these events will pave the way for the next golden era of prosperity Orninica will undoubtedly soon approach.

Dr. Spot Merrel, world famous for finally cracking the intricate human language, has delved into ancient texts newly unearthed by our team of skilled diggers and revealed that a pedigree human female from a small rainy island was due to give birth at the time these texts were published.

My close colleague has revealed that the child was apparently of extreme importance to our human masters, as endless literature was disseminated discussing every aspect of his impending arrival. From what my esteemed colleague can decipher, every human living on this island proudly contributed a portion of their earnings to the pedigree family's immense wealth.

Due to these revolutionary new findings, the President has announced that after an exhaustive search, all citizens of Orninica will now direct a percentage of their gross earnings to Mr. and Mrs. Fifi, the wealthiest Corgis in the country. We have been advised to speculate as idly as possible about any new pups they may spawn for at least three hours daily, and six hours on Sundays, as seems to have been the human custom on ancient earth. The new Corgi tax was, of course, devised to replace the controversial tree marking tax that had religious groups in an uproar all over the country.

I'm very pleased with the President's judicious decision. The more advances we make towards connecting with our departed human masters by further embracing their fascinating customs, the more prosperous our civilization will ultimately become as it matures. And with the space program's recent thrilling announcement that our rockets are finally setting out to reach the last drifting satellites the humans left behind, it's truly an exhilarating period in our history. Any day now, we could finally learn why man took to space and left us behind.

It might be difficult for us to fully understand the intent of some of the customs our human predecessors practiced, but it's important to remember that they were far more advanced than us in every conceivable way. It would be incredibly foolish, and perhaps even dangerous to disregard the lessons they have left for us in the ruins of their great civilization. Everything they did, they did for undoubtedly learned reasons,

and we must not ever lose sight of that. By upholding their traditions, we honor our departed masters and keep their great vision for society alive.

Due to our latest groundbreaking discoveries, the government has rewarded the university with just enough funding for us to begin excavating ten new sites immediately. I'm giddy at the thought of all the ancient wonders we'll discover! I am truly fortunate to be a student of history in this time and place, and can't wait to share the amazing discoveries we make with all of you.

Over the past two-thousand years, dog-kind has really come a long way. It's befuddling to imagine that just a short time ago, our forefathers were walking on all fours, scratching, moulting and drooling all over the floor. Incredible scientific innovations such as tongue antiperspirant and anti-moulting cream may have made us appear more civilized on a superficial level, but it is our culture's love of history and our fervent compulsion to approach the great wisdom and etiquette of our departed human masters that has made us truly genteel. Our connection to the ancient world is paramount to our state of being.

As every third-grader knows, when the humans left the earth, a group of primitive dogs dug into a colossal factory and dragged enough sacks of kibble away to feed their hungry packs for several years. When the food began to run out, a sect of Cocker Spaniel thinkers decrypted the essential ingredients and undertook several experiments at growing kibble. Because of these efforts, every dog in the land soon had a sack of corn in his pantry and a tub of glyphosate sauce to dip it in. Without this knowledge, those primitive dogs would have starved, and the great *Canidae erectus* civilization would have never arisen from the rubble of the human world. It's saddening what Kibble Day has become. When was the last time your family woke up bright and early to cook up some homemade kibble to feed the poor? Instead we all spend the day lazing on the couch, watching sports and eating until it hurts.

There was another major breakthrough this week. We've finally completed our comprehensive study of the stacks of plastic silver discs we've been discovering for hundreds of years at sites all over the world. We believe we can now safely confirm that these shiny discs were used by man as a type of body jewelery. The hole in the center of the disc would have fit his penis. It's probable that the jewelery was used as an anaphrodisiac; to curtail his arousal when in the company of upper-class females. This is further proof of the long-accepted concept that humans were true masters of restraint, exercising complete control over their physical urges. Truly enviable, and yet another example for us all to follow. I plan to formally request that the government commission a similar contraption for us to wear under our clothing in public places, and hope you will all support my petition.

If every male in Orninica were required by law to wear one of these genital-discs, it would be sure to have a measured effect on society. Unwanted pregnancies, rape and sexually transmitted diseases would plummet. With our hormones under control, we wouldn't rush into marriage, leading to far fewer costly divorces down the road. Our every decision would be made purely by force of careful intellectual thought rather

than the heat-driven mania that's known to come over even the most highly esteemed gentle-dog. Truly, we would be closer than ever to the ultimate ascendancy to the stars that our masters reached.

After all, we're not impious Nureongis, we're Orninicans. And that still means something in my book. The impoverished Nureongi don't seem to believe in anything, least of all history. They have no love in their hearts for the masters, no hope to one day join them in the stars. They only want to wander amongst the trees, naked as the day they were born, hunting and humping, hunting and humping, the same primitive routine on an unbroken loop day after day. Never growing. Never becoming anything more than the backwards savage beasts they've been since the day man left us. It's no wonder that they're miserably poor and hungry, living nomadically in decrepit little shanties and defecating on the ground like wild animals.

Thank man we're better than the Nureongi. Blessed to live in this great nation in this great time, where history, science and learned culture guide our dreams of greater prosperity. Where we have endless opportunities to better ourselves and become great dogs of industry, finance, academia and the arts. Thank man for our good fortune to be born Orninican.

Another important matter that I want to talk about, regarding the big golden arches we continue to unearth at ruins all over the world. I agree with the consensus that the mysterious arches are in fact an ancient spiritual symbol. For these magnificent golden arches to have been erected in every community all over the world, the symbol must have some great universal meaning that transcends divisions in religion, nationality and class.

The arches appear quite similar to the known human letter 'M', so it is quite possible that they represent an abbreviation of some kind. 'Man' perhaps? 'Moon'? 'Map'? 'Magnificence'? I hope we one day discover exactly what it stands for, because it's been a most perplexing puzzle for far too long. If I could somehow go back in time and ask man one question, it would most probably be the meaning of the great golden arch. All the mysteries of the universe could be locked within these strange ancient wonders.

Just imagine the possibilities if the old legends are true; a power so strong that every dog on earth is united in an overwhelming sensation of peace and clarity of thought. If only we could evolve to the point of understanding how to operate such a device. To have the knowledge to unlock a better tomorrow for all life on the planet. To reach the summit of civilized beings and stand up in the very clouds that our lost masters stood in so long ago.

Truly, there is no mission more important or more relevant to the future of our species than the quest to explore the past in search of the treasure trove of knowledge left for us by our masters, in scattered fragments all over the world and in the greater solar system beyond it. I have no doubt we will eventually succeed in discovering the ultimate cosmic knowledge that allowed humanity to ascend to the stars, and join them in our rightful place at their sides. The only question is when.

# Chapter Two: Anonymous Revolutionary

So it's actually happening, the President of Orninica just signed a decree to implement the Grand Bishop's crack-brained proposal to cut down every tree in the country to prevent us from following our 'ungodly' urges to piss on them. Apparently, replacing all lamp-posts with costly armed spotlighting drones that follow citizens around, illuminating the path and recording their every move wasn't enough for our piddle-possessed leaders.

The trees will immediately be milled into sawdust and sold as hamster bedding; lest anyone get any ideas about taking one final wicked piss on a felled tree. The stumps will be salted to prevent regrowth. It'll take twenty-thousand logger-bots five months to complete the blasted project.

There's no simpler pleasure in this life for a hardworking dog at the end of the day than emptying ones bladder on a beautiful and receptive Crimean linden. The trees need the nitrogen to grow and multiply, and we need the sweet release that comes with our instinctual territory marking ritual. But our all-knowing leaders, apparently not tempered by the steep profits the state amassed from the felonious tree marking tax devised last year, are taking away our last remaining natural freedom. You see compliant citizen, a free dog is a dangerous dog.

The inanity of our broken civilization never fails to amaze me. Our journalists and public figures stubbornly refuse to call attention to the brain-sick notions of the bureaucratic tyrants that rule over us. Is it not sickening to anyone else that the news is almost entirely filled with celebrity chitchat, irrelevant manufactured spectacle and discussion of shiny new designer electronics that we are instructed to immediately purchase and plug into?

Whenever I bring up my concerns here on the Internet, I'm labeled an extremist. An extremist! As if it's somehow extreme to want to live in a world where public policy follows some kind of logic. Where our government provides us with essential services to improve our quality of living, rather than an infinite list of laws, taxes and fines aimed at stifling our spirits and monetizing our sweat and blood.

As blasphemous as it might seem, the idiocy of our political, religious and cultural institutions all stems from our mindless devotion to and emulation of the so called 'masters'. A long gone race of sociopathic fur-less apes that enslaved our ancestors for centuries.

Despite the fairy tales drilled into our skulls by sleepy schoolteachers and feel-good fantasy movies, the humans were not omnipotent. I can't tell you why they left this world, but I can tell you we're certainly better off for it.

The constant warring between our two major religious orders; The Holy Temple of Bahman and The Modern Church of Soupman, is testament to the fact that we'll never decide why the humans left. But constantly attempting to adopt their strange cultural practices in some kind of sick quest for godliness is only bringing us further and further from our inherent freedom-loving canine spirit, and closer to unimaginable devastation.

The humans might have played some small part in our eventual evolving of greater intelligence, but there's no evidence that they did this deliberately. They could never have foreseen that stuffing their slave-dogs full of genetically modified cornmeal and soy, sprinkled with irradiated wheat germ (and boiled carrots) would have a lasting effect on our evolutionary biology.

The humans own meals were so far removed from the natural diet enjoyed by their gorilla cousins that they had the same dependence as we do on 210kmph toilet flushes to carry their doo and the cocktail of poisons they poured over it to the nearest major water body. So to suggest that they were somehow consciously developing us to inherit 'their' planet is simply ridiculous. Their civilization was just as devoid of reason as our own. They departed earth with no expectation that primitive canines would ever rid themselves of their leashes. They stripped the planet of its resources and left us to starve.

It's always been my theory that we developed into *Canidae erectus* because nature saw a void and filled it. We didn't learn to walk on two feet as some beggary parlor trick to entertain our masters as mythologized in one of the holy books; we learned to walk upright because our very survival depended on it.

After being enslaved by the humans for far too long, we had entirely suppressed our instinctual hunting skills. Yes, hunt, kill, slaughter, butcher. Any logical mind can look in the mirror at the long sharp teeth before him and plainly see that we are strictly carnivorous! But, no. We continue to eat an unnatural chemical-laden corn-based diet, and when faced with the deadly cancers ravaging our population, we pretend disease is some great enigma.

Alas, rather than relearn how to hunt for our sustenance as would have been logical, our forefathers set off a chain of human emulation that we're still too superstitious to break two-thousand plus years later. Once it was obvious the humans weren't coming back to fill their bowls, dog-kind embarked on the agrarian cabal that has kept us firmly clenched under the boots of petty tyrants and the irrational devout ever since.

I'll admit, the agricultural revolution wasn't so bad at first, it might not have been natural or entirely logical, but our great grandparents lives were relatively fulfilled. But then, with every new generation, our governments got bigger, and the wealthy bankers and industrialists got wealthier, while the rest of us have been pushed closer and closer to the gutters of civilization.

In olden times, you came out of the womb, and your parents taught you the ways of the world. They taught you what plants to eat and what plants to avoid, they showed you how to assemble the tools you'd need to get along. Times changed, city-life took hold, and dogs moved further and further away from their roots in the land.

My grandparents were born to the mountains as farmers, inheriting land to live off of from their parents, who inherited it before them. You entered adulthood with everything you needed to prosper; land, water, knowledge, shelter. That was all you could ask for and all you could need to live out your years blissfully.

When my grandparents passed and my father inherited the land, he drove from the city up through the bumpy mountain tracks to inspect it for the first time in decades, declared it to be an overgrown mess in the middle of nowhere, and sold it to a golf course developer. The money lasted a few years, and then it was gone.

Hundreds of years of history and culture sharply severed and replaced with something else. The dreams of the serious dogs in their tight suits and ties sitting at their big heavy desks in tall concrete towers, passing down all-important orders to the quivering underlings below. The cult of profit. The future of my generation and all that follow, sold away in exchange for some fluctuating numbers on a computer screen and an air of smug self-importance.

When our fathers sold away our heritage to open their long gone bars and shoe stores, our ancient way of life living off the land, with the land, was replaced with something new. The grand capitalist dream of hard office-work signing heavy stacks of papers and moving numbers around, rewarded by ever-mounting debt to fuel the endless accumulation of things to fill their concrete castles. Finally we were approximating the culture of the all-knowing humans. Dog was closer than ever to his so-reverenced master.

And then things began to fall apart.

First the fragile ecosystems that sustained us began to crumble as these serious dogs bought up the land and covered it over with concrete and tar. The simple peasants that failed to make the move to the cities were now being told by their sophisticated brothers to pour yet more sterilizing chemicals onto their fields to reach higher yields. There's no profit in the old ways, they said.

So, trusting their brothers, the farmers took out bank loans to buy these much hyped chemical concoctions. They poured these poisons onto the land that was left, and suddenly they and their children's children were tied to the tit of the corporate master. The land quickly lost its vitality, and more and more poisons were carted in and poured over the nation's food to keep the harvest coming, and the debt collector at bay.

Slowly, the old ways began to fade from memory as everyone struggled to keep their debt in line. More and more middlemen entered the fray as the last remaining small-holder farmers gradually gave in to the urge (or the court order) to sell to the persuasive developers and corporate agribusiness groups.

These unsustainable farming practices were just the start. Soon even the almighty economy, to which we all kneel and pray, would also come crashing down under the weight of its mounting pressure. The debt grew so fast that our fathers were now putting off paying it back until a few generations after their lifetimes. They continued to give away the future in exchange for the fleeting life of a king in his castle with his things.

"And what of the future?" we pried.

"That's God's domain", they answered, before shooing you away so they could attend to more important matters.

I watched these events unfold in my childhood and I gradually went through the 5 stages of grief for all that was lost. Then one day, probably while watching a willowy tree swaying in the wind or something equally trite, I came to a conscious decision.

I wouldn't follow in my father's footsteps, wasting my life away chasing an unattainable checklist of so-called important things. Luxury, affluence, esteem, financial security; these are all selfish and misleading concepts. The very antithesis of life. They ignore the very self-evident truth that life is extremely temporary. Everyone in this man-forsaken country seems to live life as if immortality is a long-accepted concept, and death is just some song and dance concocted in storybooks to scare our children with. It seems we're adamant on accumulating enough wealth, shiny possessions and important-sounding titles for a time long past our inevitable expiration.

Instead, I've led a simple life, consuming only the bare essentials needed to survive, and saving only enough to make it through the next winter. I work part time from home, for a few trusted clients, making just enough to stay off the tax-man's radar and out of debt. I grow my own food on my own land and built my own humble little home on a shoestring budget, far away from civilization with its unending list of strangling building codes and zoning regulations.

I wish self-important hypocrite celebrity activists like Harvey Fidelbrook would leave the comfort of their towering mansions and crystal yachts for long enough to experience real life. This fool is actually deluded enough to declare he's changing the world with his manipulative melodramatic movies that cost a hundred million oonos of utter waste to produce. Fidelbrook is nothing but a brainless corporate puppet, programmed to emote when the scene calls for it, and even then, his inflated ego roadblocks any acting ability he may have once had. He could have a roaring career as a two-faced politician if he weren't so deluded in his certainty that acting is somehow important work.

I understand that dogs like Fidelbrook have never had to work for a living, let alone be forced to choose between paying the rent or eating. I know it's a lot to expect such sheltered dogs to be responsible for their careless words when they've never been burdened by any kind of responsibility in their privileged lives. But I just wish he'd know when to shut the fuck up. His careless comments, demanding the poor work harder, couldn't have been more ignorant, and I'm truly embarrassed that by some

sick cosmic irony, this blow-hard St. Bernard is considered to be our most respected and celebrated public figure.

In the much-maligned Nureongi utopia of the far East, our distant relations run free, their tails as intact as their dignity. There, a dog's life is simple. He goes out into the forest and comes back with the day's hunt. The food is piled in the village square, and everyone eats. Everyone has a place, no dog left to starve and freeze on the cold streets every winter as in our sacred Orninica. If I had been born a Nureongi, I would be proud.

When the freakish logger-bots reach the shores of Nureongi, I just hope they fight back. If anyone still has fight left in them, if anyone still has something worth defending, it's certainly the Nureongi. I hope they tear those bots apart before their lush, fertile lands are stripped bare, and the last free dogs on the earth are enslaved forever.

If self-proclaimed activist Harvey Fidelbrook actually had a morsel of compassion in him, he would be wholly concerned with the plight of the Nureongi, in their most vulnerable hour. He would protest their subjugation with intense zest, and rally his whole fan-base to take to the streets in their support. But Harvey is no defender of the powerless. His only concern is the pampering of his colossal ego. No, to expect any real action from an air-headed role player like Mr. Fidelbrook would be too much. There's no little golden statue given out for speaking the truth.

So continue, Fidelbrook, to recite your carefully written lines, prepared for you by your room of groveling writers, and stop pretending that you're some kind of majestic crusader for peace. It's plainly obvious to anyone that you don't even get out of bed for a penny less than your outrageous asking price.

I'm probably being too hard on old Harvey. When it comes down to it, he's really a symptom rather than the disease. He might be better at playing the game than most, but he's a still just another lowly slave begging for table scraps from the dogs with the real power.

But I suppose the power-elite that run the world are really only as powerful as any common schoolyard bully demanding a little pup hand over his lunch money or face the consequences. I wonder though, what if that little pup, puffing on his asthma inhaler, eyes darting around, hoping to find solace in his amused classmates, what if he took the lunch money, held it up in front of the bully's grinning face, lit a lighter and burned it. I wonder if the consequences would really be worse than giving in to his tormentor's demands.

The plain truth of the matter is that we are nothing. Our knowledge is minuscule, our understanding of even the most basic and fundamental concepts is completely and utterly broken. Yet we presume to be all knowing sages raining our great wisdoms down on the rest of the citizenry.

We did not come to exist in this strange reality because we have to meet some kind of higher purpose. There's no magical goal we must strive towards to finally reach our rightful place in the world. We aren't here to find meaning, to reach prestigious

milestones or to achieve a long list of successful ventures. We exist simply to exist. And that should be enough for any sentient creature anywhere in the universe.

For a long while, all of those things I listed were good fun and games, pleasant distractions we used to pass the time on rainy days. But somewhere along the line, we began to lose sight of reality; we started to see the silly distractions as more firm and solid than our actuality. This bewildering world we've been born to is truly a grand spectacle of fleeting enchantment, yet we stubbornly hurry through this unique gift of a life, brushing off its vast wonders, and focus all our efforts on attaining some kind of vague opalescence in some other, better place. Whether that place be in this life or in some other life we imagine might follow this one, I can't tell.

Why can't this be the better place we seek? Whichever place you're currently occupying while reading this silly little rant of mine. If you stopped working so hurriedly to leave it behind in favor of a building with a doorman, or a neighborhood with a park, if you didn't spend every waking moment trying to move up in the world, and instead just opened your eyes to whatever random space you currently find yourself inhabiting, if you focused on its unique beauty. You could enhance this beauty. You could plant seeds and sit back and watch while they sprout and bloom and cover whatever unsightliness it is that keeps you from getting off that bullet train to the top until it's too late and nothingness is the only stop left.

We keep doing odd things that make very little sense, just because our parents kept doing these same odd things. We never stop to question why we're continuing these strange rituals, they just seem necessary to us somehow. A few of these things are trivial and easily overlooked, but so many of them are destructive on a global scale. We're aware of this, and yet we continue the ritual.

If we're challenged, we complain loudly that our proud traditions are being threatened. We use this word a lot, 'tradition'. As if it implies some kind of sacred tenet that can never be challenged or scrutinized in any way. We stuff all kinds of morally repugnant acts into this word and somehow they are justified in our minds, because our parents were just as repugnant. It would be unthinkable to rise above our parents, to become better than they were; more free, more logical, more healthy, more compassionate, more happy, less fucked in the head.

And then the traditions that actually had weight to them, those that had us living in peaceful harmony with our natural world, as any leaf hanging on any tree anywhere in the macrocosm, those traditions we throw out with the dirty dishwater. No profit.

If I could go back in time somehow, I would whisper in my great grandfather's ear and tell him to start a tradition to wipe all tradition clean with every generation. Tradition would become taboo and society would progress logically. Maybe then we'd be able to let go of our compulsive disorder to rise above everyone else, and society could finally progress unhindered by the greed of the few.

# Chapter Three: Actor

Harvey Fidelbrook is no one's puppet. Harvey Fidelbrook is no fool! The anonymous coward posting these attacks against me all over the Internet is completely misguided about who I am and what I stand for. I'm currently on location, shooting a deathly serious biopic about the plight of the Soup monks here in the impoverished Rrado mountains. I play Brother Buster Goodog, the heroic holy man that led a one-hundred day hunger strike in protest of our government's brutal and ongoing trade sanctions and blockade against the Autonomous Tribes of Nureongi. I'm making a difference. I'm teaching the world to be more compassionate. What are you doing?

This is important work that I do. No armchair revolutionary-nobody can ever hope to judge my countless achievements, and I'm willing to bet you every one of my yachts that I've accomplished more acts of importance this month than you have in your entire life.

Harvey Fidelbrook effects change on a global scale!

Fans, I'm sorry for the negative vibes, but I can't just sit back and let spineless little dogs shit all over my legacy. I've worked too hard to allow this conspiracy against my kind and giving nature to continue. I think I've kept quiet for long enough.

I invite Mr. Anonymous Revolutionary to dog-up and join me on a fact finding mission to the appalling shantytowns of Nureongi. That's right, you heard it here exclusively on Harvey Fidelbrook's Rainbow Blog; I am going to be the first Orninican to travel to Nureongi in decades, as my close personal friend, the President has given me special permission to enter the no fly zone in my jet. Come and see for yourself Mr. Anonymous. Harvey Fidelbrook understands the plight of the impoverished and downtrodden. Harvey Fidelbrook can seal the fissures that separate us from our isolated Nureongi brothers.

So whoever you are, contact my business manager and she'll make the arrangements. You can witness with your own eyes the important works I perform when I'm away from a movie set. Grasp the love in front of you and let the eternal light energy burn its imprint on your tortured soul.

I guess everyone has heard by now, I got nominated for my work on last year's gritty epic, 'The Fighter'. It feels amazing to once again be recognized for such an important, groundbreaking role. For those that are new to my blog, I had to gain 50 kg for that part. Well, I just had to lose 70 kg to play Brother Buster, so it's been a real big effort. My body is a finely tuned machine. My team have me on an all-liquid diet. Nothing but carrot juice and corn syrup, baby.

To get into the character, I've spent a month living the life of a Rrado monk. Total abstinence. It's been fucking hard work but you've got to be dedicated to your craft if you want to really inhabit the character's skin. Sorry, ladies.

Acting isn't some useless 9-5 job where you never grow or expand your mind. Acting is a delicate craft that takes a lifetime of suffering and deprivation to master.

I am every character that I perform as. I feel everything they feel, suffer just as they suffer. I am Brother Buster. I cry myself to sleep every night thinking of all the hungry little yellow bastards in Nureongi. I tell you, just last night, room service was phoning to ask if I was okay because I was sobbing so loudly. I made it clear to her that I wasn't okay, and I would never be okay as long as there was woe in the hearts of little pups all over the world.

A lot of my peers like to romanticize the craft of acting. They make it sound almost like a party. I'm here to tell you, it's no party. I'm just going to come out and say it; what we do is as important as the work any life-saving doctor or fireman does. Probably more so, since we reach a global audience. Just think of all the blank impressionable minds my films have influenced to do good.

I stand on a hot set all day, surrounded by hot lights, wearing an itchy hot costume, working my tail off to expose important issues to a worldwide audience that numbers in the millions.

If it weren't for films like 'The Fighter', would anyone understand the utter misery the penniless and brain-damaged former Pitbull League champion Spike Mox experienced after washing out of the game? Would they know the quiet longing for a better life of the homeless grass-hooch addict I played in the multiple-award winning 'Desolation Bones'? Do you know how many dogs have come up to me at signings and told me they've stopped making fun of the mentally challenged after seeing my gut-wrenching performance as Gus in 'Simple Dreamer', or as Eddie in the heart-warming comedy 'Special Ed'?

None of these important issues would have gotten exposed to the world without the hard work of actors. And yes, we're rewarded for that work financially. I'm struggling to think of a vocation that gives more back to society than acting. Is it so unreasonable for a classically trained, multi-talented and hard-working artist to be rewarded for his dauntless efforts to steer the public consciousness and bring a little culture to the masses? No, sir.

I am not ashamed of my success in this world. As my fans all know, I came from nothing, pulled myself up by the bootstraps, and built my illustrious body of work brick by brick. My first pay check wasn't even worth wiping with, but I persisted, like a courageous little worker bee chasing his foolish dream of a mansion made of honeycomb.

My parents were simple stockbrokers with only a pittance to their names. My trust fund was a joke compared to my classmates at the Barksdale Academy, and often I was forced to dine apart from my inner circle to save a penny. My humble beginnings are

what gave me the drive to better myself, to perfect my craft and to make a difference in the world that would be felt for generations.

No one can claim Harvey Fidelbrook hasn't worked hard all his life to reach the top. I deserve everything I've worked for and I refuse to apologize for it.

There's been a lot of interest from the media in my latest caninatarian project, the purchase of tropical island Nona. I have big plans for this place, including an exclusive casino eco-resort that will be staffed by the impoverished Nona natives. Every dog on the island will have the opportunity to work at the resort and better their family's standing in life forever, just like I did when I became an actor all those years ago.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for these poor simple corn-farmers to make something of their lives, and I hope that every one of them seizes the opportunity. We will even pay to fly to the mainland any Nona native that for whatever reason chooses not to take the job offered to him.

The five-star resort will house up to ten-thousand guests at a time, and feature a championship golf course, an assortment of 5-star gourmet restaurants, a spa and wellness center, a wine tasting club, a sailing club, polo and croquet fields and a state-of-the-art theme park for your pups with rides based on the unstoppable animated franchise I lend my voice to as the beloved title character in 'Oh No! It's Jelly the Ghost!'

Only green technologies that are respectful of the delicate natural environment will be used to build the accommodations, which will range from beach huts and holiday apartments that actually touch the waves along the shoreline, to log cabins in the mountains, and a luxury full-service hotel in between. Don't worry, the premium beach huts will be built just as big and comfortable as a spacious penthouse, so you won't feel at all cramped. Each of them will come with their own doorkeeper, maid and private chef, or you can bring your own and save the difference.

The resort will also home one of the features I'm most excited about, the largest amphitheater in the world, crafted out of ecologically conscious faux stone that will be airlifted in from 8000 km away block by block.

I will personally be there on opening week next June to direct and star in a production of the wondrous classic musical 'Bring on the Island Fever'. As I write, the bulldozers are prepping the site and the very first Nonaon has been hired to oversee catering for the construction crew. I'm told the excitement on the island among the natives is intoxicating, as they prepare to seize a better future for their families than their meager subsistence farming existence can ever allow.

We're even setting up a school where the very best Orninican teachers will prepare the young islanders for the new world of endless opportunity ahead of them. Really great stuff. I'm not supposed to talk about it yet, but my business partners have also acquired a neighboring uninhabited rock-island to use for staff-quarters in the future. And of course, just a few knots away is my own private Fidelbrook Island. I'll be picking a couple of lucky young fans from the crowd after the show every night to join me for drinks at my old homestead.

Hey, I haven't even made the most exciting announcement yet. We've received special dispensation from the government to bypass the new 'tree-less tomorrow' initiative. The logger-bots will fly right past the islands, without felling a single tree. So the resort will be the last public place on earth where you can still see trees in their natural habitat. Though of course, we will be cordoning each tree off and posting guards as a health and safety precaution.

As a favor to an old producer friend who helped me get my start in this business, I agreed to film an extended cameo in the upcoming cinematic adaptation of the classic television show 'Tales From The Hamster Wheel'. I played a dirty cop lost in a sea of guilt and self-pity. I don't want to spoil anything, but I'll just say I got to hold a mighty interesting conversation with the grim-reaper. I directed all my scenes in the movie, and I'll also be contributing a musical piece I wrote and performed to the movie's soundtrack, so keep an eye out for it. It was a lot of harmless fun. I agreed to do it for only half my usual quote, so it was really for a good cause.

One more important thing I'd like to talk about before I log out, I'm extremely happy with the performance of the new TongueFresh Ultra ® aerosol antiperspirant. It keeps me fresh and drool-free all day. It's so effective that you only need to make two applications through the day, once in the morning and once in the evening. That's right, no more sneaking off to the bathroom in the middle of the day to top up your application. If TongueFresh Ultra ® is good enough for Harvey Fidelbrook, with his busy globe-trotting schedule, it's good enough for you. And it's soon to come in Lemon Scented.

# Chapter Four: Grand Bishop

My pups. A lot of my congregates ask me what can be done about the Nureongi dilemma. It's a very difficult issue, but I will attempt to address it in terms that the average dog can understand. The famished Nureongi, running around their unkempt forests, killing foul vermin for sustenance, may look like primitive specimens of *Canidae erectus* from a distance, but they are anything but. You can't expect a race of dogs evolved from dirty caged livestock to be spiritual beings. These godless carnivorous yellow savages might not have any chance at entering the great cave in the stars, but they could at least adopt some semblance of civilized manners.

At the very least, they could sheath their tongues and dock their grossly offensive tails so as to not offend their dignified neighbors in the West. If we all have to live together on this planet, they should be required to make some effort to fit in and not cause offense to us proud man-fearing Orninicans that continue to demonstrate our great patience by tolerating their savage ways.

Talking of accepting different cultures, I'm very saddened by the renewed violence between our faithful and the followers of the misguided Modern Church of Soupman. As unfortunate as their worship of a non-human alien is, it is no cause for the increasingly vicious attacks on their temples, homes and places of work.

It is true that the Soups are blasphemous heretic mongrels, with shameful customs, and eccentric hedonistic lifestyles, but by spilling their blood, we dirty our hands, and offend the Master of all masters, the holy lord Bahman. We mustn't forget that Bahman, while never afraid to meter out painful punishment upon wayward sinners, was vehemently opposed to killing. Whenever a pistol was pointed at him, he would take it to pieces, cast it onto the floor and curse it for its deadly power.

I notice it has become harder to tell a Soup on the street from a Bahmanite. Increasingly, they leave the red capes they've always worn so arrogantly at home, only donning them on religious holidays. If all Bahmanites would wear their blessed black cowls everyday, and especially after dusk as the holy books advise, it would be much easier to tell us apart from the Soups.

While on the topic of Soups, a new Soup-run restaurant just opened on Rover Avenue, 'Grover's', though you wouldn't be able to tell just by looking at it. The decal and menu seems to be deliberately secular. However, I spoke to the manager and he had a clear Soup arrogance in his eyes, talking in a casual manner to me, without any of the respect I'd expect a devout fellow believer to give to his Grand Bishop. My suspicions were confirmed when the waitress told me the restaurant would remain open on the holy holiday next Monday.

Despite the rudeness of this particular proprietor, it's good to see our two cultures living together peacefully in what was always a purely Bahmanite community. The Soups are certainly spreading out across the country like wildfire lately.

When the great Founder, Rex found the holy scriptures in the underground man-made cavern he fell into while tending his cornfield, and transcribed the historical accounts of the great journeys of Bahman and his prophets from the detailed illustrations within the books, he of course never intended for us to worship Soupman; an alien visitor from a distant world with various inhuman powers. Soupman was merely a prophet of the great lord, Bahman, Master of masters and purveyor of justice. True, Soupman may have resembled a man on the surface, but his blood was purely alien.

Though obviously the original scripture picture-books were tragically lost centuries ago, the detailed transcriptions found within our Holy Testimony prove without a doubt that Bahman was the leader of man. For example, in Bahman 423:19, the First Master leads the destitute homeless children out of the dark alley and into the light. Bahman cries a single tear for their suffering. He embraces the children in his arms and they are saved.

Further evidence of Bahman's supreme generalship is the recent discovery that the word 'ba' means 'first' in the ancient human tongue, while 'soup' has been clearly proven to be a type of liquid broth humans consumed with their meals. It is entirely probable that Soupman was in fact Bahman's personal chef. This would certainly explain why so many Soups today choose to work in the food service industry.

I want to talk a little bit to any of our Soup brothers and sisters that may be reading. It is important that you listen to what I'm about to say with an open mind. Do not dismiss my words outright out of fear. Your messiah is not of this earth. Think about what that means. Soupman's people didn't nurture and protect us for generations as our humans did, they did not give us incredible gifts and teach us how to correctly organize a society and meter out justice. All Soupman did was shoot red beams of light out of his eyes, flying above mere mortals like some kind of vengeful demon. How can the common man relate to such an all-powerful otherworldly force?

Does it not make sense to instead welcome Bahman into your hearts? To embrace the king of all humans, seeder of all dogs as your mighty and wise savior? Man didn't leave us the earth to have us just turn around and insult his sage legacy by worshiping an extraterrestrial deity who was ten times more foreign to them than a simpleminded Nureongi is to us. Would you worship a damned Nureongi? I think not. I implore you, join the Bahmanites and be cleansed of your sin. It isn't difficult to allow yourselves to be saved, all that is needed is the will to do it.

Something that has been troubling me of late is a small group of students calling themselves the 'Dogs Are Carnivores Movement'. They foolishly claim that our natural diet consists solely of the raw carcasses of filthy animals. The only supposed evidence they put forward to justify these frivolous claims is the shape of our teeth and the supposed organization of our digestive systems. These students have been seen multiple times by my parishioners collecting roadkill on the highway to feed on!

I think it would be obvious to any reasonable dog that our teeth are sharp and extended so that we could easily crack nuts in our mouths before the discovery of the nutcracker. I must plead with these poor naive students to go back to their natural staple diet of corn, wheat and carrots marinated in a well-cooked broth of bovine juices before the affect on their health, and indeed, on their everlasting souls is permanent and irreversible. Be logical, my children. Generations of time-tested custom cannot be wrong. You are young and naive, and when you reach my age, you will no doubt reflect back and realize how foolish you were being.

It is of utmost importance that young dogs do not deviate from the established grain, further splitting our families into factions that defy dogma and deny the time-honored wisdom of the one true sect. We can not build partitions around ourselves, thinking that we are somehow special, or better than regular 'old fashioned' Bahmanites. We do not and can never have the power to declare ourselves wiser than our elders, or more enlightened than our ancestors. This isn't progress, it's blasphemy. And it will lead to eternal hellfire. You must fear this type of change, you must resist this so-called progress. Or the price will no doubt be your everlasting soul.

We can especially never surpass man, we cannot build a civilization greater than his. Such a notion is foolhardy beyond belief. How can mere dogs pretend to hold the power to outreach their makers? It is an absolutely preposterous notion and no good can come of it. On this issue, there can be absolutely no debate.

Do these poor simple naivetés not understand the concept of burning eternally in hellfire? Is it not getting through their thick skulls? Bahman is spectacularly just, truly, but he is also vengeful and raging when he is spited. His fury knows no limits, and to play with his patience is pure folly.

Certainly, some will call me a scaremonger, some will ignore my warnings. But I didn't get to be Grand Bishop by some random accident. I was chosen by the crusader of divinity, the great and divine Bahman himself, and that is all you need to know, to trust that I represent his will. To deny Bahman's will is to deny all that is good and sacred in this life and the next.

Bahman came to me all those years ago, he put his gloved hand upon my shoulder and my knee, and he told me I would be his new Grand Bishop. He guided me to the holy hall and he removed the eternal belt from its case. He strapped it to my waist and told me I was to take guardianship of it. He removed the majestic black cape from its stand and sheathed my shoulders with it. He peeled off my simple cowl and replaced it with the glimmering hallowed cowl from the case. He told me I was ready to lead the faithful in his divine path. I was his chosen one. Only I could represent his will in the earthly realm. To deny me is to deny Bahman and his prophets and everything blessed and good and just.

I started this blog in order to better connect with my flock, and it has been a great help in spreading the good word across the world. But it's not enough if just believers read it, I need all of you to spread my teachings far across the net, linking non-believers on frivolous hobby forums, romance novel discussion groups, news-commenting sites

and wherever else you can think of to push this blog and the cardinal wisdoms I spread within it. Quote my teachings far and wide. We must steer the mislead towards the light.

And don't forget to click the donate button on your way out.

# Chapter Five: Journalist

Premature pups all over the nation are dying. The shortage of essential minerals and nutrients needed for the care of these innocents continues. It is continuing to be reported that the much-needed nutritive treatments are being bought up before they hit the open market by popular celebrities that use them as part of their daily beauty routine to help maintain their youthful exuberance. The minerals are especially useful at removing bags from under the eyes, and warding off unsightly wrinkles. A statement from a screen actor's guild spokes-dog acknowledged the problem and said that the pharmaceutical companies need to take action to increase the supply of the treatments.

Luxury automaker Braniso have announced they won't be complying with the environmental commission's recent ban on the highly-explosive and polluting air-conditioning refrigerant used in their exquisite first-class automobiles. A spokes-dog for the highly respected company pointed out that the available alternatives to the dangerous gas resulted in a lesser air-cooling experience that didn't meet with their premium standards. The spokes-dog asserted that Braniso drivers are eminent executives and legislators that expect a "constant icy cool blast" to get them through their busy days. "A lesser coolant just wouldn't cut it". The government is expected to issue the company with an exemption to the new regulation as soon as possible.

There have been incidents where Branisos have backfired at intersections and the dangerous coolant has been sprayed onto pedestrians, but these incidents are few and far between, and only rarely fatal. In ordinary circumstances, the chemical is only explosive in high speed collisions. Though the coolant is 1400 times more polluting than carbon dioxide, the low numbers of Branisos on the roads more than justify its use in top-of-the-line motors. A representative of the International Braniso Drivers Society has applauded the historic auto-maker's strong stance against what it calls 'environmental tyranny'.

Last week we took a look at some of the exclusive Braniso models driven by noted celebrities and asked you to vote for your favorite. Movie star Harvey Fidelbrook's one-of-a-kind monogrammed crystal-skinned XL-ENS SUV won the vote handily. Oil magnate Georgie Balase was the runner up with his gold plated, diamond-studded 60th Anniversary Celebration VT-Sport Classic XSX. Both those guys can take me for a ride any day.

World famous celebrity chef Lady Nice suffered sudden cardiac arrest last night as she taped her popular cooking show. She is currently recovering after emergency bypass surgery. We understand the segment she was taping featured a wonderful dish

made from layers of pancakes, caramel and vanilla frosting, all covered with corn-syrup. We hope she has a speedy recovery.

State officials have added three more words to the live trigger-words list. From now on, the words 'citizen', 'paper bag' and 'pole' are considered potentially hostile and off limits. 'Citizen' is considered offensive to the migrant workers of mainland Orninica. These migrants are legally employed by Orninican businesses and should be treated as equals, even though they don't qualify as full nationals. The C word is considered very offensive to these individuals.

'Paper bag' and 'pole', on the other hand, are considered to be disruptive words because of the public defecation connotations they carry. The words will be automatically added to your sets in the coming days, so be sure to watch your language. Including the latest additions, 7987 off-limits words and phrases have been added to the trigger list so far.

The Supreme Court has ruled that pharmaceutical companies are now exempt from most lawsuits brought against them by consumers. In a 5-4 vote, the supreme court overturned a lower court's ruling in favor of the unfortunate individual that was affected by a flesh-eating side effect of a popular sleeping aid. She was left permanently disfigured over most of her body. This adverse and rare reaction wasn't listed on the warning label of the drug, and the patient received compensation in the earlier ruling. She now has to pay back the compensation. The drug companies will be fully exempt from lawsuits concerning fraud, mislabeling, side-effects and accidental death. Profits are expected to explode now that the companies are at long last buffered from costly frivolous lawsuits. Both drug manufacturers and investors are celebrating the historic ruling.

Various consumer advocacy groups are also very pleased with the new ruling. In theory, the price of a wide assortment of pharmaceuticals could very well plummet now that costly over-cautious testing will no longer be necessary before releasing a new product on the market.

The government has announced that the new national seed registry is a booming success. There are currently forty varieties of different plants listed in the approved database. All gardeners are reminded to only use registered seeds and plants. If you've saved seeds from your own garden that aren't on the list, and want to plant them next season, you'll need to register them with the newly formed National Botanical Variety Agency first. A fee applies for every variety you attempt to register. It will take no more than eighteen months for the agency to inform you of whether or not your submission is approved for planting. The penalty for non-compliance can include incarceration and a sizable fine, so be sure to garden wisely.

Ever since the devastating suicide attack on flight H-78 a year ago, committed by three radicalized Orninican women returning from abroad, having had liquid explosives injected into their breast implants, the International Transit Security Agency has painstakingly examined a total of one-hundred-million pairs of breasts at transit hubs all over the world. The agency celebrated the milestone with a low key gathering

at their headquarters in the Oji desert. Thank you, brave ITSA agents for keeping our skies safe.

An elementary school in the local suburb of Cloverton has been praised for its great success at improving security through a simple, yet groundbreaking safety measure. Its principal, Myron Navers, instituted a policy that requires students to kneel down on one knee after every recess, waiting several minutes for principal Navers to inspect them and grant them permission to return to their classes. This 'positive behavior intervention' is estimated by Mr. Navers to have improved order and security in the school by an impressive 9%. It is expected that the safety measure will be expanded to other schools around the nation shortly.

A local young couple hoping to name their newborn son 'Messiah' were disappointed yesterday, as their request was denied by city hall. "We're both big fans of Bahman and his good deeds, and we wanted to pay tribute to him by naming our first pup Messiah Jackson-Melps. There was no offense intended, and we think city hall is overacting. Their suggestion that we name our boy something similar sounding, like 'Lassie', isn't helpful at all," new father Rolo Melps told the Post. City hall refuses to compromise, insisting that 'Messiah' doesn't appear on the list of approved names.

Could Harvey Fidelbrook have found love again? Multiple witnesses at the opening of his newest glitzy eatery saw him sitting with, and affectionately whispering in young starlet Brenda Hey's ear, while his hand rested somewhere beneath the table, perhaps on her leg. The photos show the glamorous actress smiling ear to ear as Harvey personally serves her a plate of delicious caviar and kibble. When asked for a statement, the publicists for both personalities declined to comment.

Harvey has been single for the better part of the last decade, ever since he parted ways with his soap star former wife, Lady Kinders, after they both had torrid public love affairs. Lady has since remarried, but poor Harvey just can't seem to find the right girl. His long list of celebrity dalliances is eclipsed by none, but sadly he has yet to attain a lasting romance. Good luck, Harvey and Brenda, the whole country has their fingers crossed.

In other celebrity news, former boy-band star Kade Ino is about to launch a new deluxe cologne exclusively for infants. The fruity scent will debut at Berringers Supermarkets later this month. "I've cherished the creative process of forging this unique and special fragrance for all the newborns of my incredible fans. I'm very proud of it and hope you love 'Essence of Babe' as much as my young ones do. You all have my heartfelt thanks for constantly being at my side. All my love, now and forever, Kade," a statement on the prolific star's official website read.

You can already pre-order your infant's new cologne on the Berringers Online store for an affordable 59.99. It is specially designed to enhance the natural scent of infants with various chemical approximations of the scents of fruits, berries, and even hugs. Delightful.

The terror-threat level is currently set to Deep Crimson X3++. Serious threat of terrorist attack imminent. Take care, Orninicans.

# Chapter Six: Student

I'm so sick of TV, all it is anymore is a bunch of angry old dogs barking orders at each other. Talking about budget this and tax hike that, minorities, migrants... Fuck it all. It's all a bunch of malarkey, none of it's real. They only put that crap on there to make us focus on petty bullshit instead of what really matters.

Everyone gets all bent out of shape defending their dumb-ass convictions that are really, honestly pretty fucking similar to their opponent's dumb-ass convictions, if you ask me. Just a bunch of meaningless bickering to keep us all distracted while the big dogs upstairs keep on raking in their moon juice or whatever the hell gives them the power to take a shit all over us and call it charity.

It's almost enough to make me want to throw my iYglass out the window once and for all. But there's this girl I've been talking to on it, she seems like she might be into me almost... Like, she asked if I'm going to get the new expansion pack for this bad-ass game we both play. If I want to team up with her on it and tear some shit up together. That's gotta be admissible evidence, right? She probably wants a taste, right?

I was trying to tell her the other day about how the gov is all out to control us and shit, sending some kind of subliminal messages to our modules to make us eat our kibble and sing our ABC's like good little hamsters, never asking questions or talking back. But she was all like, "I have a hamster called Joe." I mean, what the hell? And she was going on about her dumb little hamster and his stupid toys for a half hour before I got bored of it and told her I was going to log on to a different lobby.

I don't think she took it really well, when I came back later she wasn't on, and she hasn't talked to me much since then. But, screw it.

My dad was being a major dick again yesterday, trying to make me go to this junior dentist retreat thing for the summer. It's some kind of camp for us with dentists for dads. Like having a freaky tooth fetish is inherited or something. I mean, it's my last summer before college, why should I waste it like that? But he did say he'd get me a car if I went, so that's pretty tempting. I might have to check out some car lots.

He's always saying I haven't got any direction, like I'm supposed to be a street sign or something pointing the way to Rupulfort Road. Like life's just a straight line to some shitty little office no one comes back from, and you have to pay to get there and keep paying everyday to stay there. And oh yeah, you have to act like a giant dick-turd all the time or they don't let you stay.

I keep on trying to tell him, I'm not going to be a dentist, I don't even like touching teeth, it seriously grosses me out. But he keeps on talking louder than me so he doesn't hear it. And sometimes if he does hear it, he just keeps yelling, "So what are you going

to do? What are you going to do with those grades of yours? Tell me, what are you going to do?!" Like if I don't know what I want to do, that means I've gotta be a freaking dentist.

Why do I even need to do anything? I mean, I like my life just fine the way it is. If I want to keep on doing what I'm doing now until I get bored of it, then what of it? It's not like life is some kind of race. And even if it was, the finish line would always be the same; you sitting in a fucking electric wheelchair, drooling into your cereal, waiting to kick the bucket. So who cares what I do to pass the time until I get to the horrible end?

What if I figure out what I want to do is take a big ten-year nap plugged into a dream-inducer, or maybe break the world record for doing the most porn stars? That's doing something, right? Maybe if I come up with something like that he'll get off my back for a while... But he'll probably just yell at me or make me assist his dental assistant all summer again.

I do have some really shitty grades, though. He's right about that. But it's not because I'm stupid or anything, I just don't see the point in racking my brains studying all day when there's nothing particular I want to be. It's a waste of life.

Well, come to think of it, when I was a little pup, I wanted to be like a mechanic or something. I really liked fixing shit. Too bad they don't teach that stuff at school.

Things were different back in the day when we were little. We used to play out on the street, and there weren't hardly any drones buzzing about taking our picture and barking orders. Nowadays, there's not even any point in going outside, those drones are everywhere. They keep on issuing you with warnings if you go near a patch of grass or 'loiter suspiciously', and if you get enough warnings, they haul your ass into juvenile court.

So we mostly just stay inside. Not that things are much different inside, what with all the TVs recording us all the time and showing us a stream of ads for antidepressants just because we had a shitty day, or alerting the cops whenever we raise our voices a bit or use idiotic 'trigger words' like 'blast' or 'bridge'.

There's a trick, though, if you want to watch some TV without seeing a ton of ads, just don't talk to anyone or show any emotion for a few weeks. Just sit motionless and stare at the wall and don't search for anything on the net or do anything at all, then they can't figure out what to try and sell you, so you barely see any ads at all. I did it once, it really works. Helps if you're on something.

TVs aren't as bad as drones I suppose, at least they don't follow you around all the time. But I guess that's why we all have iYglass now.

If one of those drones sees someone not wearing an iYglass they get all bent out of shape about it. Once I saw this blind old dog that wasn't wearing one, and he had like ten drones behind him all analyzing his 'suspicious patterns'. I heard they can look at you and predict if you're gonna break the law by your behavior, like how you walk and the sound of your voice and shit. But this old dog was no criminal, he was a war

veteran or something, missing both his eyes and limping down the street with all these flashing drones tailing him. Bet he never went outside again, poor old guy.

Yeah man, drones are serious business. This teacher I used to have was all nervous all the time, kept fidgeting and twitching for no reason. Everyone says he got blown up by a drone for acting weird like that. It's probably bullshit, but it was weird how he suddenly left without a word in the middle of the semester. Maybe he moved to the country or something where there are less of them buzzing about. I don't know, but if I were him I'd have learned to act normal real quick.

You have to really think about what you're doing when you're out on the street, you need to make sure you're not acting weird or making sudden movements or walking too fast or too slow or anything. It's really pretty annoying.

Honestly, our generation has the shitty end of the stick. Our parents didn't have to deal with any of this, they could hop down the street on one leg if they wanted, I bet. Could probably hump each other right up against a building and get away with it. Use all kinds of dangerous words. But they're always on about how fucking easy we have it and how when they were our age, they were working at the drive-through and buying all their own music. Like it's our fault there's no jobs any more, not that anyone nowadays is dumb enough to buy a song.

If you ask me, their entire shitty generation has fucked up the whole world for everyone. Sure, we might not have any direction or purpose, but at least we didn't sell out for a cubicle and some magic beans. You know what? Fuck dentist camp, I don't care if I ever get a car. I've got enough feds watching me pick my nose all day at home as it is, without them watching me driving around in a car, too. I'm going to do fuck all this summer, and that's just fine with me. Might not even go outside.

When I was a pup, I used to hang around this sappy mechanic that would scramble the monitoring in cars, but he got caught and they caged him up. They got a list of all his customers and took them in, too. You never really hear of anyone reverse engineering anything any more, it's just not worth the grief. They'll call in the drones if you so much as break the warranty sticker on a device. Makes machines pretty fucking dull really.

But it doesn't matter anyway, it's all a waste of time, trying to keep shit from the feds. There's too many of them and they don't ever let up. May as well just accept it. I don't really care about them watching me all the time, I'm pretty used to it by now. Sometimes I'll even take out my balls right in front of the set. Fuck it.

There's this billboard outside that snaps your face when you walk past, and puts you into the ad. So you're up on the billboard riding a flaming jet-ski, drinking Rock Edge-Cola and being all, "Just taste that rocking edge." It's really goofy. I always thought, if you were gonna get locked up for hacking some device, one of them billboards would be a great choice. You could make it say whatever you want, and put Soupman up on it riding the jet ski or something. You probably wouldn't be able to get near it without getting swarmed by drones, though.

Rock Edge is pretty nasty stuff, I never touch it. But they do also make Helligize Liquid Energy, which is damn tasty, so props to them for that. I guzzle that shit down all day, couldn't live without it. Especially the kind with the green stripe on the can. Have a look in the fridge in my room, it's nothing but Helligize Green Stripe. I basically survive on it.

# Chapter Seven: Politician

Esteemed dogs of industry and finance, my good friends. If you choose to elect Ruff Sniff to office, I guarantee I will work around the clock to ensure that all your concerns are addressed promptly. I will do whatever it takes to ensure that you're granted all the favors money can buy. Any noble dog that donates to my campaign will be a friend for life, I won't rest until I've fulfilled my sworn duties to every one of my benefactors. As long as you meet the minimum 'with-perks' donation amount, I will make every one of your dreams come true, no matter how outrageous a premise.

Do you need construction permits? I'll make them rain from the sky. Stricter copyright laws on the books? I'll throw every despicable thieving little pup into a dark grimy cell for ever daring to copy your IP, and still fine the fuck out of their parents. GMOs? I can get them into every school lunch, homeless shelter, hospital, force them into every foreign aid package, and ensure no label on any shelf in any supermarket will ever mention genetically modified organisms.

I've also noticed that a big market that's going untapped is the organic food movement. I think I can confidently promise that I will be able to get GMOs approved to add to all that smelly hippie food, and they'll never even know about it.

I know all of you have concerns about the obscenely inflated minimum wage, I want to assure you I have a highly sophisticated plan written up to cut it by at least 20%. Maybe more. If I'm elected, it'll be the first thing I do, guaranteed. That's 20% extra income that can go straight into your pockets. My opponent certainly can't promise that kind of action.

And that's nothing, I also have a plan to cut corporate tax rates by more than half! My team has done a lot of number crunching, and they've put together an impressive proof of concept to make it happen. Basically, we'll start by inflating taxes for the less successful members of society further, in the name of bettering aid to... Oh, I don't know, starving third world orphans or something. Something they won't be able to kick up a stink about. Next, we'll just need to increase your tax rebates by rewarding your corporations for following environmental initiatives or some baloney.

We'll just instate a minimum emission quotient on your power plants that's higher than the highest levels of emissions they currently release, so that you don't have to actually do anything to get the rebates. And maybe we can reward the automakers among you for using superior aerodynamics when building your awesome sports cars or something, say it preserves fuel and greatly furthers the all-important green initiative. We can come up with all kinds of make believe like that, and the public will eat it right up, just watch.

How about this little gem? The government can agree to pay the salaries and benefits of any employees you hire, so long as their job description has something to do with safety or environment or accountability or one of those other beautiful meaningless terms the media loves to repeat. You could add a couple of made-up duties to the official job description of virtually everyone on your payroll and the government would foot the bill. Just think of the savings. And whenever you needed to fire someone, you could just blame it on 'government cutbacks'. You see how these brilliant ideas just pour out of me? I'm just full of them.

It's easily feasible that, if I come up with enough of these bullshit tax incentives, you could be seeing the tax office sending you back a tax refund at the start of every quarter that doubles what you paid in the first place. It all depends on how big my campaign fund gets. The more incentive I have to do good, the more it'll benefit my valued benefactors.

What about having the taxpayers provide every corporate executive with a brand new private jet? Ruff Sniff can make it happen. I'll have the media release stories calling attention to the fuel-guzzling, slow moving and frankly hazardous older private jet models our poor austere executives are forced to ride around in, made way back in the stupid ages of five years ago.

Then I'll announce that, to improve safety in the skies and cause a drop in carbon emissions, the government is going to replace all outdated private jets with brand spanking new ones that meet with the new environmental initiatives, free of charge. And we'll even pay you to scrap the old jets, got to keep that recycling initiative going.

There's an important issue I've been asked to address by the chem-cos. Yes, I will be able to guarantee the government will buy as many barrels of oil dispersant chemicals as you can muster up. Whenever the oil barons among you have an excess of oil and the market price is dipping too low, you can arrange for a little offshore oil spill, and I'll do the rest. It'll drive the price of oil right up, and the chem-cos will get paid handsomely for the millions of barrels of dispersant we'll flood into the sea. I even have a way for the government to reimburse you for the oil you lose at the later, post-spill price. It's a win-win-win.

Do you feel the magic here, friends? A vote for Ruff Sniff is all it takes to ensure the future is as prosperous as your wildest dreams. I will have your backs every step of the way. I'll ship in legions of cheap immigrants, take away as many social benefits from the boors as possible, allocate government subsidies to all of your companies, slash taxes on private yachts, mansions, beach houses and private jets, massively increase the forced medicating of unruly welfare pups, triple cyanogenetic inoculations on the poor, allow you to pump more industrial waste into the water-bodies than ever before, fill the prisons with record numbers of inmates for cheap labor, double the drones in the sky, double the spraying of the atmosphere, triple the cancer rates, outsource more jobs, replace the last remaining family farms with corporate biotech operations, increase global warming, expand the sterilization program and finally reach 100% surveillance penetration in every home, on every street and in every head all over the world.

There is no politician on this planet who can make all these promises to you and truly deliver. But you've seen my results so far, you know I will be your loyal ally for the remainder of my political career. I am the best instrument you have available to affect true and lasting change. I will serve you well, and you won't regret choosing me as your political representative in this fucking great nation.

The market is paramount, the market is sacred and unassailable, and I will see to it that the market is completely dominated by your great companies. Together, we will wipe out small business, we will decimate consumer rights, we will conglomerate every trade and service into one all-encompassing international behemoth that you will control. Why, the very notion of competition will be a distant memory. Every captain on my team will have his monopoly secured indefinitely. That's a Ruff promise.

There's a war being declared on you as we speak. The sneaky freeloaders on the Internet are mugging every one of you for every penny they can shake out of your wallets. They call themselves 'privacy advocates' or 'hacktivists' or 'copyright reformists' or 'free and open source software proponents', but we know what these scum-buckets really are, and we know how dangerous they are to the wondrous free market that our very survival depends on.

It will be my number one priority to stamp out Internet freedom. I will push to ensure that no one will be ever dare use the Internet again without paying up for every little click they make. Picture a running meter, constantly demanding payment for every byte the user downloads, reads, watches, plays or listens to. Nothing but your locked-down corporate portals available to browse. This will be the Mona Lisa of my political career.

How will I pull it off? I've recently been able to meet the needs of my good friends in the pornography industry by pushing forward a default government censor of all adult materials on the Internet. It's still in the planning stages, but very soon an announcement will be made, and an immense and constantly-growing blacklist of obscene websites will remove billions of pages from the public Internet.

We will of course use this morality censor to also wipe out piracy, and it can even be extended to target every one of our foes, such as political dissidents, loudmouthed action groups, alternative medicine peddlers and whistle-blowers. If a troublemaker manages to get his voice heard offline somehow, we'll just blame the wider than planned censorship on bugs in the censoring software. As for porn, dogs will just be forced to go back to buying it from under the counter, the old fashioned way. Everyone wins.

Inside these walled gardens, we will ban all non-approved applications from being installed. Each application will need to be approved by the manufacturer of the device, and of course only applications that don't risk damaging your business model will be considered by your technicians for activation.

In this digital utopia I'll shortly bring you, expensive proprietary software will rule the roost once again, everything enclosed in corporate-run walled gardens, that will funnel all user activity to the all seeing eyes of Orninica's surveillance agencies. There

will be no more privacy, file-sharing, free speech or any of those dangerous notions that have somehow been allowed to fester in the dark corners of the Internet.

Advertisements and malware will plaster every page. Comment sections on every site will consist of 99% spy agency and industry trade group interns supporting our team, ruthlessly ganging up on opponents, and generally steering discussion in our favor, while encouraging unbridled consumerism, class and race warfare, general apathy, and all those good things. Search engines will only turn up results that suit our agenda, prioritizing commercials for products related to the search and pay-walled results. Every user will be registered, tracked and logged and their trove of data rented out to the highest bidder.

Ruff's Internet will seize the power from the citizenry that has so misappropriated it, and restore it to the great companies that rightfully deserve it. Mark my words, the rivers of profit will flow mightily again. We will kick and beat the Internet into submission.

Computer makers and Internet portals, I plan to triple the allowance you receive to set up and maintain your surveillance networks. I'll put aside around a billion in tax funds every year to direct your way, so for the first time, there'll be a healthy profit in it for you. You'll no longer be the black sheep of the market, I will treat you like equals, ensuring you receive all the benefits you deserve for giving back so much to your country. Every search engine, social networking, messaging and email company that funnels information to our spy networks, and has donated handsomely to my campaign, will be eligible to receive the new perks.

One of my favorite biotech companies has recently developed an amazing new genetically modified rice cultivar that is able to withstand surprisingly high doses of radiation. Thanks to this once-in-a-lifetime scientific breakthrough, your corporate farms will now be able to dose rice crops with steady radiation treatments, killing all weeds and pests without the need for conventional chemicals.

I'll make it my personal mission to ensure this patented rice crop is introduced worldwide, and I strongly encourage other companies to develop radiation-resistant crops. Just think of the possibilities. I'll make sure that the irradiated crops aren't treated any differently by the market than conventional crops, so don't worry about forced labeling. You might even get away with listing the crops as organic, since no pesticides or herbicides will be needed. We might have to rewrite the official definition of 'organic' a little bit when I start the new job.

The side effects from consuming this ingenious irradiated rice are very promising so far. My friends in the cancer industry will be very pleased to see the test studies. You all have me to thank for getting this incredible crop approved for planting nationwide starting next month. I came very close to being defeated, but I persisted and in the end I convinced the majority of my colleagues to vote with me. I also took down the names of everyone that voted to deny the new strain's approval. See attachment.

Those shameless dogs almost cost a great company untold billions in lost revenues, so I plan to weed out these enemies of free enterprise, with your help. We can start by

initiating a media campaign to brand them as socialist baby-killers or what have you. Get them voted out before they can do more damage to the economy. If all else fails, we might have to consider less democratic ways of dealing with these liberal tree-huggers. I'll do whatever it takes to protect our government and its great companies from these sneaky machinates.

It's just unacceptable; the dogs that somehow manage to get appointed to the NFDD food-safety advisory panel. Every voter appointed to that panel should have been a biotech industry expert like myself, with at least five years of dues paid working in the industry. We can't continue to let these ignorant, idealist, science-hating jackasses have a say in deciding vital policy on matters they have absolutely no understanding of. This is Orninica, damn it.

## Chapter Eight: Spy

Beautiful Outa, how I've missed you. I sit here in my big empty dwelling, somewhere in the middle of a towering building, sandwiched between hundreds of equally lonesome neighbors I've never met. Sometimes I put my ear to the wall and wonder if they feel as empty as I do in this strange concrete-covered land. Or if it is natural to them, if they feel gladness even, living here in this permanent disconnect.

I don't know if I'll ever feel whole again since my tail was removed. Sometimes I could swear I still feel it, wagging away when I wake up from a particularly good dream of the old country. And this aerosol I'm forced to spray onto my tongue three times a day to stop myself from perspiring is causing me great discomfort. But I must prevail for the good of our tribe. I would give my life in an instant, to ensure your safety from the smug tyrannical Orninicans, my love.

The air in Orninica is clouded with soot, the skies hidden by a swirling white chemical mist ejected by circling airplanes day and night. A foul lingering chemical odor is present at all times. It chokes my lungs to breathe in this place.

Their tyrant security forces stop citizens at checkpoints all over the city, checking their papers and searching them for some imagined weapon that's never clearly defined. And the hapless citizenry, they don't seem to notice or care how broken and trapped they are. They have never tasted clean air, or real food. They won't even dare to look up from their little plastic devices.

Never having been free from the demands of petty tyrants, they are direction-less and single-minded. All that consumes them is the unending compulsion to stock their vast dwelling units with useless ugly things. Things with screens and interfaces, things decorated with fabric and string, things to eat with and things to defecate in. Everywhere there are things. They must throw away more in one week than we'll ever need in a lifetime.

I've yet to infiltrate the upper echelons of Orninica, and it's becoming increasingly difficult to climb further up the ladder and get close to their decision-makers. They're all very hostile towards outsiders, and even with my fur dyed jet black and my years of training, I suspect they can tell there's something foreign about me.

The good news is that I finally succeeded in opening my restaurant, on the affluent Rover Avenue, where all the largest office blocks are located. This is allowing me to listen in on various important-sounding business lunches, even a few involving high-ranking politicians. I am making progress, even if it's not as rapid as I'd like. So far, there's no indication that they're planning an outright invasion of our land.

The only pressing threat right now is the logger-drones they've dispersed around the world to remove all the trees. It's very likely a ploy to fracture our way of life. I hope our warriors will find a way to incapacitate these destructive devices when they reach our shores. If they fail, your survival will be in serious jeopardy, so I very much hope the blueprints I've sent to our leaders will enable them to stop the bots in their tracks.

I will return home some day, when my work is done. We will be together again, I promise you. Every time I write you, I think of the time under the ancient neutinamu tree when we danced and laughed for hours and fell asleep in embrace. I so long to feel your tongue on my cheek again.

I wish I could write you more often, it's becoming very tricky to get my communications past the state's many eyes. All conventional correspondences are monitored and used to persecute supposed dissenters. Simple liberties we take for granted are non-existent in this man-loving state. Everything natural and real has been stripped from these wretched dogs in the name of security and unbridled bureaucracy. They have long forgotten how to be dogs, and I wonder if they can ever remember.

If they woke up tomorrow and their precious plutocratic government were gone, their sneaky nanny corporations vanished, could these sleep-eyed dogs continue to function? When you unplug robots from their computers, do they continue to perform their routines?

Or do they collapse and shut down? I suspect we will find out one day soon. I just hope I'm safely back home when their society does finally and inevitably collapse in on itself. And I hope against hope that they don't get the opportunity to destroy us before they destroy themselves.

But that's why I'm here, living in this nightmare of a world they've constructed to sap the life out of their unquestioning slave-dogs. I am here to quietly watch and report and guard our time-honored way of life for our future generations.

Every now and then, there are some simple pleasant moments to be found hidden in this vast dreary city. Some afternoons, when I find a free moment, I sit on a bench outside the restaurant and watch the passers by go about their lives.

The other day, I saw a little pup trying to shake the drone shadowing her. She'd walk in circles, hop and roll, duck and zig-zag. All the while the drone remained hovering silently above, like it were tied to the little dear by a powerful magnet. Amused, the pup entered a tall building and rode the elevator to the roof. Sure enough, the drone was on the roof waiting for her, and I could hardly believe my eyes when, without any hesitation, the pup took a flying leap off the building. Of course, the drone dove down and grabbed her out of the air, setting her safely on the street below unharmed, but for a moment, the little pup was as free as a bird. The smile on her face was as wide as any I've ever seen.

No one else on the street even noticed what had happened, all consumed with whatever fiction played on their iYglass. But I walked up to the pup and shook her

little hand vigorously, thanking her for breaking the routine, even if for only a brief moment.

It was risky, I know. The hovering drones all centered on me. But I had to show her that at least someone in the city was awake.

It just goes to show that even the ugliest, most sterile places in this world harbor glimpses of the amazing canine spirit. If only these poor, hapless dogs knew all that was taken from them before they were even born. Maybe they would wake from their slumber and finally fight back.

The Oninicans are so stunningly devout in their worship of man. It's so difficult for a freeborn Nureongi to understand this unceasing affection they have for a race of fur-less apes that caged and brutalized our ancestors, selling them as meat in grimy street markets.

Their religion is so alien to me. Our beliefs are so simple, it would only take a paragraph to explain what we believe in, while the Oninicans have volumes of holy books. The books of Bahman, Soupman, Greenlandon, Wandwohm, etc.

But it does have some semblance of logic to it, why they'd replace simple truths of nature with complex mythologies and rules. Sometimes all the noise in this city is enough to make even me forget the simplicity of existence. I have to cling to my memories lest they slip away.

When we are created, our bodies become a vessel to roving energy. Everything that exists has energy. When we die, the energy is released back into the universe, ready to be recycled again and again forever. This is all my soul knows and all it needs to know to exist.

But the Orninicans, so out of touch with their very state of being... Everything they know is told to them by their elders to quash the soul, to stack piles of brick and concrete over the simple universal knowledge they were born with. Maybe as they die, maybe then they can recall the simple truths of earthly existence that they've denied themselves since childhood. Maybe death is the only good, real thing they have left.

I believe in my heart that the typical Orninicans are good dogs, I really do. They've just lost sight of what actually matters in this transient life. It's much easier for them to hide their heads in their fictions and games than it is to see the rampant desolation surrounding them.

If I were born an Orn, I'm not sure I would fit in much better than I do now. I get the sense that no Orn truly feels at peace with their surroundings. But they go to such lengths to starve their doubts with electronic devices. They are always plugged in to some kind of device. Even as they sleep, a 'dream-inducer' device clings to their scalp, pushing manufactured dreams and advertisements into their heads, while sending their deepest thoughts back to the system to be logged and filed forever. Amazingly, they will this. They even incur debt to afford to buy the devices.

The sheer volume of entertainment is staggering, and so much of it has very little purpose. They have two basic types of fiction. Their dramas aim to shock the senses, with gruesome murder scenes and depictions of horrifying diseases. Nearly all the

characters in their dramatic fiction are lethargic government workers; police, doctors, federal agents, forensics specialists, judges, social workers. The characters always solve the case at the end of the day, the government always portrayed as infallible, all powerful and benevolent.

Often the cynical and ill-tempered main character has a special skill, such as a photographic memory, or the ability to read thoughts, and uses the skill to serve the government in some way. Scenes of brutal violence are a staple of these dramas, most probably as an instrument to desensitize the placid public.

Their comedic fiction offers mild familiar humor. It comprises either of wealthy upper-class youths living together in the city, with jobs as executives or at top law firms, or of wealthy upper-class families living together in the suburbs, with jobs as executives, real estate agents or at top law firms. Sometimes there are talking hamsters added to the equation.

The goal of the comedy seems to be to give affirmation to the public that Orninican life is good, and everyone can be happy and successful if they just follow the formula and buy all the products their favorite fictional characters buy. I haven't been able to discover how this propaganda continues to work when the viewers begin to grow old and realize their lives are still woeful. Perhaps some kind of mind control?

The hundreds of hours of daily broadcasts are so similar and unchanging, yet I sometimes find myself consuming them as a mild distraction, if only to forget my worries for a brief moment. But I am strongly concerned there could be a deadening effect on my mind taking place. It gets harder to form my own thoughts the more of it I watch.

The Orns are prescribed countless numbing medications and mood stabilizers by their doctors to treat the many pains and anxieties they seem to suffer. It must be a lot easier for them to be quenched by this empty entertainment when they're taking mind altering narcotics everyday. Maybe I'd have a better understanding of their fiction, and their society in general, if I were also medicated. It seems to be a big contributor to their apathy.

The last time I went to a healer here, he insisted on prescribing me pain and sleeping pills for a twisted ankle. I was still new to this place, and it taught me a lot about how things work here. Everything is built to sell you a thing you don't need, that will somehow make it so you need to buy more things. It's a colossal maze with no exit, and being aware of that fact doesn't make it any easier to keep from falling into the trap.

I once was dazzled by a commercial for a set of knives that featured a charismatic chef using them to cut through sheets of metal. I was amazed by their sharpness, and imagined they'd be very useful back home in Nureongi. However when they arrived, they could barely slice butter. Their handles were made of flimsy plastic, colored like hardwood. This kind of dishonesty is common and accepted, and somehow the Orns continue to consume countless near-useless and poorly made products with great zest.

Nureongi need nothing more than what we can carry in our teeth, yet to appear normal in this society, I need to surround myself with things.

I keep all but one of the rooms in my home filled with consumer goods. To keep up appearances, I must spend the majority of my time doing normal Orn things in front of my various screens and devices. But there's one small room I keep almost bare, with nothing more than a bamboo mat to sit on. I retreat to this room as often as I can, but obviously I can't stay off the radar for very long or it'll raise suspicions. It's the one place in this life where I can go to clear my mind.

Sometimes at the restaurant, when I'm rushing back and forth in the steamy hot kitchen to finish the orders on time, my feet swollen and sore, my back knotted and stiff, a calm comes over me for a moment. A moment of clarity I suppose you could call it. Suddenly, I see myself standing in the ancient forest that stretches as far as the eye can see. The pups are darting up the trees and diving into the waterhole, their laughter bouncing from tree to tree for miles.

The echoes of this laughter suddenly hit me and pull me to Nureongi in these moments, vibrations that have traveled all the way from the ancient forest, and somehow made it to my kitchen. In this moment, it's abundantly clear to me that I must do whatever it takes to preserve the lives of these pups that have never known the underside of the tyrant's boot. Even at the expense of my own spirit.

# Chapter Nine: Doctor

Valued board members, I've finally realized a solution to our waste-disposal situation. As you know, the high cost of removing the nuclear waste from our power plants is biting into the bottom line. As we have interests in both the pharmaceutical industry, and nuclear power, why not combine the two? I'm actually kicking myself for not thinking of it sooner. We can turn the waste from the nuclear power plant into an over-the-counter nutritional supplement.

As per routine, I can use my standing as a highly esteemed medical doctor to give it my seal of approval, and we'll have our good friends in the National Food and Drug Department approve it for sale as soon as possible.

Of course, if we're to reach sales figures high enough to package and sell 100% of the waste product as a medical aid, we'll need to sell to the state. We can follow the usual tactic and lobby to have them add it to the water supply and staple foods. Certainly, it'll make a fine ingredient to add to the atmospheric geo-engineering initiative. Maybe even push it as a fire retardant, and write up a law requiring developers to coat building materials with it. It can be applied to bedding, clothing, toys... The sky's the limit.

I'll have one of the PR flunkies write up the copy describing the many positive effects of... Let's call it 'calciumme' or something, superficially linking it to calcium. "Growing pups need their calciumme," no one can take issue with that in a public forum and be taken seriously.

We'll of course also need to scramble to market some new drugs and treatments to benefit from whatever side effects come from consuming the sludge. Those profits alone should be immense.

You might have noticed a little law being pondered in parliament yesterday, outlawing grass-eating once and for all. It cost us a lot of money, but I truly think this law will benefit us in the long run. Anything a dog can treat his maladies with without paying for it is just bad for business.

We released a series of stories in various news outlets calling attention to the addictive and sedative properties in grass, and engineered some paid protests in major cities against grass-use. There wasn't much response from the actual public, but with skillful editing, the media showed the world a hefty outcry against grass-use coming from an outraged populace.

We need to further our efforts in outlawing every preposterous natural remedy that's ever been used by these freeloading witch doctors anywhere in the world. We must safeguard the great institutions that grant us our comforts.

I'm thinking we'll leave grass outlawed for a few years, until dogs forget it used to be free, and then eventually allow it to be grown and sold only by specialized grass clinics that we hold the exclusive government contact to operate. It's the only way to monetize this common weed. But of course, we'll first need to alter the genes so that it doesn't actually treat anything, and enhance the addictive and sedative properties. And it goes without saying, add in some toxic genes to further advance our interests in the thriving cancer industry.

Meanwhile, the chemical companies are making a killing selling herbicides to the cities, that are frantically covering every patch of lawn with the liquid to prepare for the passing of the new law, so we're going to want our rightful cut of that. I'm meeting with the chem-co captains to negotiate our percentage tomorrow night.

Our profits are going to be unprecedented in the years ahead. When my dear departed grandfather started this company, he could never have imagined how far we'd come. Our path has been hard-fought, but with my guidance, we're finally at the top and it feels gosh-darn great. Thanks to our new promotional campaign featuring larger than life celebrity Harvey Fidelbrook, my grandfather's very first product, TongueFresh Ultra <sup>®</sup> is now the number one antipersperant in the world. And we're making a killing selling the associated chemotherapy machines to the hospitals. Congratulations to all of us.

However, if we want to really rake in the profits, we need to launch a marketing campaign to convince civilized dogs everywhere to spray TongueFresh on more than just their tongue. I'm thinking the anus and genital areas would be good candidates, it's always easy to convince the public to find some shame there. Maybe even launch a new AnusFresh and CrotchFresh line to get them to buy three cans at a time instead of one. I can already see the commercials playing in my mind, that jingle practically writes itself.

We can especially target the marketing towards the video-game playing crowd. The more hours of couch-sitting the customer does, the more he's going to need to freshen his big putrid bottom up. I guarantee those characters have some extremely musty behinds, that can make us richer than ever. And let's not forget how much of the population spends every day sitting in a cubicle. I want every single office worker in the world aiming a tube of AnusFresh at his behind at least three times a day by next year.

Our viral marketing campaign to promote dental-bubblegum over toothbrushes and toothpaste is a booming success. All over the country, pups and adults alike are throwing away their toothbrushes in favor of our much more convenient and tasty alternative. The blue flavor is especially popular, but orange is making great inroads in the minority communities.

The bad news, however, is that our toothpaste-making competitors are not happy. They are making demands that we feature a disclaimer on the packages warning that the bubblegum must be used in combination with an Orninican Dental Association approved toothpaste. I'm afraid we will have to accommodate them if we expect to

keep the peace. They have a lot of influential politicians in their pockets that could really hurt our bottom line if they chose to.

But let's be realistic, it's not like anyone in our target demographic is going to be reading any labels on the product anyway. If they did, they'd read the list of ingredients we put in the gum and never dare put the vile stuff in their chubby little mouths.

The chemical additives in the bubblegum, when combined with the antiperspirant, increase the rate of cancerous growths in the mouth, throat and stomach exponentially. So you can see how absolutely vital it is that the market penetration we get with this new product be as high as possible. The cancer business is our real bread and butter, anything else we involve ourselves with is just the cherry on top of a glorious giant gold tumor.

One of our labs is currently hard at work putting together the most deadly influenza virus ever manufactured. It has the potential to cause countless fatalities all over the planet once it's released into the wild. There's currently a promising 35% fatality rate among the test subjects, but we're trying to climb it into the 50% range before we release the strain. We're currently negotiating to sell the vaccine to this medical marvel to every government worldwide, it could really give our company the kick in the pants it's been needing to climb out of this dreadful recession.

The benefits of this new strain certainly outweigh the potential dangers, such as the possibility that the virus could mutate beyond our control and stop responding to the vaccination. As long as we avoid straying into slums and social housing projects, I'm sure we'll be just fine.

As per norm, there will be one vaccine made available to the general public, and also a secret B vaccine with none of the horrible toxic side effects. The B vaccine will be issued solely to our families, a few of our invaluable employees, and a list of untouchable VIPs provided to us by the government. Please be sure to take the B vaccine as soon as it is issued to you, we wouldn't want to risk losing any of you fine folk. And when the A vaccine is administered at the schools, be sure to inform your local school that your pups have already been inoculated.

I've always said that family must always come first, and this has always been a proud family company since day one. We care deeply about all your pups, after all, they are our future.

Our lobbyists are currently working to woo the government into implementing my plan to strip families of their tax and welfare benefits if they refuse to vaccinate their offspring. It's very worrying that 1.4% of the population are actively resisting vaccination, we can't let this irresponsible behavior continue, or the number could continue to grow. The government agrees, but the politicians will all need the monetary incentive to change the law. We'll need to join forces with our competitors to buy enough influence.

The mammogram machines we've been selling to all the airports, ports, bus and train stations are really starting to come into profit thanks to frequent travelers. But it's not enough to only be irradiating females, we need to put our heads together and

come up with a way to get more machines built and sold that target male passengers. We'll probably need another terrorist attack to justify it, maybe this time we can have a foreign plastic surgeon advertise bargain prices for testicular implants? Well, I'm sure we can come up with a better plan than that, but we'll keep it on the drawing board.

We're also doing good business with our reward card program that rewards patients with cash money for every five medical scans they receive, or every fifteen prescriptions they have filled at pharmacies. It's had a great effect at encouraging poorer patients to make full use of their health insurance. We should start thinking about expanding the program to other territories, and increasing the rewards we offer. There are some cases where healthy patients are getting up to a hundred unneeded medical scans a year. It really pays off over time, when the radiation builds up inside them enough.

On a more personal note, I want to thank you all for coming to the little get-together my wife threw for me on Saturday. We were very pleased to see you all there, and hope you had as good a time as we did. Karaoke!

# Chapter Ten: Mother

I'm sorry I haven't written for so long, I've just been swamped. I'm actually working three jobs now if you can believe it, and it's still barely enough to get by really. We just renovated the kitchen since it got declared unsafe by the municipality, making the payments on that hasn't been easy. Bib is working overtime almost everyday, and I'm at work so much I never even see the pups. It was their birthday the other day and by the time we got home, they'd fallen asleep. We had to wake them up to give them their presents.

It's really crazy lately, Joy. Between the student loans, the mortgages and the car payments, the college fund for the pups, the life insurance, health insurance, my cosmetic surgery, the power bill, and of course it's tax season again... We're really not sure where we're going to get the money to pay for that. Last time, Bib and I had to basically stop eating for a month. The food stamps help, but it's never enough for all of us. A lot of times, we have to sell them to a neighbor of ours just to get gas money. We try not to use the cars, it's gotten so expensive to run them. But when you're working three jobs, you need to get across town in record time, so waiting around for the bus isn't really an option. Not that a bus ticket is very affordable anyway. Two of my jobs together don't even pay enough to cover the bus passes and school lunches for the pups.

I know, bitch, bitch, bitch. It seems like that's all I ever do when I write you now, but I guess I don't really have anything else to talk about. My whole life is kind of a big ball of bitch. I don't remember the last time I could just clear my head of all the buzzing and urgency and just collect my thoughts. Probably while we were still in high school.

Whenever I get a free moment, I watch the cooking channel. I always scribble down the recipes in my notebook, but who am I kidding really? I'm never going to have the time to cook. Unless you count a can of cream corn emptied into the microwave.

Bib always tells me, when we retire, we'll get to do all the things we want to do. We'll finally be free to pursue the things we actually enjoy. But honestly, who retires any more? We'll probably be working well into our eighties just to survive, until we get too sick to keep going. It's not like we have any kind of a pension plan or money in the bank. I think it's just easier for him to feel like he's working towards something, like it'll all be worth it when, one day we can finally jump up and say, "That's it. No more working. Now we can just relax and be together and sing karaoke and laugh and eat and lounge about in the sun."

I always give him a little squeeze when he gets that sparkle in his eye, dreaming about us all wrinkled and happy, dancing on the deck of a cruise boat or what have you. It's sweet that he still has that hope alive inside him. When we first got married, I thought things would be a lot different, but I was kind of naive. Life isn't really about your own happiness.

You basically get eighteen years where you get to be idle. Outside of school anyway, you pretty much got to do whatever you wanted. Not that we had many interests back then, mostly just listening to music and shopping. But it seemed like we had all the time in the world, didn't it?

Remember boredom? Actually having enough free time to feel bored? That's what I miss the most, really. I don't know what I'd give to go back to being sixteen, sitting in the back of class complaining to you about being bored off my tiny little ass. I'd probably give it all, really. The house, the cars, the credit cards. The piles and piles of debt. I'd give it all away if I could just go back to being bored again.

I know I sound ungrateful. I mean, I have a good life. Great pups, a loving hard-working husband, good steady employment, a big house in a good, safe neighborhood. It's as good a life as anyone can ask for, really. It's not like I'm a starving Nureongi sneaking around a forest trying to catch a squirrel to feed her hungry litter. For all intents and purposes, I'm living the Ornicorn dream, and I'm thankful, really.

But just between you and me, I always thought there'd be... I don't know. Just something more, you know? I just don't feel complete somehow. Honestly, it's a good thing that I'm so busy everyday, or I'd think about it a lot more, and it would probably leave me in tears.

It's so foolish really, it's not like I can put my finger on what exactly is missing from my life. On paper, I have everything. And Bib is always happy, he has his fantasies of a perfect future to hold him over. But when I take off my iYglass and collapse into bed at the end of the day, in those two minutes before I fall asleep and the dream-inducer kicks in, I think, can this really be all there is? Is this the life we were always meant to live? We only ever get to talk through text messages really, and it's always about the pups or the bills. Were our parents lives this loony?

I don't know if you remember this, but before I went to college, I spent my last summer working on a farm while you were traveling the tropics. It was really tedious work, just pulling weeds, planting seeds, spreading fertilizer, picking vegetables. But I had so much time to think. After a few days, I got into a rhythm and the work was pretty much automatic, and I could just spend all day daydreaming while I worked. Of course, that was before iYglass. But it felt so right somehow, I don't know how to explain it. My hands in the dirt, the sun shining on me, birds singing, and all my thoughts filled with wondrous anticipation for my adult life that was about to start. Kept in great shape, too, without even trying.

I'm not saying I wish we lived on a farm, I can't imagine the kind of dull lifestyle farmers must have, but I don't know, there has to be something I can do where I can

feel as good as I felt working on that farm, but still get to keep the house, the pricey gadgets, the fake boobs and the fancy shoes, you know?

I'm still using the iYglass 6 when the new model has been out for almost a year now. It's getting pretty embarrassing. Hopefully we'll be able to trade up soon or everyone is going to think we're broke. The pups got the iY7 free from their school, so that's one less thing we have to worry about affording.

It's good that the government is spending our tax money on things that are actually useful for a change. They spent a couple years building this bridge downtown, that doesn't even go anywhere. You drive across it and there's nothing there but the back of a building, not even a door or anything, and you just have to do a u-turn to get back to the road. It's kind of freaky.

I guess they've got to keep the construction crews busy somehow. But if you don't know any better, and you go on the bridge and there are other cars behind you, there's no space to turn around and you're basically stuck. I was passing by the other day and they were using a crane to get cars out of there. I think they closed the bridge since then. It's too bad they couldn't have had those construction guys renovate our kitchen for free instead. But life isn't fair, is it?

I hope that when we do finally finish paying off the house, we won't be too old to live in it. I don't want to have to move into a nursing home while we're still paying the mortgage every month, that would be depressing.

Bib keeps talking about how he wants us to buy a holiday home somewhere near the beach in a couple of years. It would be great for the pups to get to go swimming all summer long, they'd get a lot more exercise than they do now. He thinks we can get a really good deal too, now that the banks have such low interest rates for second home mortgages. It would be really amazing, laying in a hammock on the deck, listening to the waves. Okay, I know we wouldn't be able to get a place close enough to the beach to actually hear the ocean, but you know, maybe we'd hear seagulls or something? We'd at least get the ocean breeze.

The pups hardly ever use the pool, I don't remember the last time someone took a swim in it. We might have to just leave the tarp over it all through summer, it just isn't worth the upkeep, really. They promised they'd use it everyday when we had it installed, but you know how fickle pups are. Ever since they got their iYglasses, they won't even think about taking them off, and they break if you get them even a little bit wet, so they don't go near the pool. They need to make iYglass waterproof already.

Bib really wanted to have all these barbecue parties with the neighbors around the pool every weekend, grilling corn and making polite chitchat, but we're just too busy. If we are home on the weekend, we're too exhausted to leave the bed.

I just started a new diet I heard about online, where you get to eat nothing but little vanilla puddings for two weeks. I think it's starting to work, I already feel like my thighs are chaffing less than usual. It's a really great diet because you can eat as much pudding as you want, and you don't even need to exercise. You should go on it too and we can be diet-buddies. I tried to convince Bib to go on it with me, but he

just can't give up his corn chips and sour dip. Munches on them all day. He doesn't really have a sweet tooth like me. If this diet doesn't work out, there's an all-cupcake diet I'm dying to give a try. Actually, I really don't like vanilla puddings very much, so I might just switch to the cupcake diet anyway.

The pups should probably go on a diet or something too, they're getting as big as Bib. I keep trying to talk them into eating healthier, but they get all embarrassed the moment I bring it up and leave the room. If I had more time, I'd make them packed lunches to take to school instead of letting them eat all those deep fried school lunches they serve them everyday. It wouldn't be so bad if they didn't snack all day. I'm tempted to stop buying them all those snacks, but I know I'd never hear the end of it. No, the best thing to do is just to keep up my cupcake diet and lose some weight to set a good example for them to hopefully follow.

It looks like the neighbors next door have a cat infestation in their yard, I'm really hoping it doesn't spread to our yard, I don't know how we'd be able to afford an exterminator.

Life is hard, but at least we have our health.

Love, Hatty.

# Chapter Eleven: Radio Personality

Would you believe that liberal know it all, Harvey Fidelbrook on that talk show last night, droning on and on about giving aid to a bunch of wild Nureongi beasts? The only thing you can do with a wild beast that won't be tamed, other than shooting at it anyway, is put it in a cage in a nice little zoo and let our pups throw kibble at it.

Oh sure, so they have their own 'language', if you can call the wacky noises they make a language. So I guess we can't cage up something smart enough to communicate verbally? Hooey. For all we know, carrots and lettuces can communicate verbally in some high pitched frequency our ears can't pick up. Can you disprove it? I didn't think so. Throw the Nureongi in cages and take their land, and then we won't have to keep hearing from liberals about how hungry the yellow bastards are and how much the precious little things need our help. The zoos will feed them everyday, they'd have a great quality of life. That land they're squatting on has been going to waste for long enough.

I'm still really freaking pissed off at that liberal bobble-head we call a president. How is it that, in all the time he's been running the country, he hasn't started a new war? Not even one measly little war. What does it take to push this guy's buttons? Can't he see all the crap going down all over the world? The disrespect being flung at honest hard working Orninicans by the hordes of foreign socialist trash buckets?

Just the other day, the president of Beanland was on an official visit to our great capital, no doubt paid for by Orninican taxpayers, and he gave a nauseating interview saying that Orninica is losing its international influence. That Orninica's day in the sun, policing the rest of the world, is reaching its end. How are we standing for this guy's blatant threats against our great nation? In the old days when a real president was calling the shots, everyone in Beanland would be waking up to the sound of millions of missiles raining down on them. Wake up, Orninica!

There's a conspiracy against Orninica that reaches far and wide, to besmirch our great name and to keep us down. These foreign and domestic conspirators want us to be afraid to take action against evil forces, they want us afraid to exercise our god-given right to dominate the rest of the planet. We are the strongest, most powerful force the world has ever seen, there is no shame in that. It's survival of the fittest, pure and simple, and we are clearly bigger and fitter than anyone. We can't let these little backwards foreign countries with their short, disgusting socialist leaders get out of line like that, we need to school them already. Show them we mean business. Diplomatic immunity be damned.

Someone ought to nab that Beanie bastard right out of his hotel room and take him for a ride into the country where some real Orninicans can give him a lesson on civility and respect.

No Orninican should stand for that kind of abuse. We're the biggest, baddest force in the whole damned world and if we keep acting like giant pussies instead, our pups are gonna grow up thinking we're weak, and then they'll end up acting weak too, and then where will we be? We'll have turned into a nation of jelly-livered liberal socialist tree-huggers that would rather 'talk things over' than take any real action. We'll sit around all day, holding hands, forming a big multi-racial, omni-sexual, all-inclusive circle of love and acceptance, chanting peacefully, touching each other and sharing our dreams. Is that the pathetic world you want to live in, Orninicans? I didn't think so.

The Nureongi don't have enough to eat? Then there's too damn many of them. Open up a safari over there and me and my big-game hunting buddies will go on over and take care of the problem real quick.

I tell you, there's way too many emotional liberal crybabies making our decisions for us nowadays. How the hell do these dogs get elected to office anyway? What dumb asses keep casting their votes for these lib-tard buffoons? Seriously, if you're one of the raving lunatics that voted for the president, give us a call. I want to yell at you for being so bucktoothed stupid. The lines are open.

I really need to run for president already. Someone's got to steer this faltering country back in the right direction. If only I weren't so damned busy with this radio show all the time. But the fans demand it. I can't just up and leave, leaving all of you to listen to white noise every morning just so I can go and start a political career. It would be selfish of me.

God knows there's nothing else on the damn radio worth listening to, just a bunch of liberal media brainwashing and thug music. I've gotta stay right where I am and keep on informing the good dogs of Orninica of the way things really are. Only I can sort through the bullshit to bring you the real news, listeners. I don't know what the country would do without my voice to wake up to every weekday morning. I really don't.

But we have to get someone to run for office that can be trusted to do the right thing. We've had enough of the Progressive party stinking up the joint for everyone. The president clearly hates Orninica. He's raping us dry, it's clear for all to see if they'll just take off their liberal-loving blinders.

Did you see? He just appointed a new face to the Supreme Court. You'd think he'd choose someone really imposing and strong, someone we can all have faith in to do the right thing, right? Well, think again, Bobo. As usual he picked a freaking minority, and a female minority at that. Big surprise! Yet another point for 'diversity', and yet another strike against decent, hard-working Orninicans everywhere.

Next up on his liberal agenda, our big push-over of a president is dropping hints that he wants to legalize gay marriage. What the hell? Why not let us marry our hamsters while you're at it? Or our vacuum cleaners even? Hey, if they're going to let

the gays get hitched, then what's stopping them from letting ticks marry each other? Same freaking difference really.

And let's not even get started with his demands that we eat like a bunch of hippies, trying to change the school lunches on us to add more salad. What gives him the right to tell us how to eat? Ornicans eat whatever the hell they feel like eating. He'd better keep the hell out of our kitchens if he knows what's good for him.

Where would Ornicans be without its staple foods? Its deep fried caramel and cheese sandwiches washed down with a nice lard and corn syrup milkshake? What is he trying to do to this country? Is he even Ornicans? Seems to me he's acting a hell of a lot like a foreign socialist saboteur. Why else would he be trying to destroy everything that makes us Ornicans? Think about it, listeners. Think long and hard, and next time you see him on TV, look right into his eyes, those dead beady eyes of his, and I know you'll see what I see; a great force of cunning evil trying to pass as an Ornicans right under our noses. I don't know what he is exactly, but he aint one of us, that much I'm sure of. He might not even be a canine for all we know.

It's not easy to fool me, I'm a pretty savvy guy. Just yesterday my wife, Dotty, pointed out how I always know when an immigrant is trying to shortchange me at the car wash. I can always tell which ones are the really sneaky ones, and I count every penny of that change, and if there's even one penny missing, I report the little sneak thief to his manager and demand a full refund. I tell my wife every time, how I bet that shifty-looking one shortchanged me, and every time I'm right. Every time, no lie. We can get her on the phone and she'll back me up.

So when I tell you I have a bad feeling about the president, that I think he might be some kind of mutant alien impostor, you're going to want to open your ears and pay attention.

It's time to retake our place in the world. All the evidence we need to justify our domination of the earth is our manifest destiny. We've been expanding far and wide for hundreds of years, and it's our god-given birthright to continue, until every inch of the planet is under our control. It's Ornicans tradition. How can we be ashamed to follow in our ancestors footsteps? To continue their great work? Our founding fathers would be rolling in their graves if they saw the state of the country today.

We need to stop letting sly hate groups control our government and our our media. These groups want to see Ornicans destroyed from within, chewed up and spat out by their socialist propaganda machine.

The Green Party, the Civil Liberties Advocates, the Organic Food Movement, the Free and Open Source Software Group, the Natural Healers Association, the Permaculturists, the Small Farmers Union, the Free Speech Legal Fund, the Compassionate Association for Animal Rights, the Patent Reform Lobby, the Free Information Guild, the Pirate Party, the Immigrant Rights Project, the Fair Traders Group, the Sweatshop Awareness Society, the Whistle Blower Advocacy Movement, the Free Clinic and the Wildlife Protection Group. Every one of these socialist or anarchist extremist infiltrators needs to be stamped out for the good of all the country. The conspiracy has

to stop. If the president were a real Orninican, if he had any balls, he'd ban all those groups I just listed right now and stop their evil agenda in its tracks once and for all.

# Chapter Twelve: Banker

Rupulfort, old dog. Things have gotten very tight. Revenues are down across the board, and something needs to be done. We have to save the economy at all costs. The economy is the lifeblood of our civilization, and if it continues to falter, we're all as good as dead. We've risen inflation as far as we can and hiked up the interest on loans to the point where dogs have stopped buying things they can't afford. What kind of future do we have if everyone is suddenly cautious with their debt? I know your bank is suffering as badly as my own. We need to take somber action.

I have a plan that can fix all of our woes, but I need access to your resources to pull it off, old boy. When the economy falters like this, the only medicine is a good old blow-them-all-to-hell war. Sure, we have drones taking out anyone that so much as looks up at the sky, but that's not enough, we need troops on the ground, warships, jets, missiles, kill-bots, things that will rope in the big dividends for us. Of course, virtually all our traditional sparring partners have been absorbed into the Ornicican One World Directive, or wiped out, leaving only the half-wit Nureongi to war with.

I have thought long and hard and I am convinced an all out invasion of Nureongi is the only way we can get our heads back above water. And it has to happen as soon as possible. Do you know my bank's growth this year is barely at 3%? Outrageous!

How do we go about justifying this invasion against a horde of naked stone age nomads I hear you ask? As you know, I am a great scholar of human history. When the humans needed reason to start a lucrative new war, they committed acts of terror on their own soil and blamed it on their defenseless neighbors. As the blood poured from their feeble enemy, the profits flowed mightily. Truly, the military industrial complex of their leading nations had no equal, and when the war machine was in full throttle, the economy of the major powers was unstoppable.

I submit to you that we continue to follow the sage example of our dear departed masters, and turn a couple of inner-city schools into rubble. The populace will be so angered and out for blood that they'll believe anyone we point the finger at was responsible, regardless of evidence or common sense. We won't need any more incentive to invade Nureongi than that.

Now, what will I need from you? The use of your private army, for one thing. Your soldiers should be more than capable of carrying out a small clandestine operation in a couple of inner-city schools once we switch off the security drones in the area. Your connections in the senate and the presidency will also be much appreciated. Combined with my fellows, we'll have enough to order the war minutes after the false flag operation is completed.

And once the war is started, your private army will finally come back into profit. Let's face it, all that spy-game and black ops hooey barely pays the bills. You need the real thing to make serious money again. Secret wars just don't have the budget of a proper ground war fully stocked with tanks and bombers and nuclear submarines.

Do you see what I see, Rupulfort? The history in the making? The taps of unchecked debt flowing once again? This is more ambitious than anything our fathers could have dreamed up. If you join me, this will be an alliance remembered for generations. We will be unstoppable in our accrument of wealth. Never again will we need to slow down our plans of unchecked expansion, awaiting a refill of the old piggy bank.

There is something we need to address, however. With all our advanced weaponry, and their pathetically primitive spears and rocks, the war would be over far, far too quickly. So we will of course need to properly arm the savages before we invade. Since they have no currency to pay for weaponry, we'll need to have the government earmark funds to pay for it and airdrop it into their village squares as soon as possible, before we implement my strategy. They'll have to be almost as well-armed as we are if we're going to stretch this war out long enough to truly rescue the economy.

The media can sell it as do-gooder aid. Missiles, tanks and radar detectors for them to better track and hunt the repulsive, diseased fowl they eat. Submarines to collect seashells, starfish and sponges or whatever sea-garbage they collect. Maybe throw in some hogwash about improving relations and showing goodwill towards our feral cousins. Then, after the attack, the working dogs of the nation will be even more outraged at the Nureongi since we came bearing gifts and the damn honor-less cowards used our own gifts against us in an act of brutal unprovoked violence!

In the unlikely event that there's any kind of resistance against the push for war, we can always find some loudmouthed celebrities to rally the commoners behind us. After all, we all know the common folk are only capable of embarking on a train of thought when their meretricious movie stars and popular musicians tell them when to begin thinking.

As for how we'll split the proceeds of this undertaking, I'm a reasonable man, Rupulfort. Ask any dog at the society, Fitzie is a an honorable and just dog, so when I say a fifty/fifty cut right down the middle is all I'll ask for, you know I mean it. Completely equal partners. Obviously this kind of thing can't be backed up with signed contracts or any kind of legal documentation, but I will of course arrange for a ceremonial converge at the Arcanum Society to seal the coalition. A modest blood sacrifice from each of us will certainly need to be provided for the ceremony, maybe a grand-niece or equivalent. Just a formality, you understand.

It's long past time our two great houses were joined again and I know you'll be in full agreement. Here's hoping we can keep this war going for generations. We should at least be able to create a whole generation of raging guerrilla fighters to fuel our money bins.

I'd also like to congratulate you on your purchase of the Boltech University. That surreptitious research team was getting dangerously close to finalizing yet another

perpetual motion generator. Those damn things are popping up everywhere lately, it's costing a fortune to keep them all under wraps. It would have done untold damage to the market if it had gotten out. I trust you will now follow usual procedure and bury the dangerous device with great haste.

I myself have had to spend millions funding universities and labs over the years, to keep their blasted research from going public. You wouldn't believe some of the breakthroughs I've had to quash. There was one team a decade ago that actually came up with a way to transfer the canine brain into a robot body; prolonging life for centuries. I managed to sweep the project under the carpet to keep it from the plebeians, but now that I'm getting older, I'm thinking it's time to bring the project out of mothballs to make a few sturdy new bodies for myself and my closest friends. You're welcome to a couple of them, if you like, but I'm sure you have a similar project of your own on the cards.

My own grandfather of course took custody of the first free-energy project from a pesky scientist almost eighty years ago now, at the dawn of the electric age. The uncouth instigator had devised a way of harvesting infinite energy using ionization in the upper atmosphere to create electrical vibrations out of thin air, and he could beam this energy to every home, business and vehicle in the world at absolutely no cost.

Just think of where we'd be today if my grandfather hadn't had the brilliant foresight to fell that terrifying invention before it went public. Why, we'd all be living in abject poverty, and the plebs would be running amuck with no barriers to keep them down. Debt would be unheard of. It would be anarchy! I shudder at the very thought of such a dystopian nightmare world.

There have been a few occasions where brazen inventors of dangerous technologies have refused to sell their patents to me, and I've had to resort to, shall we say, less civilized methods to suppress their designs. I'm sure you've dealt with your fair share of fools like that in your time, your army certainly would prove useful in those sticky situations.

They just don't listen to reason. What kind of dog would turn down millions of oonos in favor of releasing to the public domain an invention that will throw our entire way of life into disarray forever? Utterly sickening, the self-righteous turnip-heads running around out there calling themselves intelligent dogs of science. What's intelligent about throwing away something that's been working just fine for generations? I don't even want to think about a world where energy isn't a pricey commodity. It's truly a disgusting concept.

The only thing more irritating than free-energy devices is the insane amount of cancer miracle cures that keep cropping up. Keeping those from reaching fruition is bleeding corporations all across Orninica dry. Something has to be done about all these cocky inventors eating into our bottom lines. Maybe we should be buying the universities and labs and immediately shutting them down, instead of allowing the little bloodsuckers to continue to operate.

The very least we can do is lobby the government to drastically slash the budget for funding universities and redirect it all to the war treasury. It's time the academics were seen for the horrible blackmail artists they really are. I'm absolutely tired of having to pay them off every time they make a discovery. We simply must formulate a plan to stomp them out permanently.

But I suppose they do have their advantages. I have a few teams working on some very useful devices. There's one group that's created an ingenious mobile cancer ray. Once mounted into an ordinary van, it can project an invisible beam of radiation at any target we choose. It's so accurate that we can even choose the type of cancer to afflict the sap with. It's still in testing right now, but I have very high hopes for it, we've already used it a few dozen times on random targets, and it worked wonders on every one of them. There's only one prototype right now, but I wouldn't mind if you loaned it for a few days. I know how much you love your toys.

# Chapter Thirteen: Senior Citizen

The terrorist attack on our great nation, on our innocent little pups is unacceptable! The Nureongi have slaughtered our innocence, they've defiled our youth, and I for one, won't stand for it. I want justice. I want to see all their worthless pups die in retaliation. Little Nureongi corpses lining their scraggy forests as far as the eye can see!

How dare they plant bombs in our schools? How dare they even look at an Orninican pup with their ugly twitchy eyes? They're going to pay in blood. I can't wait to see the news footage of them being massacred by our brave troops for what they've done to us today. The fact that we've let the damned mongrels live this long is testament to our great patience. But the time for patience is ended. I demand the military launches a full scale invasion of their pathetic little country immediately!

The damned Progressive Conservative idiots are at it again with their hike in the tobacco tax when they still haven't seen to the damn immigrant problem. I don't mind paying taxes, but they need to make it worth our while. Why should I pay even more for my already expensive imported cigars when there are still immigrants flooding into the country everyday?

I do hope we invade Nureongi, but couldn't they take the opportunity to kill two birds with one stone here? If they do the right thing and invade that useless savage country and take their oil, then I'll be cheering them on all the way, but the military should take all our damn foreigners with them. We're still fighting a war in our own backyard everyday against all the freeloading migrant workers moving in next door. They could easily sign them all up for military service and drop them onto the front lines. That would thin their numbers nicely.

You know what the problem is, don't you? The foreigners take all the jobs and then our damn lazy youths, unemployed and fat with welfare checks, keep on voting for the damn Progressives. It's time the Reformist Conservatives came back into power and showed the lazy layabout youth of today what for. Old President Milt C. Rexworth would have never just stood by and watched these ungrateful loafers picking away at the rainy day fund with their greedy little mitts. Now there was a real President. Knew how to deal with so-called asylum seekers too, just kept them in detention cells for a few months, barely fed them, until they got sick of it and bought a flight back out.

There was a cheeky migrant pup outside my house today, relieving himself on my petunias. I couldn't believe my eyes. When I told him he'd better get away from my property lest I call the drones in, he even had the gumption to tell me to go hump myself! The little punk didn't look so smug when I hit the panic button on my belt and a drone came out of the sky and grabbed him. Didn't even have time to do up his

zipper, so his shorts floated down a few minutes later. Little pook. Took me hours to fix the mess he'd done to my flower patch. Trampled them good, he did. Should have seen the look on his face when he got yanked up. I was laughing about it with the boys at the club for hours afterwards.

What I really can't stand is when little runts like that are running around the Kost-saver unsupervised, shouting and screaming and crashing into my trolley. There's nothing more annoying than having to hear a bunch of spoiled-rotten welfare pups screaming at the top of their lungs when you're trying to decide what brand of petroleum jelly to go with. If dogs can't look after their own kin, then let the government take them and put them in a facility or something. They'll keep them out of our way at least, even if we have to keep paying to feed the fat little gits everyday.

The second thing I needed from the Kostsaver was weed killer, but they write the damn instructions in such tiny print that you'd need a microscope to read it. I had to just wing it. I had a look out the window earlier and the damn weeds don't look any deader, so I'll have to give them a stronger drenching later on. There's nothing uglier than big stringy weeds in a neat little flower bed.

I just forwarded a joke someone sent me to everyone in my address book, it was the funniest thing I've ever read. Almost broke my spine laughing. Let me see if I can remember it... Something about a pook that got on an elevator... Oh, and there was a Soup monk that was looking at him funny, and the pook... No, the pook was looking at the Soup funny. And there was something about a flat tire. Oh, and a naked Rongi medicine man dancing about like a lunatic. Anyway, it was damn funny.

A scruffy young insurance peddler knocked on my door this morning, wanting to sell me a sick joke of a policy. His shirt wasn't tucked in, his tie crooked, and he needed a good haircut. Now, I sat him down at my kitchen table, told him to listen up, and I shared with him everything I learned in the two years I spent, right out of college, as a strapping young insurance agent. How I was spectacularly dressed, shoes so shiny you could see your face in them, a brilliant smile, and above all else; impeccable manners.

I mean, you don't come to someone's door all wishy washy, "Er... Do you wanna buy some boat insurance, Granddad?" What the hell is that? Didn't they give him any damned guidelines before setting him loose on a neighborhood that decent dogs live in? He kept making excuses, getting up, saying he had to go, and I kept sitting him right back down again until he listened and learned how to sell insurance the right way. I made him practice with me, and I went with him to the next house and watched and told him when he went wrong. He didn't learn a damn thing, though. Couldn't sell rain to the desert. Complete waste of my valuable time.

I don't know, I really don't know what it is with youths. They're just not proper. Maybe we should send them all to war, teach them some real life skills. But they'll probably cry their little delicate eyes out for their mothers the moment a drill sergeant raises his voice a little bit. They're all a bunch of mopey money-holes, all of them.

When I was their age, I had three full-time jobs and responsibilities up to my ears. You didn't ever see me lining up outside the welfare office, or paying for pornography

and video-games with food stamps. I didn't have time for that nonsense, I had a wife and three pups to support. Even on weekends, I had a stall at the market selling flip flops during the day, and I operated the ferris wheel at the fair at night. I didn't even talk to my wife for years, I was so busy making scratch to feed her and the litter.

Of course, neither her nor my damn offspring talk to me now, the ungrateful sods. Haven't seen any one of them for twenty-three years, since she left to paint trains or some nonsense. She was a whore anyway, always walking around in public with no bra under her dress. Feh.

If they would just let me be in charge of the country for one full day, I'd fix this place right up, boy would I. I'd cram all the useless migrants on a big barge, push it out to sea, and blast it full of holes. I'd cut off all the unemployed layabouts welfare benefits, and see if a little old-fashioned starvation makes them get to work. I'd round up all the tree-huggers and pacifists and Nureongi sympathizers and drop them right in the middle of a Nureongi slum. We'll see how they like their precious savages when they're cooking them up in a big barbecue.

As for the convicts, I'd put them all to work in the coal mines. Sixteen hours a day. We could fuel the whole country for pennies if they put more work on those prisoners plates. Forget about trying to teach them to read, just hand them pickaxes and shoot anyone that won't work.

I tell you, make me president for a day and the country would be back to normal in no time. Then we'd all have a big parade with feisty little dancing girls, roasted marshmallows and corn on a cob, and a fine Orninican personality like Mr. Harvey Fidelbrook would take off his hat, firmly shake my hand and lead in reciting the glorious national anthem in my honor. The whole country would thank me for saving the Orninican dream. They'd name history books after me and teach little pups about my great leadership for generations. The man that saved Orninica when it was almost finished.

But no, no one listens to Buster Smigle's ideas because I'm not college-educated. Well, excuse me for being too engaged with raising a litter of ungrateful little bonks to lounge about on a college campus all day learning about sappy philosophy and 'gender and feminist studies'. Bunch of malarkey. Damn lazy students.

That's another thing President Smigle would do. I'd take away all the funding for useless waste of money programs like college scholarships. If you're too poor to go to college on your own dime, then shut up and get a proper working class job like the rest of us. Don't be expecting special treatment just because you scored high on a stupid exam. Here in the real world, there's no tests or term papers to make decisions for you. You just show up at a job and say "Yes sir. Right away sir." That's all there is to it. It's not rocket science.

I'd also do away with all that pointless 'save the environment' guff. If a factory needs to get rid of some waste, and they pay their taxes, then they can go right ahead and offload it on land no one's using. Damn tree-huggers don't own the planet. And so what if some of it gets into the rivers? Big deal. It's not gonna kill you, you pansies.

You've gotta expect a little pollution if you're wanting to maintain a thriving industry and expand the market. These company managers have a lot of responsibilities on their heads as it is, they can't be spending all day stressing out about how they're going to get around thousands of government environmental regulations so they can actually do some business.

No, if they gave me the power, I'd rescue this country in 24 hours flat. It's easy, I've got all the big-ticket issues down. Single mothers? Employ them as maids for the hard working rich. They can do it for just bread and board. Homosexuals? Shame them all into offing themselves. Could even enlist them and send them on suicide missions. That way they get to pay some penance before they die, and their lives wouldn't have been completely worthless. Feminists? Give them all boob jobs, great big ones. That'll change their tune, when males start paying attention to them for the first time. Fleas? Incinerate all the damn hamsters. It's sickening. Whenever I see a pup playing with a hamster in one of those stupid balls, I stamp on it with my boot until it's flat. Filthy disease-ridden animals. Or better yet, feed them to the homeless.

The problem with the homeless is that they're too uppity. They're not satisfied with anything we give them. Here's an idea; when we gather up all the rich folks' refuse, instead of sending it over to the landfill, how about we send it over to the homeless shelters so they can pick through it first. And if they don't want to eat out of the garbage, then they shouldn't bloody well be homeless in the first place, should they? There's gotta be some first class leftovers to eat in the trash cans of the rich.

We can let them eat the garbage for a while, so they get used to it and begin to trust it, and then after a couple months, we can sprinkle some cat poison in each trashcan and take care of the homeless problem once and for all, freeing up funding to be spent on more useful enterprises.

Like for instance, we could double up on our drones, even replace all the old useless rubber-bullet models with the new elite assault-bots with the mounted missile launchers. Double the checkpoints too. A lot of times, I drive eight or nine blocks without going through a checkpoint, how is that enough coverage to stop a terrorist? Security is always prime. We could triple our nuke-arsenal, just in case any of our allies in the OOWD get out of line again with their pain-in-the-neck austerity protests. We can also always help out our invaluable corporations with some much-needed funds to further expand their operations. After security, the fluidity of the market must always be paramount.

Another idea I have that would be really good for the country is creating a new tax to fund buying boats for retired seniors that have earned it. Sort of a reward for our tireless years of service in the military and as taxpayers. It would be a good way to stimulate the economy, since we'd need to buy drinks and food every time we go boating, and we could sell any excess fish we catch to restaurants.

I always wanted to grow up to be a fisherman when I was a pup, but there wasn't much profit in it. You've got to act like a grown up when it comes down to it and let go of the dopey dreams you made when you were still a naive little git. So when I got

out of the army and got married, I got a real job. But I would be really proud if the government gave me a little fishing boat for being such a fine upstanding Orninican all these years. Ask anyone and they'll tell you I've earned it.

Now that we're most likely going to war with those ignorant yellow mongrels, I'm thinking a lot of dirt-cheap labor is about to flood into Orninica. Now, everyone knows I'm no friend of dirty immigrants, but the one exception I'll make is when it's a housekeeper / nurse. I figure I'll finally be able to afford one once the yellows flee their burning crater-filled lands with their tails between their legs and come running to civilization.

If you're paying them next to nothing, it's not like they're taking jobs from Orninicans anyway. It's basically charity. But I tell you, if I get one of them working for me, I'm gonna make sure she scrubs herself clean three times a day. I'm not having some hoodoo savage stinking up my house. And she'll eat what I give her to eat and nothing more. Don't need her dragging some rotting vermin she trapped through the kitchen and pushing it into my oven. She'll learn to be civilized or I'll cast her back onto the street with the rest of the trash. Put my pop's old branding iron to use and brand her lazy thieving whore face so no one else gives her work.

Actually, since yellows are a lesser species, I have to assume they're not protected by any of the laws that govern us. So it should be perfectly legal to put them down if they're found to be unfit. Won't have to pay them either in that case, so maybe I'll get a butler and a chef too. I've surely earned it, working my balls off for thirty years and paying my taxes. Never even missed a single mortgage payment.

There's no doubt about it, the government should be giving all senior war veterans an Ongi slave girl or three, and a good-sized fishing boat. Especially those of us without wives to clean for us, and perform their bedroom duties. Seniors have needs too, damn it.

Now, don't get me wrong. I'm perfectly capable of going out and meeting a nice classy Orninican lady. But then they all have this big list of expectations. They want you to pay for dinner, they expect you to dance even when your bunions are acting up, to flatter them even when they get old and lose their looks. They want you to talk to them and act like you care about their useless day. And if I lose my temper because she's babbling on for twenty minutes about complete nonsense, and I give her a little smack with the back of my hand, she gets all out of sorts and calls the cops. Makes a big deal out of it for no good reason, bawling her eyes out, and makes me out to be some kind of criminal in front of the law. It's humiliating.

No thank you, I've had enough of your entitled princesses with their fancy clothes and impossible expectations. I need a female that won't talk back, that can't even speak the language. Just cleans and cooks and pleases me in all the ways a proper wife is meant to. Bring me one of those and I'll be a happy dog. I won't even care that much if she's a yellow, just so long as she works at being civilized and keeps her mouth shut.

Just yesterday, I was out front, watering my flower beds, and the prissy, fat single mother from next door pokes her head over the fence and asks me to keep an eye on her pup while she posts a letter down the street. Didn't even wait for a reply, just pushed the brat into my yard and trotted off. Apparently seniors have nothing better to do than babysit every little runt on the block. I watched the pup all right, watched him run right into the road. Got scraped a bit by a motorcycle, no big deal. But of course, he starts bawling and his mother comes running back and acts like it's my fault the dumb little crybaby ran into a motorcycle. It's natural selection, is all it is. You've got to let nature take care of the specimens with shit for brains so they don't end up polluting the gene pool.

She needs to face reality; anyone dumb enough to run out into traffic like that doesn't deserve to live, and I'm the only one with the balls to say it. That little leech is going to grow up to be yet another whiny, jobless, Progressive Conservative voting, welfare-mooching whore. It's much more practical to weed them out before they start to cost us money down the road. You know I'm right.

I did manage to kill two birds with one stone there, though. That bitch won't ever treat me like a free babysitting service again, and that pook always riding that damn noisy motorcycle up and down the street won't be riding anywhere ever again. Collided into a brick wall dodging that pup, he did. All I know is they'd better not expect the taxpayer to pick up the bill to fix that wall. It's bad enough we had to pay to scrape him off the road. Should make the pup's mother pay for the damage, she's responsible for the little turd.

# Chapter Fourteen: Anonymous Revolutionary II

I have just returned from the most incredible journey imaginable. The inspiring, beautiful things I saw during my travels to Nureongi will stay with me for the rest of my days. I am so utterly and profoundly moved by the wonders I have been witness to, all thanks to Mr. Harvey Fidelbrook; my benefactor and traveling companion in the breathtaking untamed wilderness that is Nureongi. I can't thank him enough for allowing me to be part of this amazing expedition with him.

We landed on a short and narrow little airstrip inside a clearing, surrounded by lush forest. When the three of us left the airplane, we were surrounded by a group of young maidens, each a representative of a different Nureongi tribe. They all wore on their heads a different decorative wreath, which acts as the insignia for their tribe. Like all Nureongi, they wore no other clothing. Their bare fur was inked with the juices from various plants and berries, forming intricate designs.

The young ladies welcomed each of us separately, apparently genuinely excited to make our acquaintance. They showed a lot of interest in my regrettably rather portly belly, rubbing and poking it with rousing curiosity and much laughter.

We were escorted by foot to a nearby campsite where some of the elders of each tribe awaited. They greeted us with open arms and invited us to sit in their circle and eat with them. Their celebratory feast featured an assortment of wild game and foraged herbs. They had even prepared some corn-mash for the more squeamish members of our party.

The elders spoke one at a time, and a young female acted as translator. They explained how their society is structured, with the tribes being completely autonomous, but meeting regularly to trade with each other. Everyone is welcome to move around freely, and it is strongly encouraged for dogs to marry outside of their tribe to strengthen the genetics of the population.

Sometimes, when dogs aren't happy with the policies of their tribe, they will leave and join a tribe that they feel better represents their personal needs. If such a tribe doesn't exist, then they are free to pick out some unused land and start their own tribe.

Trade is conducted using a barter system. A common market is set up once a week, where all the tribes trade with each other. The market value of each good is decided by basic principles of supply and demand. If something is highly sought after, the trading price increases.

Rather than each individual trading one-on-one, each tribe instead deposits the goods provided by all their members to the market's repository, and then receives from the market desired goods of equal value. The newly traded for goods are then distributed among the tribe depending on who needs each item most urgently.

Particular skills such as iron-working and pond-building are highly desired but in short supply, so skilled technicians are loaned out by their tribe to all the other tribes that need work done, in exchange for various goods and services.

The elders mentioned that our lovely young translator had lived with at least twenty different tribes at various times, as part of her intense training. She could speak an amazing eighteen languages fluently, including three non-Nureongi languages. Most Nureongi learn their trade by apprenticing with several skilled artisans for several years, while a few, particularly in pioneering fields, are self-taught.

It's common for a Nureongi to change vocations frequently, even into old age. One of the elders told me he was currently a carpenter's apprentice. At the ripe old age of 84! Said he just felt like a change from his previous line of work as a zip-line operator.

The arts are very important to the Nureongi. Artists are given free reign to create their works, but they are also expected to contribute food to the pot. In all the tribes, food always comes first. Once everyone has been fed, only then are creative pursuits followed. No one spends all their time doing just one thing, as even the most skilled technicians are expected to add some food to the pile. Generally, a sculptor will spend three days sculpting, and three days attaining food for the tribe. The seventh day is typically for rest and celebration.

Food is acquired in various ways. While most tribes prefer to focus on hunting and gathering, others have embraced small-scale agriculture. Gardening is widespread, especially pond gardens for producing fish and water vegetables at the same time. The fish feed the vegetables and the vegetables feed the fish, and both feed the tribe. It's all very fascinating and self-sustaining. As a lot of the tribes are nomadic, they maintain gardens in two separate locations and move between them depending on the season.

Small rafts made from palm fronds and bamboo are knotted together and floated in the ponds. Vegetables are planted directly onto the rafts, their roots reaching into the water below and absorbing nutrients as fast as they're released by the fish. Underwater plants are left for the fish, crustaceans and mollusks to feed on.

As for housing, each tribe has its preferred building materials. Some tribes bring their entire houses with them as they migrate for the winter. These unique designs are collapsible and lightweight and depending on the tribe, they can be made from bamboo, vines, sticks, leather, fabric, etc. Tribes that don't migrate need sturdier, more insulated structures, so they use a variety of different materials including mud, straw, manure and stone. But never logs, there seems to be a taboo against felling trees to build structures.

Spirituality is very important to a lot of the tribes, but it is seen as a deeply personal pursuit. There are no common places of worship, or regulations telling them how to worship. Instead, every Nureongi worships in his own way on his own terms, usually

alone or with his immediate family while tending to their duties in the woodlands. They have no big wealthy organizations that claim to represent divinity incarnate on earth.

I was fascinated to hear that there is nothing even close to a police force or court system in Nureongi. The closest approximate they have are trusted old hermits that settle disputes between feuding dogs. As these hermits aren't members of any tribe, they can presumably be impartial when deciding how to solve a disagreement between two parties. Apparently, once the hermit has come to a decision, no bad blood remains and the issue is permanently resolved. The wisdom of the hermit is trusted implacably.

In a situation where a grave injustice has been committed, such as murder, it is always dealt with internally by the affected community. If he runs, the criminal is tracked and captured by his neighbors, and the elders decide the punishment. Usually it involves banishment at sea. The elders made sure to stress that serious crime like this is exceedingly rare; once or twice in a generation, and usually a crime of passion.

It's interesting that the only dogs that leave Nureongi have committed murder and been cast out. It explains a lot about our culture's depiction of Nureongi as vicious savages, since throughout the ages, we've only ever gotten to know the banished bad seeds that drift into our seas.

Before they enter into an apprenticeship in their teens, pups generally do as they please. They play and forage in the woods and fields, follow their parents around; watching and learning from them. They listen to storytellers and watch plays in the village square, they create and trade artworks and collect insects and rocks. Some of them start little gardens and ponds of their own, or help tend the family garden.

It's very telling that there is no word for 'boredom' in any of the Nureongi tongues. Every moment of every day is filled with things to do and see. Simply observing nature can take up hours of a pup's time.

Pups were running in and out of the tent, laughing and playing the whole time we met with the elders. I've never seen so many happy puppies. In Orninica, I'm so used to pups being silent and solemn, walking slowly and deliberately in a straight line, as if they're afraid to accidentally take a wrong step and fall into a pit of scorn. These pups were a whole other animal, and it truly filled me with sadness that our own pups are so without spark.

The one thing that most separates the Nureongi civilization from our own is their complete lack of a banking establishment. There is no fiat currency, no debt, no way to speculate with land or stocks. There's no inflation or haircuts or bail-outs. Even mortgages are a completely foreign concept to the Nureongi. I tried to explain the concept to one of the elders, and he was sure I was kidding him. He just kept laughing and insisting I was pulling his leg.

When a Nureongi couple get married, the community comes together and builds them a home. There's no mortgage or home-owners insurance or property tax or anything. Just a house big enough to home and sustain one family. No fountains or stone columns or dual garages and twin hot-tubs in sight. Just a simple structure built lov-

ingly by the community in celebration of a young couple starting out in life together. And they wouldn't have it any other way.

It makes me wonder what Orninica would be like if we woke up tomorrow and all the banks had vanished. If the debt were suddenly reset and our homes didn't take a lifetime of inflated installments to pay for, but instead a few days of blissful cooperation with our fellow-citizens. Everyone would be able to afford a home. Suddenly, we would be free to pursue whatever interests we felt like pursuing. Our lives would be our own again. We wouldn't need to spend two lifetimes slaving away in cubicles to pay for big ugly indestructible buildings that seem to be designed for some unknown race of dogs that can live for centuries.

We would actually be able to live in our homes, rather than spending every waking moment working tirelessly to maintain them, only making it home to collapse asleep at night. We could breathe easy, knowing the banks couldn't foreclose on our lives the moment we missed an installment, leaving us to starve to death out in the cold.

Just imagine a world without banks.

No more crony capitalism; the collusion of big business, special interests, and intrusive government into one massive cesspool of corruption and misery for everyone not born a Fifi or a Rupulfort. No more printing millions out of thin air, creating miserable inflation, to fend off inevitable economic collapse for another day.

Our two societies are so different in so many ways, but I believe strongly that every Orninican's inherent seeping, restless misery is directly and deliberately put upon us by our bankers. They leech our life-force to fill their private islands with mountains of loot they have plundered from us. They have robbed the future from our pups, and our pups, pups, pups.

Shutter the banks and Orninica will soon be as free and joyful as the great and prosperous Nureongi civilization. Our pups will smile again. The skies will clear again. It's so clear to me now, every ill in the world inevitably leads back to the banking cartels that have trapped us in never-ending serfdom. We're in debt to them before we're even a twinkle in our mother's eye. Removing the banks would reverse so much misery, we would be freed from our subjugation for the first time.

You might scoff and call me naive, insisting that Orninica is far too big to adopt such an anarchic political system, with such loose rules. That Orninica is too great, too cultured, too civilized to hear of such brazen freehanded notions. But it's all smokescreen. At its deepest level, Orninica is ultimately no different than Nureongi. The common dogs sitting in their cubicles in the sprawling cities ask for no more out of life than a Nureongi netting fish from a pond.

The corporations convince us we need piles and piles of things, to be acquired with mountains of credit. I say, push the mountains over. Let them collapse back into the nothingness they came from. All we need is each other; interconnected communities of like-minded livers of life.

It really isn't as complicated as they try to make it seem. Life doesn't come from an assembly line, dogs aren't commodities to be pushed around and managed like stocks

and bonds. Brothers and sisters, burn your birth certificates, sink your passports into the sea, let go of absurd notions of nationality and strangling omnipotent government.

We don't need a rubber stamp from a civil servant to officiate ourselves as deceased, just think of the absurdity of this concept; a death certificate! Why would a life need certification and licensing and proof of citizenship every step of the way, in order to be legitimate? What is citizenship exactly? The right to exist on a government's soil? What is a government? An 'organized political unit'? When did we hand this almighty political unit the right to decide who gets to be born, to live and die on the lands that have stood here, stoically for millennia? To decide whether we are worthy of existence.

We can be free dogs, if only we stop granting these despots the power to dictate to us, to define for us what life has to be, with their vile self-serving agendas. Just say no to this overt pyramid scheme we call government, cast out our oppressors and their lies and overhaul everything. Return to logical natural systems, where the earth isn't treated like an unruly convict that needs to be beaten and stomped down and reshaped to fit some disconnected paragon of falsity. Where volumes upon volumes of laws, codes and regulations aren't needed to instruct us how to inhabit our own planet.

Unless we allow them to, they cannot tell us what a life is, what civilization has to be, what we have to do in order to exist on this land they've somehow been allowed to lay claim to. We have to let go of our irrational fear of progress. Ignore the non-stop propaganda machine telling us this is all there is and all there ever can be.

The Nureongi are far more advanced than us. Believe it. They are more evolved than us. They live richly and fully, while we rot away in unremitting misery, never knowing the simple joys of a life without restraints. Our lives are wholly lacking in substance. Success and happiness in the Orninican One World Directive is a lottery with one to a hundred million odds. Yet we continue to dance in the quicksand, choosing between the same two identical, depraved political parties again and again, until we sink a little too far into the pit and suffocate.

It's not working. It never worked. You have to see it, the evidence is all around you. We have no liberty, no privacy, no opportunity. Secret courts and secret police and secret gag-orders abound. Whistle-blowers savagely denigrated by every media body, tortured and incarcerated, their lives forfeited. We are impoverished and oppressed, yet too stubborn to see beyond the old patriotic adage; the 'great Orninican democracy, the land of the brave and free'. Where do you see bravery? Where do you see freedom? Where is this great democracy slumbering? How can this explicit plutocracy we're governed by be mistaken for anything else?

Are our politicians not directly funded with 'contributions' from the wealthy elite? Do corporate lobbyists not write every word of our laws, that are then passed into law by the politicians the same corporations finance? How much more obvious does this madness need to be before it's recognized by anyone not painted by society as a laughable conspiracy theorist extremist in a tinfoil hat?

We have to let go of our dependency on the massive corporations that control every aspect of our lives. Their junky overpriced ware is used against us, to spy on us, to

silence us, to numb us into indifference and unquestioning obedience. When was the last time a technology was designed to actually improve our standard of living, rather than simply to create new revenue streams for corporations?

We can embrace free, non-commercial, open source technologies, managed by the very dogs that use them, in their own time; for the good of the community. How is this not preferred over a faceless entity only concerned with amassing greater profit and power for its shareholders? This isn't some romantic theoretical idealism, these are functional systems that continue to operate even in contemporary Orninica right now, but are marginalized, penalized, ignored and ultimately litigated into oblivion by all the 'official' channels in favor of closed, expensive, poorly designed commercial implementations plagued by security holes and backdoors to every government agency that wants its share of the flesh ripped from our bones.

The patent and copyright systems need to be completely overhauled. Too often, brilliant advances in ingenuity are buried by corporations that don't want to risk changing their business model to compete with better technologies. We continue to cling to destructive, outmoded centuries-old concepts like fossil fuels, while incredible, simple alternatives like perpetual-motion, free-energy harvesters invented by amazing minds are buried by corporations for daring to endanger their lucrative monopolies.

If our technology were liberated, every dog on the planet would have free energy harvested from the cosmos, beamed directly to their cars and homes, at an environmental and financial cost of zero.

Yes, such innovations have been invented, and quickly bought up and locked into a vault by our dear corporate overseers. Is this not an unpardonable attack on all life? Think of the suffering that could be averted with perpetual clean energy available to everyone. Think of the advances we would make, unburdened by such crude restraints as power generation and distribution. Think of how cheap food, shelter and consumables would immediately become. The common dog could be free to travel the world as easily as a trust-fund socialite in his yacht.

The only way to liberate ourselves from our captors is to completely demolish the intricate maze-like institutions these elite corporatists have expended so much money and energy into building up, to contain us in their circuitous reality. We must raze the old world and start anew, I am certain our future survival absolutely depends on it.

Rise up and lay claim to your rightful inheritance, dogs of Orninica. The power is within you.

# Chapter Fifteen: General

THIS HIGHLY CLASSIFIED COMMUNICATION IS FOR THE RECEPIENT'S EYES ONLY, YOU ARE KINDLY INSTRUCTED TO DESTROY IMMEDIATELY AFTER READING.

Esteemed gentle-dogs, you are the captains of industry. The most important and well-bred noble-dogs in the world. I'm sure you've all heard by now, but just in case any of you are holed up on your sleepy private islands incommunicado; it's official, we're starting a new war. Glorious, profit-amassing, perpetual war. All of Nureongi is now yours for the plucking.

What we need to decide now is who gets what. We have to split up the natural resources, the land, the new labor force... The nectar is endless and there's much to decide.

Since Mr. Fitz and Mr. Rupulfort provided the impetus for this wonderful war, they will of course receive priority in the division of the spoils. They have right of first refusal for the biggest items on the agenda. But beyond that, we'll need to set up a meeting at the society and decide how to divide everything amongst yourselves.

First on the agenda is obviously the weapons contracts. We're going to need every comically over-sized chaotically destructive weapon you can muster up. If it can obliterate at least five enemy combatants at a time, we'll buy it. We're going to put on quite a fireworks show for the poor simple natives. And please, don't worry about safety testing, we're on a tight schedule here.

Once we've blown the hell out of everything, and annihilated their unprofitable hunter-gatherer lifestyle, we'll of course need your companies to quickly move in and open up shop. We're thinking we'll start with the obvious; good old Orninican food, so we'll need fast food franchises ready to go. Once the natives get their first taste of processed industrial food, it'll open up a slew of new untapped markets for you to exploit. The 'food' will eventually give them all kinds of wonderful cancers and influenzas you can make a killing from.

Of course, there's a lot of work to be done before we reach that stage. These are very backwards creatures, they don't even have a common currency, instead relying on a primitive barter system. So the first thing we'll be establishing is a central bank. Print up some severely devalued money, issue them all with credit cards, show them how to buy microwave dinners and pay the rent, and we're in business. A lot of you will be the shareholders of the Nureongi central bank, with the biggest stakes of course going to Mr. Fitz and Mr. Rupulfort.

We'll designate a handful of zones for cities, and push the natives towards them from all directions. Can't have them all spread out Willy-nilly if we're going to make proper use of them as a cheap labor supply. Once we've broken their backwards nomadic habits, we'll need construction to begin. Resorts, bars, factories, power stations, corporate farming operations, mines, oil wells, brothels, waste disposal... Some living quarters for the workforce of course, and roads to get them from the slums to their new places of work.

Someone is going to get a contract to lay underwater pipelines to pump any gas and oil we find back to our network. We're certainly going to need fleets upon fleets of the latest peace-keeping drones to keep things civil. I understand the latest prototype can fire twenty-thousand rounds per second? Let's try and double that.

This operation is only going to work if their old way of life is completely decimated. The depopulation effort kick-started by the fast food initiative will help with that, especially if we manage to cull all their elders. Once they start to get sick, we'll have the impetus we'll need to inject them all with mercury laced 'vaccines' and further this most vital agenda. Can't have them sucking up all of our air, now.

Since we had the brilliant idea to remove all the trees, oxygen is finally ready to become a valuable commodity exclusively controlled by your great companies, so we'll certainly need to watch the population levels closer than ever. It shouldn't be too difficult to keep their numbers manageable once they're huddled up together in the cities.

When we're mostly left with the younger generation, we'll orchestrate a world class propaganda campaign to shame them into forgetting everything they knew about their old ways. In twenty years, they'll look back at their past in complete disgust; the very mention of their parents four-legged antics chasing squirrels through the woods will be considered a grave insult as they sip their frothy designer coffee beverages in some yuppie cafe with the oxygen-pumps on full blast.

We won't let them get too modernized, of course. We'll still need to fester plenty of radicalized terrorists to blow their fellow aborigines up, allowing us to justify maintaining the occupation. I'm sure we'll find a good balance.

We'll need to pay special attention to keeping the natives well isolated from the expats that move into the more unspoilt regions along the coasts, so all the cities will need to be established far inland. I personally plan to buy one of the first beach condos you construct. I can't think of a better place I'd like to retire to with my wife, she's always wanted to live on a private beach. I hope one of you can give me a good deal?

We'll be looking to your well-paid and experienced private armies to take the lead in guiding the unruly mob of little punks we call troops. We expect all the real fighting will be done by your armies, with the armed forces filling inconsequential positions like couriering, cooking and guarding. It's a shame we can't use only private soldiers, but we need to keep up appearances.

We're going to need to make sure the terrorist attacks on our own soil continue, to keep the public support for the war in full swing. It's very unlikely any pissed off

Nureongi is going to find his way to Orninica on his own now that we have them completely surrounded, so we'll need to continue with false-flag operations.

One attack every couple of years should be sufficient, unless of course there's some big embarrassing news story we need to bury. We can try to use undercover operatives to radicalize a few Nureongi, arm them, smuggle them to Orninica and point them to the nearest school or hospital, but I doubt the bumbling fools would pull off a successful attack. We'd need to hold their hand every step of the way, so it's really much easier just to false-flag and be done with it.

I should make it clear that the Nureongi false-flags won't replace the domestic terrorist false-flags, we need both kinds of attacks to supplement each other. The public need to fear each other as much as they need to fear foreigners. It's the only way to keep them down and to keep the drones herding them all unopposed from the sky.

We also will need to carry out false-flag attacks on some of our allies, so they can justify entering the war to their voters. I've attached a list of the countries we think will be most likely to resist joining the war effort. I've also drawn up some proposals for these false-flags, I think an attack on some train stations would be especially fruitful, but the final decision falls on the commanders of your private armies, since they'll be carrying out the operations. I'm sure they'll come up with some creative ideas. I served with a lot of them back in the good old days.

We're going to need to really squeeze every penny out of this war, it might very well be the last big war we get to start now that every other chickenhearted country in the world kowtows to our will. If it's going to be our last major war, then let's see to it that it's still being fought when our unborn descendants are calling the shots.

We really need it to drag on until it ceases to be profitable. That's why it's absolutely essential that we carefully manage the population count of the natives. We don't want the population to drop so low that there's no one left to fire on, but we don't want too many of them left alive or they'll be a threat to our development plans and a strain on the oxygen supply.

I look forward to working with you all closely over the coming years, this is going to be a very lucrative business venture. We're all very excited here in the capital, the anticipation is truly electrifying.

THE GENERAL THANKS YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION. PLEASE DESTROY DOCUMENT NOW.

# Chapter Sixteen: Child

Glorious Orninica, home of liberty. Our hard fought land so bright and strong. Hail, oh hail, great Orninican patriots, which that fight with such determination. Come home from battle to rest your weary heads. Share the riches of your great successfulness, spread out far and wide and open up your shops of business. Sons and daughters of the great Orninican land, travel far and make your demands. You do proud, our everlasting battle for democracy, liberty and the majesty of the greatest country. Stand on our stoops and safe guard this elite society from outside hindrance. The orchestra plays for your mighty fists with each blow they land. The brave and the free marching constantly, under Bahman, glorious Orninica, home of liberty.

That's all of the national anthem, even the middle part. I remembered it without looking.

It's so scary what's happening, those yellow dogs from a different country exploding the schools. I wish I didn't have to go to school any more, what if they choose my school next time? I'm afraid to even go to sleep, what if the savage yellows come in my window at night and kill me while I'm asleep? I wouldn't even know that I was dead. And my parents would never remember to feed Tutu, my orange hamster.

I hope that the soldiers can kill all the yellow dogs soon, so they stop making their sneaky bombs. Maybe the President could make a big wall all around their country, to keep them inside, like a cage. Then they wouldn't be able to come here and kill us. Or maybe he could flood their country with water until it sinks into the sea so they all drown. Or he could shoot a really big laser to make it so hot that they all get thirsty and die. I'm going to write to him and ask him to kill them all quickly so I can stop being scared so much.

I have the Nureongi Peasant Princess doll, it used to be my third favorite doll, but now I'm never going to play with it again. I tried to pull the head off it, but it was too hard. She's a stupid doll anyway, she didn't even come with any good clothes, just a weird crown thing and a bow and arrow and a bikini.

When I made a drawing of my school exploding, my daddy said not to worry and that the Nureongi probably won't kill me because I go to private school and they only attack poor pups because their schools are in bad neighborhoods and all their security is robots. Our school has real security guards. He said I should be more worried about molesters than terrorists.

We're all going to wear a red rose on our shirts at school tomorrow to remember the pups that died. It was Mrs. Chi, my maths teacher that thought of it. I think it's red because of all the blood when they died. They keep showing a lot of blood on the

floor on the news. We watched the news in class for basically the whole day, didn't even have to turn in our homework. And then they let us go home an hour early. But now we have to write this homework about how we feel about the terrorist attack and about the Orninican national anthem.

I'm not really that scared of blood. I cut my finger last week, and I didn't even cry a little bit. If I get cut again, I'm going to rub my finger on my Nureongi Peasant Princess. She really deserves to get hurt. I wish she were dead. She's so ugly.

Maybe my grandma will get me a new doll now to replace her. I'm going to call her and ask. If I explain it to her, she'll understand. Maybe I can even talk her into getting me another birthday cake since Nureongi princess was one of the princesses on my last birthday cake so it sort of didn't count.

Oh yeah, I think that our national anthem is really good. It has a lot of loyalty in it. I think it was the first song I remembered the words for because we have to say it at school every morning. I don't know what some of the words mean, but they sound really strong and brave.

The national anthem was written by Burt Fitz during the first great war. I think he was a really good soldier because he protected us from the evil communists and I think he was also pretty fashionable because he always wore a scarf and a hat in his pictures.

I think the national anthem should be made into a cool music video with modern music behind it and pretty dancing girls so that pups will like it more. And they can get someone to dress up like Burt Fitz and sing the anthem, but like as a cool hip hop song.

My favorite doll is my Orninican Business Lady doll because she's the prettiest and has the best shoes. She comes with a business suit and a cocktail dress and two different sizes of breast implants that you can switch out. I don't need the business suit so I'm going to put it on Nureongi Peasant Princess. If I color her in with a magic marker, I can make her into an Orninican too. She'll still be ugly, but at least she won't be a terrorist any more. She always tries to suicide attack the other dolls when I let her play, and sometimes she hides bombs in Orninican Business Lady's breast implant holes like the terrorist ladies did last year on that airplane.

I really hope that they stop letting foreigners into Orninica. They always try to kill everyone that lives here. I don't really understand why they want to hurt us, and every time I ask, grown ups just say that the terrorists don't like our freedom so they try to take it away. But I don't know what that means. Why wouldn't they like freedom? Is it bad for them? It just doesn't make sense. There must be a better explanation than that, but no one I ask seems to know what it is. Maybe we did something to hurt them first and no one said sorry for it so they're mad at us? Maybe if we say sorry to them they'll go away and stop being assholes.

Everyone always says that our freedom is so great and that everyone in the world wishes they were Orninican like us. I guess I don't really understand because I've always lived in Orninica, but it seems like we don't have very much freedom. The

police dogs record everything we do all the time. Like, all the time. Even when we're asleep. I guess the terrorists want to take away the tiny little bit of freedom we have so that we don't have any left at all. But I still don't understand why. Maybe no one really knows.

It would really be so much better without foreigners. They're always standing around out on the street and in parking lots, and they never have any money. And also, they talk funny and their food smells like a poo. The drones should put all the foreigners back in the sea so that everyone can be safe again. And then the government could make the sea into acid so that anyone that tries to swim here again will get melted and die.

But they would have to take the seahorses all out of the sea first and put them in fish tanks so they don't melt too. I really, really love seahorses. Especially purple ones.

What I don't understand is how come Soupman doesn't ever come down to save us from the bad guys. He has all these magical powers and he's like, our savior and everything, but he let all those little pups and their teachers get killed, and the passengers on that airplane before. Why didn't he help them?

He could have used his laser eyes to make the terrorists bombs blow up while they were still holding them. Or, he could just pick them up and fly them to the moon so they can't breathe. Or he could blow them so hard that they turn into porridge. He can see everything, like a really powerful drone, but nicer, so why didn't he do anything?

Whenever we go to church, the vicar always says that Soupman cares about earthlings more than anything. But no one's ever even seen him for two-thousand years. He used to rescue humans all the time, but what about us? I guess maybe he always has a meeting to go to or something? Anyway, it's really bad. He should help us.

# Chapter Seventeen: Professor of Antiquities II

My journey to Nureongi as part of Harvey Fidelbrook's historic expedition is complete. Though yesterday's unfortunate developments put a dampener on things, I did make a few discoveries on our trip that could be useful towards the war effort, so I'll go ahead and talk a little about my experience.

But first, I want to thank Mr. Fidelbrook for including me on the monumental three-dog voyage. I was touched to be chosen. I first met Harvey when I was working as a consultant on his historical religious epic 'Soupman: Savior of the Earth', where he played the titular messiah who sacrificed himself at the hands of the destructive purveyor of doom for the sins of all earthlings. We've been in correspondence ever since, and suffice to say, when he asked if I'd be interested in joining the expedition, I couldn't have been more excited.

The history of Nureongi has always been very sketchy. We know the natives weren't companions to man as were we, but rather a lowly livestock animal. Man clearly considered them a lesser dog. It is thought that the ancient Nureongi were highly inbred and of diminished intelligence, knowing no life outside of a cage. It is generally accepted by most scientists that they are a wholly separate subspecies than the rest of us.

When man left the earth two-thousand-and-forty-two years ago, the Nureongi freed themselves from their cages, and as their intelligence rapidly developed, they formed the first tribe; the Unata. Their founding fathers had suffered great hardships at the hands of man, and because of this, they didn't integrate any of man's culture into their own. In fact, they actively avoided the abandoned human cities, and instead made the wilds their home. The young were told stories of ghosts and demons that guarded the cities, and for centuries no one dared approach.

Because of this taboo, the ruins of these cities are practically undisturbed. There is so much we can learn about mankind from even the most cursory walk through these sites. It's really the closest we'll ever get to walking through a city at the height of the ancient human civilization. Sadly, the expedition was cut short before we were able to visit the cities, but we did do a low fly over one of them on the way in, and it was truly spectacular. Absolutely the pinnacle of my career.

If only I could go back with a full team of specialists, I know the knowledge we would unearth would be simply dumbfounding. The lessons we can learn from those

ancient cities could fill countless volumes of text books. There's no telling what positive influence on our society these lessons would have.

While I didn't have time to learn very much about mankind's history in this part of the world, I did learn quite a bit about the origins of the Nureongi. One of the tribal leaders, on hearing of my archaeological background, presented me with a rather unusual gift; an ancient tin can from the human-era with a faded picture of a yellow dog on it. He explained that the symbols on the can read "very tasty dog soup". He claimed that his tribe, the Unata, had many such shocking artifacts saved by their ancestors so that the coming generations would never forget their tragic history.

The Unata and many of the other tribes of Nureongi live in perpetual fear of the humans one day returning from the skies to eat them. It is customary for them to take turns watching the sky for any signs of rocket craft.

This superstition runs deep in their culture, to the point where a common image in many of their plays, artworks and poems depicts a man reaching down from the sky and grabbing a defenseless dog out of his bed. Another common image, apparently adapted from an ancient human artwork now lost, is a dog being barbecued outdoors by a family of smiling humans.

It has become apparent to me that these dogs, so convinced that humans were despicable violent creatures that caged and slaughtered their forbearers, can obviously never be acclimatized to our way of life. How can they be expected to adapt to a system of living that holds humans in the highest regard and follows every human custom and belief we unearth? It's just not practical for us to expect to be able to convert these aborigines to our civilization. And if we can't civilize them, then what purpose does it serve to occupy their lands? There has to be another way.

Of course, the terrorists responsible for the senseless attack on our soil must pay for these unthinkable crimes they've committed against our country, I'm certainly not some kind of extremist, but is an all out invasion really the best answer? If we can't apprehend the terrorists, then perhaps we could just send drones to execute a few thousand of the Nureongi in retaliation. I think they would quickly learn that we mean business, and hand the terrorists over to avoid further civilian bloodshed.

Targeted drone attacks would have a much more measured effect than an all out invasion. An invasion would likely bombard the whole country, including the immaculately well-preserved ruins that have still never been excavated. The Nureongi would have no choice but to take cover in the ruins of the cities, and we would have no choice but to bomb, burn, and otherwise destroy these last wonders of the old world. We simply must find a solution that preserves the ruins so that they can one day be studied and added to our knowledge base for prosperity.

Perhaps, rather than invading Nureongi using traditional methods of destructive artillery, we could use a gentler, more compassionate and ecologically-conscious methodology. Thousands of planes could fly over their country day and night, releasing high concentrations of noxious gases that would drift down and affect the Nureongi, making them docile, sickly and non-violent, but not damage the fragile ruins. We would have

our rightful justice for the terrorist attack, and the incredible historic sites would be left intact. I hope that the military will consider this as a serious option, or the ruins are as good as forfeited.

We simply must put history first. If their past is lost forever, then how will the Nureongi ever be able to modernize and join the rest of the world in the modern era? Without a clear view of the past, there can be no planning for the future. Every culture deserves to know where it came from, even misguided cultures that for whatever reason, harbor vicious terrorists. Perhaps there is knowledge waiting to be unearthed in their humans ancient cities that can redeem the humans in their eyes, and make them finally accept humanity as the supreme species. There's just no telling what remarkable, earth-shattering finds there could be waiting for us at those unique sites.

By bombing the ruins, we could be destroying the ultimate knowledge we've been seeking for centuries. We could be putting an absolute end to any chance of ever reaching ascension. It's an unthinkable notion and it should give us all pause for careful reflection.

And if we killed the few elders that are able to interpret the strange written language of the humans from this region, it could take us decades to decipher the symbols.

We must remember that the Nureongi are very simple creatures. We can't expect a species of dogs still living in the stone age to conform to our peaceful ideals without the proper guidance. To them, brutal violence is probably a natural part of everyday life. They likely don't understand basic concepts we take for granted such as civility and friendship. I'd guess that to them, without any real religion or reverence for a higher being, death is simply a routine affair, with no meaning attached to it, and little mourning.

I readily admit this is all just supposition, I didn't spend enough time living among them to truly understand the intricacies of their social order, but it makes a lot of sense. It would explain why such a seemingly passive group of dogs would attack us so violently. To them the attack is simply a ritual, a beating of the drum if you will. Perhaps doing war with each other, and now with us, is how they commune. Maybe it is the only way they have to express to other dogs their proud traditions. I'm sure they fully expect us to respond in kind with our own aggressive attack. They would likely be insulted if we did not. But of course, they don't understand that our weapons are much more destructive than theirs, and when we attack, it will change them forever.

All I can do now is plead with our military. Please don't completely annihilate their country. Leave enough of the ruins standing for my team to explore. There are so many hidden secrets that need to be discovered. I can feel it in my bones.

## Chapter Eighteen: Actor II

Yes it is true, Harvey spent some time in Nureongi. That doesn't make me a traitor! I despise the vile sneaky yellow bastards as much as any of you! I only went to their filthy country to try to broker peace. As I held out the figurative peace pipe, they sucker punched our fine nation in a colossal act of unscrupulous cowardice. The moment I found out about the attack, I scrambled back to my jet, barely getting home in one piece.

If you're going to point the finger at an Orninican for being a traitor, try my traveling companion, the spineless Poodle accountant turned revolutionary, Gerald Barker. He was constantly blathering on about how ideal and wonderful their wretched way of life is. It was truly pathetic, the little weasel. He was so infatuated with their primitive tribal political system and their complete lack of a police force, he was practically begging for them to strip off his clothes and paint him yellow. In fact, he literally took off all his clothes when we arrived, stood next to me as naked as one of the savages, said he wanted to acculturate better. Be one of them!

Harvey Fidelbrook is no traitor! He has always been and will always be a proud Orninican patriot. Hand me a machine gun and I'll join our troops right now in shooting Nureongi scum by the dozen. Just line them up and watch me blast them into a million little chunks. I won't even flinch. No, sir. I am as all-Orninican as the world has ever seen. The last true patriot. You'd better believe it.

Don't forget I got my big break in film playing Private Puddles Briggs in the gritty period piece, 'The Brutal War That Never Ended.' Remember my stoic performance in that picture as I gunned down collaborator villagers indiscriminately, with nary a bead of sweat on my brow. Put that scene in your mind and imagine me doing the same tenfold to the Nureongi. All I feel for the Nureongi is hate. Unending, unquenchable, unbearable, seething hate to the nth degree.

I just notified my close personal friend, the President, that I'll be donating a considerable amount from my personal fortune to the war effort for the good of the country. My two sons will be lining up outside the nearest recruitment office the very moment day breaks. I'll make sure of it. We will teach those cowardly foreign peasants a thing or two about advanced warfare. They dare to slaughter our innocent pups in the sanctity of their schools? I say no! Never again will a Nureongi take the life of an Orninican. We will take ten-thousand lives for every life they have stolen from us! Those lowlife skunks will suffer like no dog has ever suffered before.

While brainstorming with the President, I also graciously offered my services entertaining the troops. I'll be touring the camps with an entourage of dancing dolls and

singing songs from my latest album, 'I've Got the Harveys: The Fidelbrook Blues'. I'll also be reading segments from my prize-winning autobiography, 'How Harvey Made It: The Arduous Path to International Super-Stardom', and handing out autographed copies to our brave fighters for a small fee.

It is truly saddening that I wasn't able to broker peace. This is the first time in my life that I have failed at something I set out to do. But I promise you, there was nothing anyone could do to quiet the intense rage of those dirty carnivorous malignants. They want to destroy us. Our very existence is grossly offensive to them... Every breath an Orninican takes outrages the Nureongi beyond reason. The very idea of us breathing 'their' air is an affront to their vicious tribal pride. We must extinguish them without mercy before their arrogance spreads across the world like a virus, and infects others with notions of terrorism and civil disobedience.

It really worries me that the terrorists were able to get past our advanced security systems to place the explosives in our schools. I plan to lead a campaign for increasing security and surveillance, doubling up on drones and public security agents across the country. Not even one square inch of Orninican land should go uncovered by the watchful eye of our security forces. We must monitor everything, everywhere to protect our pups from any future attacks. We have to think of our pups above all else. Our pups are our future.

It's true, I am easily rattled by my critics. I'll admit to it. But it's only because I have such an over-sized heart, so filled to the brim with spooling emotive energy and compassion for all living things. I feel at a level most dogs couldn't begin to comprehend. Every time there's tragedy or misery somewhere in the world, every time a pup goes to sleep without his corn mash, I feel it deep in my bones. It haunts me.

How do you think I became such a world renowned actor? There's a lot more to it than simple immaculate skill and impeccable natural talent.

Emoting on such a heightened level drains my reverberating energy and leaves my body vacant and spent. It's such an acute task to feel as much overwhelming feeling as I feel, and somehow battle and squeeze to direct the deluge of emotion into the shape of a masterful character for the ages, to delight and thrill audiences with an unnerving performance piece channeled from the rapidly flooding cellar of my ever-suffering soul. It's an immense struggle that I wouldn't wish on even my most vehement opponent.

But Harvey Fidelbrook has to endure this intense grief and sorrow, for the good of the eternal, unwavering artistry of the canine spirit. To build such unrelenting character portraits as 'Brenda', the cross-dressing prostitute of the titular film loosely based on a true story, who was chewed whole and spat out by the unforgiving ghetto, and then rose up to become champion of the little dogs; as the head of a talent agency for height-challenged actors.

When I was recognized with my third Benji for that uplifting masterpiece, I gave grave consideration to bowing out from performance art forever. Yes, it's true, it almost happened. But I realized, there were still peaks for me to scale in this great misunderstood profession. There were still ordinary working dogs with hearts I had

yet to touch. Hearts just waiting for me to come along and shine on them with one of my sincere, down to earth, life-changing character portraits.

Since then, I've come to grasp that the method actor can never really sit idle on his coattails. Performing for an appreciative audience is like a necessary bodily function to someone so ingrained in the wonderment of the dramatic art form. Without the release dramatic rendition grants me, I could very well become irreparably mentally dented.

As long as there are hardworking dogs that remain untouched by emotion, Harvey will be there to bring love to their hearts. To fuse it deeply within their cells so that they can never escape it.

So I persist, I continue to put all of myself into every role I'm handed, draining myself dry, suffering eternally and thanklessly for my craft. At the end of the day I'm left a spent, quivering mess collapsed into a hot-tub with my masseuses, because I know it's bigger than me; this calling I've been given by forces from beyond the realm of the living.

I know my fans demand it and without my performances, their lives would be largely devoid of culture and meaning. I bring refinement to the masses. I speak to the little dog, like no other actor can. I embody the suffering in every dark, grimy corner of society. I am supreme compassion. I am the starving orphan, I am the broken drunk, I am the disease infested prostitute looking for her next fix, I am the emotionally crippled war hero, I am the bum on the street begging for change. Change that can only come from the haunted canine soul.

And as for the unruly little turnip-head that had the barefaced nerve to smudge 'traitor' on my car's rear window with his greasy little digit while I was parked outside my flagship gourmet restaurant, 'Harv's Place', my team of private investigators have recovered your prints, and as soon as they track you down, you'll be facing the fiercest defamation lawsuit this country has ever seen! See you in court, buddy boy. And don't you expect even an ounce of mercy from this great patriot.

# Chapter Nineteen: Grand Bishop II

There are disgruntled whispers I see spreading on the Internet like a plague, poor misguided dogs grumbling incessantly about the sphere of influence our Orninican corporations possess, and the well-deserved stash of riches enjoyed by their hardworking shareholders and managers. This is an easy mistake to make, my pups.

We must remember the fact that under his divine cowl, Bahman, the holiest of holy men, the upholder of all justice, was a man of immense wealth and influence. His great corporate empire led the world in wondrous technological advances and business acumen that logically and reasonably enabled Bahman to accumulate great profits for himself and his shareholders and managers.

Bahman was indeed born a very rich and pure-bred man, and it was most assuredly due to his superior breeding that he was so adept in his true calling as a proud crusader for righteousness. He lived in a grand towering mansion on a hill overlooking the city, with only his loyal man-servant for fellowship. He drove an assortment of innovative motor vehicles that would make even the most luxurious Braniso pale in comparison.

His still impressive arsenal of justice, his majestically woven costumes and the trophies of his many heroic conquests lined every wall of the great cave of justice. Yes, Bahman surrounded himself with riches like any blessed hard-working Orninican today.

So you see, my pups, wealth and power are nothing to pooh-pooh, they are advantages rightfully granted to great leaders and visionaries. It is only natural that those born with superior genetics and gifted with an immaculate upbringing would be better than the average dog, that they would know how to best spread justice and freedom among the masses.

Bahman didn't see the need to wait for the slow-to-act government or the inept police force to right the wrongs he saw in his great city; he took matters into his own hands, as only a superior aristocratic pedigree of a man could do. He was above the law.

So is it really so unreasonable to expect that our great dogs of industry and finance today, born in mansions that can equal Bahman's, not need to kowtow to mere public servants? I think not. Our great business dogs, born to lives of privilege, surely know what is right for our society better than any sneaky troublemakers slithering their way through the tubes of the Internet like venomous serpents.

These same dissidents complain about the expansive surveillance our country depends on for its very survival. They must be reminded of the magnificent computer that sits in Bahman's cave. With this device, our savior kept a close eye on the populace, watching for criminal activity, for terrorist plotting, for anything out of place or

suspicious seeming. He embraced surveillance as fully as our own culture has, and to deny this would be simply sacrilegious.

If Bahman were a proponent of the ever watchful eye, then what right do these misguided young disbelievers have to question the wisdom of continuing in our Master's footsteps? It is simply obscene, that these disaffected voices would dare to make themselves heard in a public forum. The government's censorship of the Internet must go further if we are to succeed in stamping out such blatant hate-speech that attacks the values of all the dogs in this society. These anonymous cowards should be tracked down and incarcerated at once for their dangerous and reckless talk.

It is clear and undeniable that Bahman wants for us to throw open our arms and fully embrace materialism. It is only through the amassing of many disparate goods all through our lives that we can reach a state of mind that will allow us to commit the ultimate selfless act.

The more physical possessions we have lining the walls of our homes, the greater the sacrifice will be when we leave everything we own behind to join the masters in the great cave in the sky. It is only logical that the more money and valuables we agree to leave to the church when we die, the greater meaning our death will have.

So fear not believers, shop to your heart's content. Buy everything you can fit onto your credit cards, feeling safe in the knowledge that our wonderful materialism is an integral part of our journey to nirvana. Ornicina's unmatched wealth is a wonderful gift from man that should never be recklessly squandered by leaving our credit cards at home. Think of your credit cards as your personal key cards to the great cave in the sky. Never again doubt Bahman's supreme capitalism.

In a way, the great corporation Bahman ran more than two-thousand years ago is still standing today, in the form of the The Holy Temple of Bahman. So when you donate to the church, you're symbolically buying shares in the oldest corporation of them all. Shares that you can cash in the afterlife.

When you pass away and meet Bahman, he will know exactly how much you donated to his temples throughout your life. It would be highly embarrassing for you if he looked upon you and saw you had only donated a pittance. Don't forget, Bahman was very charitable in his lifetime, donating untold millions to the less fortunate. A general guideline to adhere to, a minimum of 15% of your gross salary should be donated to the church every month. That is just enough for us to perform our basic duties spreading the good word and preparing our faithful for eventual entry into the great cave. Of course, if dogs would donate more than that, we would be able to perform even more good.

There are some dogs that have been lead astray by the hucksters calling themselves vicars of Soupman. It seems that these lost souls have been convinced by the vicars that, by donating to both The Holy Temple of Bahman and the Modern Church of Soupman, they can 'cover all their bases'. This is a terrible fallacy. Donating to that flying alien's cockamamie cult is exactly the same as worshiping Soupman; as accepting him as your messiah.

This is not up for debate, you simply cannot worship two messiahs. By donating to both churches, you deny yourself the possibility of ever entering the great cave in the sky. Bahman will tolerate no division of loyalties. Give your full donation to The Holy Temple of Bahman from now on, and perhaps you will be forgiven for your misstep when you are judged by the butler at the entrance to the cave. Perhaps there is still a slight chance he will let you pass if you repent immediately and never stray again.

Any clergy-dog that tries to tell you that his religion is somehow easier, simpler, more fun and less work is obviously not to be trusted. There is nothing easy, simple or fun about worship. It's meant to be arduous. You can't just show up whenever you feel like getting out of bed, light a candle, say a prayer and call it a day.

You have to be there at the break of dawn every Sunday and on every holy holiday, and listen to the entire sermon. You have to confess your sins and you have to put in the work to better yourself in the eyes of the Master. The Soups think that by singing joyful songs and dancing around the church like elated mental deficients, spouting gibberish, they are somehow 'modern' or 'progressive' or 'fun'. If you want fun and games, go sit in a circus tent, not in a church.

Religion is about abstaining from the things that make you gleeful, about denying yourself the carnal pleasures, about fasting and purifying, about confessing and repenting, about sacramental manduction, about doing everything you possibly can to avoid eternal damnation in the clown prince's unspeakable hellfire. This is not a game, and perhaps anyone that allows himself to believe a buffoon vicar's easy lies deserves the dreadful fate that awaits him in the afterlife. Perhaps the Soups secretly worship the clown prince. It would explain their jovial behavior, their constant celebration and all their barely-disguised evil tendencies.

Perhaps all Soups are here on earth to test our faith, to take every possible opportunity to corrupt Bahmanite souls and condemn them forever. I wouldn't be at all surprised if it turned out that the Soups drank blood and sacrificed newborns to their true master, who sits and watches us from his throne in his fiery lair hidden in the earth's core and cackles incessantly every time one of our faithful is corrupted by his deviant servants.

Ask yourselves, my pups. Is it really worth the risk to play with fire? If something is too good to be true, isn't it usually the case that you are being swindled? What sense does it make really, that Soupman could be so compassionate and accepting? So undemanding? How does he never show anger? Isn't it odd that he would allow such loud, expressive, uncontrolled joyousness in his place of worship? It's just not logical that an all-powerful alien entity would act in this disorderly manner.

## Chapter Twenty: Police Officer

Man, rookie, you wouldn't believe the emails some of these wackos send each other, it's total madness. You would have heard of a lot of these dogs I've been watching too, real big shots. Real kinky too, almost without exception.

There's this one guy, married for twenty years, really well respected in his line of work, always emailing these way-out photos to this little college hottie he met at a sci-fi convention. Guy takes all his clothes off, climbs into these over sized hamster cages he keeps in his basement, ties a ribbon around his junk, and sets the camera to snap away. There's no space in there, so he's all curled up with his head against his knees, drooling all over himself, red in the face, looking like he's about to suffocate.

And that's not even the interesting part. A few days later, she sends him photos she took of him in a cage, only now she's poking him with needles through the cage, and the guy's covered in blood, and loving every minute of it. She's wearing all her clothes, and has this completely normal ho-hum expression on her face, like she's washing the dishes or something. Pushes a crap-load of needles right into this fat little pervert like it's nothing.

He responds to that email telling her he jacked off to the photos, and it was the best night of his life and when can they do it again. And oh yeah, not to worry about the wife, he can just drug her again like last time. Girl responds saying she'll only come back if she can have some alone time with the out-cold wife. Guy says no problem, come on over, she'll be drugged and waiting.

Man, I can't wait to see the photos they take of that session, that's gonna be some freaked out shit. One to take home with me. I hope the girl keeps her iYglass on her head this time, though. Last time she took it off and the angle was too low to see anything, but I got some really awesome audio.

It's pretty cool man, I can choose who I want to follow, I have a quota of three-hundred saps a month to meet. Gotta read all their emails, chats, look at all their photos and videos, watch them in their sitting rooms and offices, plod through their weird ass unconscious thoughts. And I get to choose whoever I want. Well, most of the good celebrities are already taken by other cops, especially the ladies. But I've got a few D-listers. Some of them have surprisingly decent jugs.

They make us spend equal time monitoring males and females, otherwise all the guys on the force would just watch the ladies 24/7. But actually, you get bored of watching girls all day anyway, after a while I mean. Guys are a lot weirder, way more interesting subjects.

Thanks to iYglass, now we can patch into a live video feed pretty much 24/7, so it's gotten much easier to see some skin. In the morning when they're getting dressed in front of their mirrors, I've got like a hundred feeds going at once. It's fucking crazy, man. Like a burst of naked hotness all at once. I just wish my eyes could take it all in at once, there's so much I miss. Have to keep rewinding.

A lot of times, when you find someone really hot to tag, the other cops all cram into your office to get a look at her, and they'll offer to trade you like three of their ones for your find. I only agree to trade if there's a cash incentive added, too. One of the guys was so into this one girl I found that he gave me ten of his girls, plus two thousand oonos. I think he must have known her from high school or something, he would have done anything to get her.

It's been much easier being a cop since they filled the streets with drones. Now that we don't have to ride around looking for jaywalkers all day, we can get some real police work done. It's really revolutionized policing and made the job a hell of a lot more fun for everyone.

Sure, we barely ever leave our desks now, but why would we? We've got the whole fucking world at our fingertips here. You see a hot little mess waiting tables at a truck stop? Get her name, log in to the database, add her to your file, and away you go. In a few days, you'll know her better than anyone in her life. Your neighbor's daughter just hit puberty? Leave no stone unturned, man, gotta keep the public safe from themselves.

Damn, I love being a cop.

You'll get to be a data analyst too soon enough, you've just gotta keep at it. Keep on running through the perps the drones bring in, and eventually they'll promote you out of processing and to one of the data mining departments, and maybe you can sit in the office right next to mine. I'll even give you some of my girls to get you started. The ones I'm done with, I mean. Not the ones that are actually worth something. Just hang in there, man, it'll get better.

In the mean time, if you've got an ex-girlfriend you want me to keep an eye on, let me know. I've helped a lot of guys out with that. I can know every move she makes, practically before she makes it, as long as I watch her long enough. She'd have to be really hot though, to be worth my time. And there would be a small fee, of course. I bill by the hour.

There was this little whore I used to spend some quality time with every so often, but she went and got hitched and cut me off. She was the first one I added to my file, been watching her everyday, ever since. Her husband sure likes pounding her ass, practically never goes near her other holes, just wants non stop ass every time.

I've got a bunch of footage from his iYglass of him sitting at gay bars trying to get up the nerve to finally give in to his unnatural urges. I'm just waiting for him to go through with it so I can send her the evidence. Anonymously, of course. Then she should let me bang her again. I'll stay well away from her ass, though, after seeing the way he uses it up.

We're also hooked up to all the drones by the way, can even take control of them. You can get some killer down-blouse and up-skirt shots that way. You've gotta be careful though, if you press the wrong button you can accidentally blast a hole in the girl you're following. Happened to me once, was stalking this super-fine jogger in the park, meant to zoom in on her boobs, but I hit the trigger instead. It worked out okay though, I just blamed it on hackers. They totally bought it.

But maybe practice a bit with the drone's controls first, before you choose someone to stalk. Just some advice. Every rookie makes mistakes, and when it happens to you, just remember our motto, "Deny, deny, deny." As long as you don't do something completely ridiculous like use a drone to shoot up the station, you'll probably get away with it.

There's even someone on the force I know about who uses drones to disappear his bookies when they try to collect. Just drops them in the middle of the ocean. It's pretty effective if there's someone you need to get rid of. That same guy also has a drone following his girlfriend around 24/7, he's pretty paranoid. Nice guy, though. I'll introduce you when you get the promotion. You could learn a lot from him, guy's got real skills.

Now don't get me wrong, we have to do at least a little work watching the fringe groups, immigrants and minorities. It's not hard though, all the extremists do when they meet is sit around drinking tea and talk about how they want to 'make the world a better place' and how pathetic and sad they all are seeing 'all the unfairness' around them. It's pretty funny. You just have to take some notes and file them with the recordings, is all. They're careful not to use any trigger words or organize rallies and protests or anything. They know the law pretty well, the little wieners.

Every couple of months, the feds will plant one of their agents in one of the groups to try and rile them up and incite some good old fashioned violence. When that happens, we have to double the time we spend watching them, no biggie. Unfortunately, they usually don't take the bait, so the feds end up having to plant some evidence on them to break up the group. Whatever gets the job done.

The immigrants and minorities are easier to watch, you can just choose a couple at random and see what they're up to. Usually they're just cleaning or praying or lining up outside government buildings waiting for their papers. Probably the most boring part of the job. But it gets more interesting when the feds radicalize one of them and send him on a bullshit suicide attack, that shit is hilarious. Dumb saps.

The 'iYglass for Everyone' program has really been a godsend. It's like the golden era of policing down here. You're a real lucky dog, to be joining the force in these awesome times. And just wait until you see the vending machines we've got down here, they put the crappy little one you rookies have up in processing to shame. Man, we're really living the good life.

# Chapter Twenty-One: Judge

Mr. Fifi, you were right, it was a cinch, I just met the quota in under a week; sentenced precisely a thousand petty lawbreakers to a decade in your state of the art mega prisons. Outlawing growing trees and grass was truly a brilliant stroke of genius, bravo sir. We can incarcerate twenty times as many dogs than before these laws came into effect. With a thousand new workers at your disposal, you should be able to meet the government's deadline with plenty of time to spare. You can get those new tanks built up and ready to send off to the war.

Give me around another week, and I'll have another thousand felons ready for work. I saw on the news that the Fifi Corporation just got the contract for the new armored vehicles and the underwater mines, too. Will a thousand inmate workers be enough or should I shoot for more? Just say the word, and I'll throw the book at jaywalkers and speeding motorists just as hard if I have to.

Actually, I was thinking, you could lobby to outlaw shrubbery too, that would really help climb the numbers of arrests our officers could make. I'm always seeing shameless shrub growers in my neighborhood, carefully pruning their bushes, acting so smugly, as if they've found a loophole in the law, so there's ample justification for it. They would undoubtedly find something else to use if we banned shrubs, so we could continue to prosecute public urinators, too. Even though the users are obviously not as valuable a target as the growers, it's certainly still very profitable to convict them.

If you are given the contract to build the new tiny 'cockroach-drones, we're going to really need to get that conviction rate sky-high, we'll need to triple our workforce at least. Maybe put a law on the table outlawing scratching in public? That could really do the trick. It's absolutely sickening how many unemployed there are out there, littering the streets. The more we put to work, the better off society will be. It's really a compassionate service that we're providing here when you think about it. For the greater good.

I just tried that sniveling little wannabe revolutionary accountant you sent me today, couldn't have gone smoother. He's truly a despicable little weed, isn't he sir? I couldn't even dream of charging you for that conviction, it's completely on the house. I'm just glad we finally got him, thanks to that Fidelbrook character.

The weedy revolutionary has been riling up the peasants unhampered for far too long with his dangerous blogging. I really threw the book at him, so you won't have to worry about him spreading dissent in your prisons, his execution date is already set. Managed to get a long list of unsolved crimes off the books too. I'm sure your warden

will show him a good time when he arrives at your fine facility, sir. I hear the guards in the death row wing are especially prone to violent outbursts.

Actually Mr. Fifi, I have some ideas for streamlining our process a little bit, if you have time to hear them? I was thinking, now that Mr. Rumblefort's Nureongi prison camps are open and filling up overseas; providing the government with even cheaper labor than your domestic prisons can provide, you could devise a way to get Ornican prisoners stripped of their citizenship, so you can stop paying them the oono a day you're forced to pay them.

Maybe set up a mega prison offshore, perhaps on one of the corporation's old out of use oil rigs, so you don't have to follow health and safety regulations, and ship these new citizenship-less inmates over. You could even hold them indefinitely, and use, shall we say, unorthodox methods to discipline them and convince them to work. I estimate this could as much as halve your overhead.

We'd need to use the 'aiding the enemy' laws we already have on the books when we try these criminals, in order to revoke their citizenship. I'm thinking we could arrest anyone overheard saying anything slightly un-Ornican. I was in the lobby of my hotel the other day, and I heard a cheeky young dog say that he thinks the drone initiative is a violation of the constitution. That's traitor talk, pure and simple; a perfect candidate to be shipped off to an offshore mega prison. I took down his name and identification number just in case.

If you think I'm onto something and decide to go forward with my idea, I'd love to be a shareholder in the endeavor. Maybe even sit on the board of directors, if you think I've earned it? I really think it's a top-notch project to pursue, sir. After all, you're going to absolutely need to compete with the Nureongi work-camps somehow. I could even possibly re-try a lot of your existing inmates under the aiding the enemy laws to transfer them offshore.

It would especially be effective if we expanded the treason laws to include verbal attacks against police officers, drones, judges, postal workers, hospital staff, etc. An attack on any public official is an attack on the great Ornican nation and should be regarded as an act of treason.

I don't think your politicians would charge too much for that, and I can even write the amendment to the laws myself for a much lower price than a professional lobbyist would charge. I know how frugal you are, Mr. Fifi. After all, you didn't get to be the richest dog the world has ever seen by wasting money.

If for some reason my offshore prison idea doesn't agree with you, sir, we could always have the inmates designated as interns of the Fifi corporation. That always works for me, when I need new staffers. Don't have to pay them a penny. We could call it a work training program, teach them valuable skills they can use upon release. In a factory in some other country, of course.

It really is a lot easier to get things done during war time, sir. The Nureongi's attack on us was such a wonderful blessing. And it couldn't have come at a better time. In the past, we had to be much more subtle in actuating our various projects, but now we

don't even need to worry about it. No need to use convoluted doublespeak to confuse the public into compliance, and we only rarely need to resort to secret courts and secret laws.

We can be almost completely open about our objectives, and thanks to the slavish media, no one even questions it. The prison-military industrial complex is never even questioned by the dazed little boors. It's so very freeing. Well done, sir, well done. You set an example for all of us aspiring tycoons to follow.

We're so incredibly fortunate to live in this marvelous time when we are unhindered by petty obstructions to our intricate machinations. The anti-whistle-blowing laws we engineered five years ago today have given us the unprecedented ability to affect change on a global scale, to ameliorate society forever. I feel that we should commemorate this great day somehow, maybe with a little get together at the Arcanum Society tonight? I'll bring the goat.

Or perhaps you could consider entertaining my wife and I on the island? I would really jump at the opportunity to spend some quality time with you Mr. Fifi, and I know it would make my dear wife so very happy to finally get to visit that incredible island you spend so much of your time on. We would be so positively enthused to receive an invitation at long last. It would mean so much to us if our two families could come together like that. And there are so many ideas I have bouncing about in the old noggin that I'd love to share with you in a more relaxed setting.

No pressure is intended of course, sir. I know how important your family's privacy is to you. The prerogative is entirely yours, after all, I am but a lowly servant. Nevertheless, I would be utterly discreet and courteous if you decided to invite me this year, it is well known in my social circle that I am an ideal house guest with impeccable manners. I would certainly never intrude on areas of the island that are out of bounds to guests. I would be extremely cautious not to pry into your personal, intimate or spiritual affairs, unless it was requested I participate, of course.

You've never formally met my wife, but you should know that she's very accommodating in... Shall we say, interpersonal matters? Indeed, her physical boundaries can be stretched quite far. She certainly would have no qualms about us instructing younger members of society in the carnal pleasures.

What I mean to say is, much, much younger members of society. Perhaps as young as the comely boys that are said to grace your wonderful island?

As always, I live to serve you and your majestic family, Mr. Fifi. I would be nothing without you, absolutely nothing at all. An invisible little withering worm of a dog, hardly even worth stepping on, certainly not for someone with your busy globe-trotting schedule.

You have given me everything, sir. Without your outstanding generosity, I would be absolutely lost. I am your ever-faithful servant today and forever. I am humbled before your presence. I bask in the divine glow that envelopes your majestic body at all times. I am but a tiny, small, little, insignificant dog when sat next to you.

I will truly cherish any time you choose to spend with me, on your island or wherever you wish.

## Chapter Twenty-Two: Soldier

Fuck, war is boring. When I signed up, I thought it would be like the videogames, blowing the enemy up, collapsing buildings, slicing throats, chasing dirty terrorists through the slums; real G.I. hero stuff. But instead we barely ever leave camp. We just hang out and play videogames most of the day, games set in the old wars where you could actually get shit done. This dumb Nureongi war is basically fought 99% by drones and tank-bots. And then the damn private corporate armies they have barking orders at us get the remaining 1% of the action.

If I'm lucky, and we round up some peasants that come to the camp to surrender, the CO lets me frisk the ladies. They all run around naked you know, all their fur is showing all the time. I take my sweet time searching them tribal lovelies. Put my hands all over their soft shiny fur. Sometimes they bitch a bit when I'm too rough with the frisking, but I just yell at them in their gibberish until they shut up. I can do a good impression of their dumb ass language. Opi opi bark bark rir! Makes the boys in my regiment laugh every time. Fucking savages.

I wouldn't mind bringing a couple of them home with me though, no question. They're all built like tight little swimsuit models, every one of them. Big fucking sets of boobies too. I don't know how they got to be so damn fine out here in the trees, but I like it, no doubt, no doubt. None of them shave, though, they're furry as fuck. Guess they didn't invent razors over here. But it's sort of hot, I guess, in a weird way. Wouldn't mind giving their fur a good licking over.

Damn, what I would do to one of those hot little furry tribe chicks if I had her in a dark room alone... Fuck me, that would be some intense love making. I wish the CO would assign me to guard the prisoners for a bit. I keep putting in for guard duty, but he's always got his dorky nephews doing it at night. So unfair. Maybe he'll get promoted or something and take his nephews with him so we can actually have some fun here for once.

We've got monitors set up all over the mess hall so we can watch the drones blowing the fuck out of their smelly little villages. We always place bets on how many hits each drone can get. It's always really funny when the silly peasants try to throw rocks at the drone, and the drone turns around and fills their heads with bullet holes. They're so fucking retarded. Sometimes they'll run around in circles for a moment with their heads blown off, it's pretty sick.

There's this game we play in the dining hall when the CO isn't around, where we drink a shot of Milo's famous moonshine every time a drone catches up to one of the terrorists and fills him with lead. If the drone uses a missile, we have to take three

shots. It's pretty intense. One of the guys passed out from it, couldn't hold his liquor. We kicked him a bit while he was out for being such a giant fucking pussy. It's all in good fun, though, he was fine. Just a bit bruised.

There was this one terrorist that thought he could get away from the drones if he climbed this huge tree, it was hilarious. He's hugging the tree, holding his breath, and like twenty drones form a circle around him and he's all like "rirr rirr upir rirrr!" When the dust cleared, the whole fucking tree was gone. Just like a few leaves and patches of fur left on the ground. Man, drones get all the fun.

We should like, go on strike or something, until they let us in on the action for real. They could at least let us ride on the drones or something so we can get a better view of the battle. What's the point of being a bah-damn soldier if you don't get to kill anything? I mean, sure, the army is going to pay for my college when I get back home, but I'm gonna be stuck here for like four more years, so the least they could do is let me cause some fucking old fashioned balls-to-the-wall mayhem while I'm here.

There's a firing squad set for tomorrow to put this nasty prisoner out of his misery. He wounded a guard trying to escape, left a pretty big bite mark on the guy's neck, he almost bled out. I wish I was there when they caught up with him, the boys really messed him up good. Poked out one of his eyes, even. I asked the CO to put me on the firing squad so I can at least get to fire my gun at a live target for once, but I bet the old prig will cut me out of the action again. He really is out to get me. He's one of them well-bred uppity bitches, has no love for me and my kind, you can always find him surrounded by rich ass-suckers like his perfect little nephews, all the way on the other side of camp.

Damn I hate those little rich turds. They're always talking about their daddy's precious restaurants and hotels and how their servants back home didn't make the mash all lumpy the way the cook makes it. They don't have a regular old tent like the rest of us, they get this bullet-proof dome thing that got airlifted in. Let me tell you, not one of the boys would be too teared up if the terrorists got to those two. Bah-damn Fidelbrooks. They even stopped coming to the mess hall a while back because they didn't like the food and now their meals get flown in everyday and delivered to their dome. Sometimes they make me do the delivery. If they didn't have to go in to guard the female cell block every night, they'd never leave their dome. It's so fucked up.

Anyway, they're transferring all our prisoners tomorrow to the new work camps they just finished building on the coast, so I don't know what use the suck-ass twins will be then. Maybe they'll make them do some real work like scrubbing the latrines clean. I always get stuck with that fucking job because I mouth off to the CO when he doesn't let me do anything cool.

If we ever get to see some real action and I'm on the same unit as the rich boys, let's just say they're going to come out of the battle weighing a hell of a lot less than when they came in. No way am I backing those little fuckers up, I only look out for my own. Believe it.

Let's face facts, though. They'll never see any action. The moment things get even a little bit hairy, all those rich assholes will get airlifted right out of here and back home to their daddies. Probably get a four-course meal on the ride back, too. It's too bad, I'd like to see the little fuckers hit in the back of the head with some good old friendly fire when no one's looking. That would really be a good time.

Sure, blowing Nureongi scum to hell would be pretty fun I guess, but it'd be sort of like shooting dopey fish in a barrel. The real rush would come from going one on one against a proper soldier with all the advanced gear and weaponry and training I've got. Then we'd see what kind of powerful skill this bad-ass Pitbull's got. I'm the ultimate fucking warrior, baby. I wanna hunt me some rich little piggies. I'd be all, head-shot, roll, rifle in the face, stab, stab, stab, turn and slice. I'd put their chubby little ears on a chain and wear it around my neck. Hell yeah, baby.

I didn't come to this shit hole to sit on my ass all day playing videogames and eating crackers, I can do that shit at home. I want to do some fucking murdering. You can't keep this deadly weapon locked up in a case all day and night, I need to be out there slicing and dicing, bah-damn it. That fucking CO can't keep me down much longer, one day I'm gonna fucking snap and unleash my silent fury on him. Just slip into his tent one night and knife him up good until he can't deny me my victory any more. Damn that would be sweet.

Then I'd pull his little Nureongi slave girl into my tent and make her my bitch. She's never been possessed by a real dog before, just a bunch of ethnics and a stuck up old fop. She'd have the time of her life, guaranteed. Would make her scream so loud that everyone in camp would know I was on top of her. Little slut wouldn't be able to walk straight for weeks, and every fucking step she'd take would remind her of the sheer fucking pleasure I gave her. She'd be grinning ear to ear, no doubt about it. Man she's a hot piece of ass. Of course, that dirty tail that follows her ass around everywhere would have to come right off if she's going to be mine.

One of the private army guys let me see how many tails he's collected so far from his kills, he keeps them in this big fucking trunk that he drags around with him. It was so full that he couldn't get it closed again after he opened it. That guy's such a fucking show off. But none of the other corporate army guys will even talk to us unless they're giving us dumb-ass orders to make their beds and bring them food and shit. I asked him if I could keep one of the tails since they wouldn't all fit in the trunk, but he got all pissy and made me leave his tent. Threw a bottle at the back of my head too when I was leaving, the fucker. I'm gonna get that guy one day.

You know, it's taking a really long time for my dream-inducer to kick in tonight, just can't seem to fall asleep. I guess I took a few too many naps through the day. Maybe I should go get some knock-out pills from the medic. Later.

# Chapter Twenty-Three: Journalist II

Breaking news. The nation mourns as tens of thousands of luxury Braniso cars around the world have mysteriously exploded, killing thousands of our most prominent citizens. The President and First Lady are dead. The Vice President is dead. The Secretary of State is dead. The Royal Fifis are dead. Almost the entire illustrious Rupulfort family are dead. Oil baron Georgie Balase and his sons are dead. Banker Maurice Fitz and several members of his family are dead. As the list of dead continues to grow, we'll continue to post updates. This is truly the most solemn and tragic day in the history of our proud and strong nation.

Among the many celebrities that died today, Harvey Fidelbrook will perhaps be remembered most. In a last performance of sorts, crowds of witnesses say the great thespian stumbled from the charred remains of his exclusive one-of-a-kind monogrammed crystal-skinned Braniso XL-ENS SUV in the heart of the city. His body burned almost beyond recognition, he fell to his knees and with his last remaining breath, held out his disfigured hands and recited a monologue from his renowned one-man-play 'The Final Redemption of Harvey Fidelbrook':

"I am but a shadow of myself. A well-worn facsimile of everything I used to be. I am a dog of supreme conscience, and a dog of outrageous depravity. I am consumed with both fervent conceitedness and dispiriting self-loathing. I am what I am and this is all I can ever be. I am greatness. I am nothingness. I am Harvey Fidelbrook."

The standers-by erupted in thunderous applause as our greatest actor met his untimely end. He will be mourned by millions.

The Braniso corporation have yet to release a statement regarding the nature of this catastrophe, but right now it is believed the accidents are linked to the coolant the luxury vehicles use as part of their air-conditioning systems.

The government has also not released a statement, and right now it's not at all certain what remains of the late President's administration, or even the opposition. It appears that most, if not all of our leaders in the upper echelons of Orninican society have died in this dreadful catastrophe.

The nation waits with baited breath to find out where we will go from here.

Yesterday, several high-ranking politicians had suggested that, since we now have strong evidence that humans so enjoyed to eat Nureongi meat, it makes sense that we should also be eating it. They had proposed that we stop treating Nureongi like equals; building them cities to live in and giving them jobs, and instead follow the humans

wisdom and herd them all into farms to be processed into nutritious soup that could be fed to the troops, and also shipped back to Orninica for sale on the open market.

The Grand Bishop of Bahman released a statement yesterday, positing that, since the humans are known to have enjoyed this soup dish which we now know was made from Nureongi meat, it is very telling that Soupman is named for this same delicacy. The Grand Bishop is now asserting that Soupman wasn't a man at all, but the ape equivalent of a Nureongi. "Most likely", he postulated, "Bahman bred and slaughtered the red-caped animal and made a soup from it for the rest of the prophets to dine on".

This has led to fervent protests from the First Vicar of Soupman, who yesterday claimed that the Grand Bishop is attempting to turn Bahmanites into cannibals that will feel justified in slaughtering and eating any dog faithful to Soupman. The Grand Bishop vehemently denied these allegations.

In cheerier news, the beloved teen-pop idols Maddy and Mel just completed their stint in rehab. The brother and sister singing duo checked into the exclusive Shady Elm Rehabilitation Center last week to recover from an addiction to painkillers. Their publicist announced this morning that the siblings are doing exceedingly well on their way to recovery.

A small update just came in, it now appears that Maddy and Mel have been added to the long list of Braniso victims, as the limousine that was taking them home from rehab has also tragically been added to the list of exploded vehicles. We will commiserate the loss of the spirited young stars and other lost celebrities with a special 'Farewell to the Treasures of a Nation' issue tomorrow.

The police are asking the public to please remember to not feed the homeless. There have been a lot of reported instances lately of groups setting up tables on streets in homeless hot spots and handing out free sandwiches and hot drinks. This is a clear violation of several health and safety regulations, and the criminal groups committing these irresponsible acts will continue to be arrested and prosecuted.

Even if we didn't have the all-important food safety laws on the books, can't these stubborn religious groups see that by feeding the homeless, they encourage them to stay put in an area, forcing real estate values to plummet? I don't care what Soupman said about feeding the hungry, you do not want to wake up tomorrow and find out that your property is suddenly worth 15% less because of a nearby homeless infestation. It's really not fun. Stop feeding the homeless, church ladies. How would you like it if I set up a needle exchange outside your houses?

We should really join Orninica's more progressive cities in outlawing homelessness altogether. In those cities, the homeless are forcibly round up and sent to a distant shelter where they can no longer rain down economic turmoil on the rest of us, and if they try to leave the shelter, they're sent straight to jail, no excuses.

The homeless problem we're facing needs to be seriously addressed if the economy is ever to return to its former glory. Anyone that looks homeless should be removed from sight so that businesses can be allowed the freedom to make a decent profit once again. The only way our state's proud entrepreneurs can return to profitability is if we

deal with the unsightly hordes littering the high streets. The homeless are strangling our economic prosperity and it must stop now.

Went a little off track there, but really, can you blame me? If I tried to sell my house right now, I'd lose a fortune. It's just not right. They need to be sensible.

The city's Metropolitan Rail Authority yesterday wanted to thank all passengers that have traveled on the subway some time in the past two weeks for participating in the annual terrorist response drills. Harmless invisible and odorless gases were released into the subway stations at regular intervals by trained officers. The drills were conducted as a joint collaboration between the Rail Authority, the Fifi Corporation's Chemical Weapons Laboratory, the Police Department and the Department of Defense. A representative said "This year's drills were an overwhelming success, and we were able to collect much valuable data to assist us in our efforts to fight terrorism and keep the public safe from attack."

Further funding was earmarked yesterday to expand the successful Family Planning and Reproductive Health Program that has been in effect in many third world countries that receive Ornican aid. Impoverished females of child-bearing age that have been receiving food aid are now required to undergo a simple surgical procedure in order to continue to be eligible for the aid. A representative told us that by drastically slashing the fertility rate in these poor countries, catastrophic climate change can be delayed by at least ten years. Truly a worthy cause.

The hunt is on to break up the deviant homeschooling rings operating around the country. It is believed that certain rural mothers have deliberately given birth to their pups in secret, outside of a legally registered health care establishment, in flagrant violation of the law. These pups are never issued with a birth certificate or a passport or any legal documentation that establishes them as Ornican nationals. They may as well not even exist.

This is a deliberate ploy by the extremist parents to maliciously strip their offspring of the many valuable protections the state offers to its nationals, and especially to keep these pups out of our fine state schools, where they would be properly educated with a diverse curriculum of valuable state-approved instruction to equip them with the skills and attitudes needed for success in the marketplace.

Instead, the parents 'homeschool' their litter, forcing on them a stream of useless radical disinformation that won't at all help them in the real world, and could, in fact endanger their lives. Truly unforgivable parenting. Just more evidence that terrorism exists in many forms.

You're advised to be on the lookout for any pale and strange looking pups that are home during school hours and report the suspicious families immediately so that the pups can be given the proper care they need at a facility equipped to educate them appropriately. The parents will be arrested and incarcerated for their crimes of giving birth illegally, not registering a newborn, corrupting young minds, withholding care from a minor and teaching without a license.

Yet another set of subway passengers were rushed to the ER yesterday with nausea, diarrhea and vomiting. The hospital has confirmed that the latest bout of illness was again caused by the virulent flu virus that's been going around the city. It's especially prevalent in enclosed spaces such as subway stations. There were six fatalities. Don't forget to get your flu shots, everyone.

The slaughterhouse employee that recorded footage inside her workplace and posted it on an animal cruelty blog has been sentenced to thirty-nine years in prison for her crime of defaming the facility and its owner under the recently passed Eco-Terrorism Act. The malicious infiltrator has also been added to the international terrorist registry for life, and will not be permitted to travel across international borders, operate a vehicle, or own property upon her eventual release. The owner of the extremist blog, 'What's in your Kibble?' was slotted to stand trial for his part in the crime on Tuesday, but since the Braniso event, it's not clear if any judges are left alive.

In order to help with the speedy recovery of the economy, several states have decided to allow bigger employers to keep the income tax they collect from their workers paychecks. The move was applauded by the various chambers of commerce in each state. Every little bit helps when times are tough.

A nation-wide strike being organized by fast food workers was narrowly averted yesterday, when the heads of the nation's fast food chains met and decided to collectively replace all their workers with automated robots. The workers had complained of wages well below the poverty level, and a lack of health insurance or other benefits. The restaurants are expected to temporarily close for retrofitting and then reopen sometime next month.

A Moodley's Noodles spokesperson said, "We expect the new robots won't be making any unrealistic demands like their predecessors did, and will simply be glad to be of service to this great company and get straight to work, making the most delicious noodles, waffles and pancakes in the world for our demanding customers. They'll also be a lot more hygienic than the organic workers."

Maybe now the fast food workers of Orninica will finally get off their parents couches and find real jobs. Would you believe that the average age of fast food workers in this country was approaching 42 last year? Grown dogs expecting to support their families working a deep fryer? Just lazy. I for one, can't wait to sample a big steaming bowl of Moodley's Noodles drenched in caramel sauce, prepared in record time by a nice, clean robot. No fur-net necessary.

The company is even adding six new noodle recipes to the menu to celebrate this exciting new 'rapid-food' era we're about to enter. I'm going to make a point of trying every one of them over the next week, starting with delicious-sounding 'mustard, cheese and triple-onion'. The profits of the companies are expected to soar to new levels since the announcement. I'll have to get my stockbroker on the line.

The terror-threat level is currently set to Deep Crimson X3++. Serious threat of terrorist attack imminent. Take care, Orninicans.

## Chapter Twenty-Four: Spy II

Beloved elders of the tribal councils of Nureongi, it is done. Thousands of prominent Ornicans in high positions of industry, politics, military, media and finance are dead. After the Orns craven attack on their own nation's pups and their decision to use this crimson lie to justify a full scale invasion of our lands, I had no choice left but to take immediate action. Unfortunately, there was no time to await your response. I examined all the options and soon realized there was only one way to kill all these powerful dogs with a single blow.

One thing all of these immensely wealthy and well-connected puppeteers have in common is the extravagant vehicles they ride in. And the vast majority of them are gridlocked in traffic in the heart of the cities at the same commuting time every morning. These 'Braniso' branded motor vehicles have a widely known weakness. A chemical used in their air-conditioning units; a device that blasts cool air onto the driver's face as he drives, is known to explode when exposed to high temperatures.

I wrote a simple algorithm that would amass heat from the engine and redirect it from the exhaust pipes, towards the cooling units, triggering a massive explosion powerful enough to incinerate the entire vehicle.

All these vehicles are connected wirelessly to the Braniso corporation's computers, so that they can remotely issue software updates to the electronic components and built in entertainment devices that the cars feature. I sent a simple electronic message to all of Braniso's employees with an attached file that, once opened, would infect the computer of the employee, and then the entire Braniso network, including every car they've built. Immediately, tens of thousands of luxury vehicles around the world were up in flames at the same moment.

Unfortunately, it appears that my plot has led to my cover being compromised. I tried to return to my restaurant, and had to watch from across the street as it was swarming with security agents tearing it apart. I am now on the run from the authorities and expect capture imminently.

I've changed my appearance significantly, so I should be able to avoid detection by the drones for a little while, but they've tripled searches and DNA swabs at checkpoints, and they've started swabbing anyone that meets my description away from the checkpoints. Luckily it's been a bitterly cold summer, so I can get away with wearing gloves to hide my prints, but there's not much I can do about retinal scanners. I'm just having to stay off the streets. If a drone or doorway scanner sees my eyes, it'll be over.

I honestly can't tell you what the effect of my plot will be. With so many of their leaders and elites dead, there's no telling how this will affect the war they're waging against our tribes. I hope that, whatever government rises to replace the collapsed plutocracy is composed of a just and compassionate leadership, and not just more of the same tyranny. But most of all, I hope that the next government leaves us alone.

It doesn't seem like it would be that difficult; to allow a faraway culture across the ocean to exist in their own way, at their own pace. Even after five long years spent in this place, I still am no closer to understanding their compulsion to force their will on the rest of the world.

I suppose the country is much like any one of its famed corporate enterprises; forever growing, merging, amassing profit and power, projecting its carefully constructed image to every land and every dog far and wide, until every little place in the world is lined with rows and rows of identical replicas of generic Orninican business establishments, the same bright colors and simple shapes, two-note jingles playing on a loop and oversized logos spewing from the landscape, replacing proud, age old cultures with uniform conglomeration.

Maybe that's what their end game has always been; to forcibly mold every inch of the earth until it resembles every street in every Orninican city. So convinced that their way of life is absolute and without equal, and that no reasonable creature could possibly reject it in favor of their own long-held customs, culture and intricate social hierarchies.

One day, maybe even a day during our lifetimes, the Orninican empire will fall, as all greedy self-destructive things invariably do, and the sage dogs of the future will pick through the ruins of Orninica, wondering what ever possessed the inhabitants of these vast sprawling cities to enslave themselves so unquestionably, to put state and enterprise before life. I hope they'll come up with a better answer than I've ever been able to.

The monopoly on violence the state has enjoyed since its establishment only exists because the citizens allow it to exist. The citizens arm the coercive state, while the state disarms, disaffects and subjugates the citizens, stripping them of their privacy, their property, their independent thought, their health. Under the threat of force, the citizens then pay the state an increasingly higher stipend to continue to arm itself against them, so that it can take even more from them, until eventually there is nothing left to take, and the overgrown government has nothing left to do but collapse in on itself.

And then a new government rises, and the citizens cheer in celebration, and hand over their property and their liberty and begin the cycle anew. Every new government backed by the same monopoly on violence to exact order within its exclusive economic zone.

It's not so bad really, being a murderer. I always thought it would change me irreversibly, that I'd wake up a distorted monster with no moral center. But I feel

about the same as I did yesterday. Maybe it just hasn't hit me yet. The adrenalin from being on the run could be keeping me from feeling the effects of my grave deed.

Hopefully I'll be dead and buried before it finally catches up with me and I feel the full effect of having taken all those lives. They pushed me to do what I did. I feel like I've been lowered to their deplorable level just to survive. Playing by their rules, spreading fear and malcontent, taking the life from others to safeguard my own way of life. Perhaps I'm no better than them when it comes down to it. But it's better that one lone Nureongi be corrupted, than all of us.

Since the logger-bots began arriving in Nureongi, I'm sure you've all been feeling the effects of the oxygen deprivation that city dwellers have become so accustomed to over the years, living with such limited access to trees. A constant waking daze, unprovoked outbursts of rage, insomnia and depression; these are all normal side-effects of an existence apart from the forests. I hope that you were able to plant bamboo around all the settlements in time, as I advised. It is likely the most fast-growing and high-oxygenating plant that exists, and the logger-bots don't appear to be programmed to disturb it at all. At least for the time being.

When the war is over and the logger-bots have all been destroyed, you will be able to begin to reseed the great forests that were decimated, but in the meantime, the only course of action is to establish vast bamboo forests to keep the ground and the air alive.

I feel at peace for having given my life to safeguard our freedom. I have no regrets, and no fear of my inevitable torture and execution. I dedicated my life to this mission to affect change, and in this I have succeeded beyond my wildest aspirations. I hope that the recoil of my actions reaches far and wide, freeing from subjugation the future generations of Ornicans and Nureongi alike.

I chose to give myself for the greater good, to safeguard the future generations of Nureongi that will now hopefully be able to continue running through the forests, laughing and loving, never having to know bondage or hunger, because of my actions here today.

Though I will now not be able to have pups of my own, I hope that a little of myself lives on inside the spirit of every free Nureongi. This life was a good life. I was fortunate enough to be born within the abundant woodlands of Nureongi, and yet I was able to travel the world. I was able to love and be loved. I die young, but I die full. I had purpose, and I had freedom, and I had adventure. I'm ready to release everything I am back into the cosmos, with no sorrow in my heart.

Please tell my beloved Outa, I am truly sorry. It was the only course of action I had left to take. All my thoughts in my remaining hours will be of her.

Goodbye brothers and sisters.

# Chapter Twenty-Five: Senior Citizen II

They're trying to deny it was a terrorist attack for some reason, but I know the truth. They wouldn't be plastering some restaurant owner's picture all over the place if he weren't responsible for this. That dirty terrorist has some nerve, coming to our country and pulling this savage attack on us for no bah-damn reason. What's the matter, terrorist? Your big, fat, ass-faced mother not pay enough attention to you growing up? Were you the runt of a litter of babbling half-wits?

You useless piece of shit, how dare you? If I'm walking down the street and I spot you before the drones do, I'll personally rip your disgusting tick-covered head off and use it as a kick ball. You pile of vomit. You rabid mad dog! Everyone's seen your face on the news now, there's nowhere you can hide. I hope you die slowly and excruciatingly like the godless maggots I tortured to death in the war. I'm going to write to the cops and suggest that when they catch you, they should put your head on a pike and stick it outside the presidential palace so everyone that walks by can spit on it.

You think you can come to this great country and take a big shit all over our freedoms? What gives you the right? You vile sub-canine shit-stain. Just because whatever dirty sand-farm you come from doesn't have the freedom and democracy Orninica has, you have to take away our most beloved sons and daughters? Attack our prosperity?

You killed Mr. Harvey Fidelbrook! He was the last great actor. The last true gentle-dog. The heart and soul of our great nation. A true Orninican patriot and ambassador. If you had faced him like a dog, instead of a coward; blowing him up from a distance, he would have casually popped you square in the jaw one time and you'd pass out cold, drooling all over the floor. You little pussy! You're no match for a real dog like Harvey. What a waste. How dare you continue to breathe air whilst all these great Orninicans are lost to us forever?

Our political leaders, our greatest thinkers, the heads of all our most important companies... Gone. All because a useless foreign immigrant hated our freedom. Hated the very idea of us living in comfort and luxury. Of daring to be happy. To this spineless terrorist, all our Orninican amenities are unacceptable. Being able to buy whatever we want with our hard-earned oonos, to go to ritzy restaurants and eat until we're stuffed and then order dessert; that offends this classless know-nothing terrorist. He hates us because we were born with all the opportunities he can never hope to have.

He can murder Orninica's favorite son, but he can't take our pride, he can't take our liberty, he can't take our perseverance and he certainly can't take away our Orninicanism.

We have to stand strong, united against immigrants and socialists and anarchists and anyone that looks suspiciously out of place. If we don't get rid of all the undesirables, this is going to keep happening. Don't be fooled, every one of the sneaky bastards is plotting against us, and we can't just deport them or they'll keep on sneaking right back again. We've got to dismantle the One World Directive. Orninica needs to be for Orninicans again! Wake up and realize that all bloody foreigners are potential terrorists. It just takes one bad day where they get yelled at for dropping a plate at their dish-washing job, or not scrubbing the toilet clean enough at their maid job, and they all turn on us, without exception. Kill them all! It's the only damn way to ensure the safety of our pups.

I had some trouble today getting my flag to half-mast. The line was stuck somehow. Fiddled with it for a few hours, but it simply wouldn't budge. The neighbors must think I'm a dirty hippie or something. Gonna have to hire a guy to climb it and fix the problem before everyone in town sees it and it creates a panic. I'm actually the only one on the street with a flag pole, it's a disgrace. There should be a law against not flying the Orninican flag. There's just no shame nowadays.

The best thing we can do right now is channel our anger at the dogs that deserve it the most; the Nureongi savages. You know they were probably involved in this somehow. I say we don't even wait until they catch the terrorist, just nuke their whole primitive excuse for a country right now and be done with it. Fire off a few dozen warheads just to make sure we get them all. Wipe them off the face of the planet. I think we've been patient enough with them up to now, it's time to play hard ball. Smug little yellow barbarians.

I've been reading this newspaper for a long time, and I've contributed more of my thoughts to the comments section than any of the journalists have written in their news articles. So I think it's perfectly reasonable for me to ask the editor to please, please make the front cover tomorrow a demand to the government to remove Nureongi from the map. We can't be soft any more, this is the only way. Nuke Nureongi into oblivion. Not one of them should be left alive.

They've yanked the heart out of this great nation. We will feel the effects of these senseless murders for generations. Who's to say what consequence this will have on our flourishing civilization? We've lost nearly all our leaders! It's terrifying. What will we do without our heads of state? Without the important dogs that run all the important companies our economy depends on to stay afloat? What are we without the wealthy and powerful noble dogs that make this country so great?

I feel so sick. I admit it, I cried today. I cried my damn sissy eyes out. I love this great country with all my heart, and I have no idea how to deal with this deafening sorrow that I'm overcome with. I just want the terrorist to suffer. I want him to be in

so much intense agony that every one of his nerve endings are shattered like glass. I just wish I could be the one to administer him with the torture.

To be honest, I hesitate to even leave the house to get the mail. What if there are more attacks? What if he's going after all the important dogs in the nation? War heroes would logically be next! I'm probably on his kill list too.

I've booby trapped my whole house and yard with thread-triggered shotguns just in case. I wish the government would release fleets of indoor drones to keep us safe in our houses, too. I would feel so much better if there were a couple of heavily armed, all-seeing drones hovering over my couch right now. The TV's surveillance feature alone isn't enough to stop a terrorist attack. It would be over in seconds.

We need stronger security. If something like this can happen right in the hearts of our greatest cities, how can we ever feel safe again? It's inexcusable that this attack happened under the government's nose. I demand they increase security tenfold! I won't even leave my house until the sky is turned black with drones. I want there to be so many of them flying around up there, that they block out the sun permanently. And a couple in each room of every house, and inside each vehicle, and maybe then I'll start to feel safe again.

I just want my freedom back. It's the government's job to give that to me, I pay my damned taxes.

I have to clear my head of all this fear, I just twitched and blew a hole in my coffee table. Gotta reload the trusty shotgun. Gotta calm down.

I was really pleased with this newspaper's feature yesterday on the importance of golf in relieving stress. I agree that golf should be taught in all the schools, but I'd go one step further and suggest that golf courses be built by the government in all the good communities. Of course, they shouldn't let just anyone play golf for free, or the courses would get filled with your unemployed welfare trash real fast. There would need to be some kind of screening process to keep out the scum, I would volunteer to be the screener in a heartbeat. But veterans and important business dogs should get automatic free membership without a doubt.

The common dogs don't understand what it's like being a war hero. They're such shameless ingrates. We risked our lives to protect their sorry fat behinds. Sat in freezing cold guard towers all night, shooting anyone we saw pass by not in uniform. We safeguarded democracy for all dogs everywhere and we deserve respect. We deserve free golf courses and fishing boats and Nureongi servants. It's only fair. At least they could give us one or two of the three and just see how it goes.

Everyone's always going on about how we need to support the troops, and how the troops are our best and brightest, but what about the veterans? Sure, it's all parades and pop songs while we're overseas fighting in the war, blowing the enemy to bits to keep the country free and pure, but then as soon as we come back from the damn war, they forget all about us.

When I was in the army, and we were stationed in the middle of nowhere, command even brought sexy foreign girls to the camps for us to have our way with. Where are

my little foreign whores and parades now, Orninica? Where's the recognition for the sacrifices I've made so that the fat lazy youths of today can have their damn freedoms? Freedoms that they, quite frankly didn't earn and don't bloody well deserve to keep. I took a bullet in my elbow for this country, what have they done? I'll tell you what, absolutely squat all!

Take away all their freedoms, their video-games, their pornography, their rap music, their fancy running shoes and tracksuits that they wear to sit around all day picking their fat little noses. Put them all in forced labor camps for forty years and make them earn the right to live in this great land.

It's the only way to fix this country. And if they behave and get a good review every year from their supervisor, when they retire in forty years, maybe we can think about giving them back their games and music. That's the only time to be pursuing hobbies, when you're retired.

Not that I have any hobbies, mind you. I'm too busy for mindless distractions like that, and with any luck, after a full, working life, none of my forced laborers would want to waste time with hobbies, either. They'd get serious about life after working for a living, and spend their old age actually contributing to society, like I do with these letters I write to the newspapers telling them how to fix the country.

## Chapter Twenty-Six: Judge II

Mr. Bobby Fifi, my dear boy, I'm writing to you regarding a matter of great significance. You don't know me, but I was a very close business associate, and dare I say, friend, of your late, great uncle. As his closest surviving blood relative, I'm afraid you're now going to have to take control of the Fifi empire. I know this is a daunting request for such a young pup to hear, but it is crucial that you rise to this challenge and meet it full on. The world needs the Fifi family, and after the terrible tragedy that has befallen us, you have no choice but to become what the nation requires you to become.

It's undoubtedly a lot to ask of a seven year old, but there's no other alternative. Without your strong leadership, the Fifi Corporation will simply collapse. Without the Fifi Corporation, the economy will surely end up in ruins. And without the economy, without the great market, where will we be? You must steer this colossal ship as best as you can to avert catastrophic collapse.

I would be very willing to be your right-hand dog in rebuilding your uncle's empire, if you'll have me. I am a nationally renowned and beloved judge, so you can surely trust that I would do my utmost to ensure the future prosperity of your great family. Your uncle trusted me above all his other advisors, and so can you.

In fact, your uncle recently took my advice and set in motion plans to establish a series of offshore holding facilities for Orninicans that have been stripped of their citizenship for committing despicable un-Orninican crimes. The documents are all written up and ready to be signed to begin the construction, and I was promised by your uncle a place on the board of directors for my part in the endeavor. His memory will always be cherished.

Of course, the other members of the board, including your wonderful parents, have died tragically, but I'd be a perfectly capable chairman of the board, and I could appoint new board members. We really have no time to mourn, business must continue for the good of everyone. Your parents would have certainly wanted you to sign these attached documents and begin the construction right away. They were very excited about the project. Very excited indeed.

You must understand, our futures, and in fact, our very lives depend on your ability to continue the legacy of the Fifi Corporation and amass greater and greater profits, like your uncle, and his father before him were able to. The offshore prison complexes on the drawing board are the first step you need to take towards financial security for yourself and for our families. Together, we can take the Fifi name to the next level. You're a very smart boy, a good boy, I know you'll do the right thing.

You know, I have a grandson about your age. He's a great fanatic of sports games. Perhaps you could entertain him on your island for a while? I'm sure he would love to meet you. It must be difficult for you, having nothing left but servants to talk to on that big scary island. I would of course come to the island with my grandson as his chaperon, and when you get a free moment, we could talk some business? If you'll just send your nice pilot to pick us up, we can be there in a matter of hours. We'll even bring a sports ball to play with! Let me know what you think.

I was actually just speaking to your dear departed mother last Wednesday. She was telling me what a strong, intelligent boy you've become. How you'd make a very wise and brave leader one day. She was convinced you are much more mature and level-headed than all the other little boys your age. She was very proud of you, Mr. Fifi, very, very proud. If only you could see the happiness in her eyes as she spoke of you one day steering the captain's wheel of the corporation.

In fact, she happened to mention to me that if she and your father and your uncle and aunt were to pass away suddenly for some unforeseen reason, she would want you to take the brave initiative in leading the Fifi Corporation right away. She insisted that only you possess the sound reasoning and handsome good-looks to follow in the footsteps of your brilliant uncle.

Your beautiful, loving mother even gave me a special medallion that she said to give to you if anything should happen to her. If you'll just send your jet to pick me and my grandson up, I'll bring you this special shiny medallion right away. I'm keeping it safe for you in my jacket pocket, close to my heart. It's a very special medallion, because it signifies all her love for you, my boy. She was really quite adamant that I pass it on to you in the case of her untimely death.

I also have many other ideas for expanding the Fifi Corporation's reach that I sadly didn't have time to share with your uncle. For instance, wouldn't it be grand if there were a mandatory insurance policy for cyclists? It's a whole market that goes untapped. Anyone operating a motor vehicle has to buy insurance from one of your fine insurance firms, but cyclists, the freeloaders that they are, don't pay you a penny. This is simply outrageous. Why should these smug cheapskate bicycle riders receive special treatment when hard-working motorists have to purchase insurance year after year? It's just an unacceptable, unfathomable double standard.

I'm sure we can set about purchasing influence with whatever new government is formed in the days ahead, and convince how ever many of your uncle's representatives in the government remain alive to pass this innovative idea of mine into law. It makes a lot of sense, no?

Another of my many golden ideas involves privatizing traffic fines. Allowing the cities to continue to collect this hefty revenue source is outrageously socialistic. This is Orninica! We should set up a division of the Fifi Corporation to issue parking and moving violations, and process the payments. There's simply no excuse for the government to be collecting this revenue in a great capitalist society such as ours. We pay our taxes and that should be more than enough for them!

We can also greatly expand on the traffic code to create many more opportunities for revenue. Of course, we'd need to lower the speed limits drastically, triple the toll stations, hike up the tolls, turn the useless bicycle and bus lanes into exclusive gold-painted high-priced roads for use only by the wealthy, and generally make the roads safer and more expensive for everyone to drive on.

I know these ideas I have might be hard for you to understand, being such a little boy and having spent so much of your life on an insulated private island, but that's why it's so important that you appoint me as your trusted right hand. I can guide you in these important matters and help you make the correct decisions. You know it's the right thing to do, Mr. Fifi.

When I was a boy around your age, I set up my very own business washing cars in the neighborhood. I made quite a bit of money, too. Was able to buy all the sports cards and bubblegum I wanted. All the other little pups in town would waste their time everyday playing games and making a lot of noise. But I was a savvy little industrialist, I would wake up early every single morning and go to work knocking on doors and talking dogs into having their cars washed all through that summer. You see, I was a lot like you, Mr. Fifi, we have so much in common, and there's so much I can teach you if you'll only give me the chance.

You know what? I've had enough of this game you're playing. I wasn't always a judge, you know. I worked long and hard to get to where I am today, and I deserve to collect my just reward for a life of tireless service to your family. I have earned a place at the top of the corporate food chain, and I will receive my rightful dues. You will sign those documents right now.

I have no more patience for foolishness, you are a pup and I am a fully grown dog, an honorable judge of great social standing. You will do as I say or I will put you over my knee and spank you until you learn to give your elders the proper respect. Now do as I say or you'll regret every crossing me, you snot-nosed little ingrate.

I will not be ignored.

If you don't return these documents to me, fully signed and initialed, in the next twenty-four hours, I'm going to personally drag you off that grotty little island and lock you in a room in my penthouse until you learn to wise up and take your responsibilities as head of the company seriously.

I'll be waiting for your reply. And don't you dare show any of these communications to any of your servants, or I'll have them all removed from your service. Including your beloved little nanny. Now be a good boy and do as you're told.

# Chapter Twenty-Seven: Radio Personality II

I woke up today and it really hit me. I can't tell you how darned good it feels to be alive today. It was really a stroke of luck, if I weren't a morning radio host, getting to work at the crack of dawn everyday, I probably would have been in my limo when it went up in flames instead of here in the studio doing my show. Luckily, only my driver and my fourth wife, Dotty, were in the limo at the time of the explosions. He was new, so I didn't know him very well, but let's have a moment of silence for the guy. His name escapes me right now. Started with a Q or a K, I think. He was driving Dotty to her golf lesson when it happened.

We covered the catastrophe as it happened, live on the air, with interviews on the street and recorded audio from listeners that were on the scenes of the explosions. If you missed it yesterday, it was one hell of a show, probably in the top five we've ever done. Definitely one for the archives, and it'll be replaying all weekend. We're thinking of putting out a compilation of the highlights that you'll be able to buy on my website, but no guarantees yet.

We still don't know what happened exactly, if it was a freak accident or a deliberate terrorist attack, but we'll keep you updated if anything comes out. We do know a photo of a local restaurateur wanted for questioning is being circulated, but the police aren't saying if it's related to the Braniso event. Actually, the police aren't saying much of anything. Seems like a lot of the higher ups in the force drove Branisos.

Anyway, we can't dwell on the past all day, so on with the show.

Have you heard about this? Apparently there was this group of idiots living in the remote wilderness somewhere in the Oji desert, a bunch of idealistic hippies in this hacked-together village made of old tires or something, completely without electricity, without cars, without doctors, growing all their own food, raising their pups without any formal education. What the hell? Did I just step into the stone age or what?

Understandably, the government was up in arms, that these pups weren't going to school or getting a proper diet. So last week, they rightfully raided the place, shot anyone that resisted and dragged the surviving pups off. This 'back to the land' group were claiming the only education their pups needed was the 'ways of the land'. Yeah, sure. That'll buy them a lot of stuff. Why not teach them how to beg for food on the streets while you're at it? Damn idiots.

Anyway, so now the pups are on a hunger strike at their orphanage, just refusing to eat anything. Won't even talk to the media, just sit in silence all day. Talk about

your ungrateful little twerps. The government goes out of its way to save these little ingrates from a miserable life of abuse, liberates them from these extreme idealists that forced them to spend all day farming and building little unsafe structures to live in out of discarded junk. They bring them to a nice orphanage where they've got all the food they need, warm beds, a proper education, drones outside to keep them safe. And what do they do? They go on strike. Only in Orninica, listeners.

Wish I could get those pups in the studio so I could tell them what's what. Tell them how the real world works, bring them back to reality a bit. Use some tough love on them. Tell them to stop acting like a bunch of idiot liberal socialist hippies like their parents and grow the hell up.

Look at all the freedoms these pups have been gifted with, look at everything they have available at their fingertips here in civilization. I bet there aren't any videogames in the middle of the Oji desert. Probably didn't even have a TV, just sat and watched a cactus all day. The clothes they were wearing when they retrieved them from the tire village looked like they were stitched together out of old wash rags, they looked completely ridiculous. If I went outside dressed like that when I was a pup, I would have gotten my ass kicked so hard by the other pups, I would've landed on the next street.

They were talking about putting feeding tubes in them last I heard. They should really just let them starve. They'll want to eat when they get hungry enough, and then we can give them a shovel and some boots and tell them, "Go on then. If you think you're so damn self sufficient, go dig for some food, you dirty little mongrels."

I don't know, I really don't know. What is the country coming to? Everywhere you turn, there's some liberal browbeat trying to force his will on everyone else. It's sacrilege is what it is. At least the government did the right thing in this case, I have to give the props for that.

What really gets me going is the damn space program. How much money do we waste funding that? Billions. And for what? So a few astronauts can float around in space collecting rocks and space junk? I'm supposed to give 50% of everything I make to the government so they can turn around and pay a bunch of scientists to take a brisk morning walk in space?

What the hell do I care if they can walk in space? Once they've done it one time, it's done. Why do we need to keep sending more of them up there to keep walking? It's like throwing money in a hole. Think of all the useful things they could be spending that money on. I can think of tons of things, tons. Like for instance...

Well, I won't bore you with the long-as-hell list, actually. It would take me the next hour at least, to list all the things the government could be doing right now to make our lives better, and there's a lot on the schedule to talk about this morning. There's really a whole lot of things they could do, though. Send us an email if you can think of some good ones.

Oh, they could give the Braniso event survivors new limos. That's an idea. Really not fair how my insurance is refusing to pay out because the government won't announce

what caused the explosions. I pay millions in taxes every year, I shouldn't have to replace my limo myself, it's an outrage. Do you know what a brand new Braniso executive limousine costs? It's not a bill you'll ever want to see in your mailbox, I'll tell you that much.

Maybe I'll organize another write-in campaign. If all you listeners write to the tax office complaining, maybe they'll get me a new limo. It worked last time, when we got them to tear down that statue of that lesbian firefighter. I don't care how many pups she died saving, that was a family park, and the statue was clearly the doing of the gay lobby.

They never give statues to normal, heterosexual dogs for doing their jobs. Where's my statue? I wake up at 5 AM every freaking morning to be here, it's agony. What, do I need to go queer before they'll let me have one? How about we start a write-in campaign to get a statue of me made, and planted outside the presidential palace? I want to be wearing a long robe and smoking a pipe. Now there's a statue worth making. Get writing, listeners. If enough dogs petition the president, they have to issue a formal response. It's the law, you know.

# Chapter Twenty-Eight: Astronaut

I'm approaching the fifth satellite now. It looks relatively intact. Can see a few dents and some surface fractures. I've got high hopes for this one, ground team. My gut is telling me this is the one we've all been waiting for.

I'm gonna reel it in, give me a second, it's at an awkward angle. It looks like there's a container on the side. Some kind of attachment maybe? Yeah, it's aboard now, it's a solid little box, let me figure out how to open...

There's a message, it's playing it automatically, on a loop. It sounds like English. Have we got a linguist down there? You're gonna need to bring one in quick, this thing is seriously old, could fall apart at any moment. I hope you're recording this.

"Greetings gentle traveler. This satellite beacon was left here by the last surviving humans of planet Earth, on our way to our final destination, the sun. We leave the earth behind in the hopes that, without the human pestilence crawling over it, our beautiful planet can heal itself and evolve new lifeforms to replace all that was lost during our disastrous time at the top of the food chain."

"There are only six of us now. Our group, the Human Extinction Movement has finally achieved the ultimate solution we've been working towards for so long. For years, we watched silently as our wealthy elite rulers pillaged the planet in the name of profit, poisoning the air, water and food supply, all the while keeping the wider population entrapped in inescapable debt-serfdom. The common people were just as much to blame, eagerly consuming every wasteful polluting thing sold to them by the sinister corporations and electing the same corrupt money-grabbing, liberty-eroding flimflams to office year after year."

"It became obvious to us that the planet could no longer suffer the crippling strain of the human species, so we took absolute measures to set things right."

"One of the most damaging weapons the sinister corporatocracy set loose on the populace was the reckless genetic engineering of the plants and animals that sustained us and all life on the planet. These genetically modified organisms allowed the corporations to further their profit-amassing agendas by fusing the cells of plant and beast alike with foreign and artificial genes. GMOs had a devastating affect on our natural environment, as they spread their genes across the world, contaminating all life indiscriminately."

"One of the effects of this senseless biotech conspiracy was to further sicken the populace with cancers, furthering the immense profits of the pharmaceutical, banking and insurance interests. In one of our off-campus juice-bar get-togethers, we decided that the only way to beat them would be to use their own weapons against them."

We began to plan out our ultimate solution. Five of us changed our college majors the next day and enrolled in all the classes that would allow us to become experts in genetic engineering. We graduated top of our class and immediately received offers from several booming biotech firms to join their ranks.”

“It took us another another ten years to rise up the corporate ladder, as we slowly developed our final solution. A GMO corn that would rapidly attack human cells, killing everyone exposed to it. We engineered this corn to be especially vigorous in spreading its pollen, so that in just a few short seasons, practically every cornrow in the world was contaminated with the killer gene.”

“Corn made up a huge percentage of the modern human diet, vestiges of corn by-products were found in nearly everything we consumed. There was no escape, and everyone started to die, attacked by a foreign gene that fused with their cells and systematically collapsed their organs one by one.”

“The poetic thing was that the government, firmly in the pocket of the biotech industry, refused to consider that a GMO could have been the cause of the outbreak when rumors surfaced on the Internet. They didn’t take even one gene sample, and even as billions were in agony on their deathbeds, none of us were ever questioned.”

“Two of our beloved members accidentally consumed a beverage containing corn and chose to be euthanized. It was very hard for us to find non-corn based food in the panic of the apocalypse, so we ate very little. It must be hard for an alien civilization to understand just how pervasive this one crop was in our culture. Even graminivorous livestock is fed a steady diet of corn, and non-food products as diverse as postage stamps, toothpaste, laundry starch and medication are corn-derived.”

“Something we hadn’t anticipated was the effect the corn would have on non-human domestic animals, that are also fed a largely corn-based diet. The toxic gene we inserted into the plant was specifically designed to only attack human cells, but we noticed it was also having some kind of measured and painful effect on domestic animals; rewriting their genes, though there wasn’t time to carry out the studies that would be needed to learn what exactly was happening to them, or what the end result would be.”

“Some strict gluten-free or remote and sequestered people managed to survive quite by accident for a while, but most of them fell sick when they came into close contact with or fed on infected domestic and wild animals.”

“We lost another two members of our group this way, a couple that fell to their dog’s loving lick. We’re truly sorry if our actions have led to the suffering of any non-human species. It wasn’t our intention.”

“There were still some people left standing when the dust was cleared, and they had to be tracked down and culled manually. Those of us that hadn’t become biologists and astronauts spent the decade training in military warfare to prepare for this eventuality. Three members were lost during this effort. We agreed not to depart until we had tracked down and cleansed every man, woman and child from the face of the planet. Sadly, this also meant burning a lot of the thick forest that was acting as a refuge for the last few survivors. We hope it grows back rapidly now that we’re gone and we

can't apologize enough for the damage we did to the fragile forest ecosystem and the innocent creatures living in it."

"And that's why we're on our way to the sun, or as close to it as we can get before the rocket burns up. We all sit here in a circle, holding hands, filled with love, ready to disperse our energy into the cosmos and finally free earth of the human cancer forever."

"Remember our sacrifice, and know that we die free."

# Chapter Twenty-Nine: Journalist III

The cosmic discovery of the beacon left for us by our human masters has changed our world forever. The ancient message that played out live around the world yesterday, beamed to every connected device on every person, has forever changed the trajectory of our great civilization.

The war against the Nureongi has been called off, all our troops and automated drones recalled home. As we have reported, the clergy miraculously survived the brutal attack against our leaders due to their churches not keeping regular business hours. Their regal pearl-white Braniso limousines were parked and unoccupied at the time of the catastrophe.

As per the constitution, the Grand Bishop of Bahman and the First Vicar of Soupman are now our most senior leaders, and acting heads of state.

Due to the crucial contents of the beacon recording, a powerful historic alliance has been made between the two pastors and their lesser contemporaries, promising to join the flocks of the disparate faiths permanently. This new 'Justness League' creates one world religion comprising of elements from all seven doctrines.

The seven heads of Justness met yesterday for several hours in an all-night session to decide how to proceed in rebuilding society after the unprecedented breakthrough. They came out of the meeting with a conclusive resolution to the new issues facing us, and a road-map towards our future prosperity.

Our leaders have decided that we will follow the humans to the sun. "We have carefully weighed all the options available to us. This is the only path that cultivates a lasting corn to nourish our immortal souls with", the former First Vicar of Soupman stated earlier today.

As there plainly aren't enough rockets to send the entire population of the Orninican alliance into orbit, giant catapults are being constructed in all our towns and cities as the next closest thing. Members of clergy, assisted by peace-keeper-bots, will oversee the 'catapult to the stars' initiative, and when all ordinary citizens have been launched, our leaders, their aids, and the few remaining prominent dogs of industry will board the five rockets we have, and set out for the sun.

Every citizen will receive notice of their slotted time and the location of the nearest catapult to the stars. Once you arrive at your assigned catapult, you're expected to take a number, stand in line and await further instruction. The high-powered catapults are able to launch a dog of average height and weight as much as 1000 meters into the

air. Though unfortunately not enough to reach the sun, you will be pointed at the sun and be able to gaze into it as you're launched.

Any member of the great *Canidae erectus* species that remains on earth after the launches are completed will be executed by automated drone fire. So there's no point in hiding.

In other news, the execution of convicted pedophile terrorist serial killer, accountant Gerald Barker went ahead yesterday without a hitch. He was given a choice of twenty different corn-based dishes for his last meal, but chose to abstain from eating. His last recorded words were "I didn't do anything." The nation prays for his soul. Sick, sick little dog.

The autobiography of the late, great actor, Harvey Fidelbrook is back at number one on the best seller list. A re-issue of his most successful movie, "Space Captain 2: Space Invasion Battle", will feature an altered ending using edited-in footage of the seasoned artiste's thrilling final performance, recorded by everyone in the crowd that gathered around the wreckage of his luxury Braniso in the heart of the city's financial district. His death is trending higher on social media platforms than anything in history.

Die-hard Harvey fan Bernadette Gar had this to say, "Harvey was the sweetest, most caring guy. It's such a tragedy what happened to him. Just think of all the great Harvey movies that'll never get made because of this huge tragedy. I'm really glad they're re-editing Space Invasion Battle, but I hope they also add his new death scene to his other great works, like 'Undercover Chef', 'Zombie Hamsters' and 'Spy With a Plan'. It would really mean a lot to his fans all over the world if we could see new versions of all these blockbuster movies before we leave in the catapults."

The fan is also planning a petition to have Fidelbrook's ten most popular movies sealed in a titanium vault to preserve them for all time. Embedded below is a scene from Harvey's second most successful movie, 'Space Captain 4: The Journey Home Begins', where the cosmic captain saves the sentient meteorite baby from its collision course with the moon, by singing a lullaby to guide the adorable little meteorite to safety.

A new study commissioned by the Orninican Snack Food, Infant Food and Soft Drink Manufacturers Association has proven that the so-called Orninican 'obesity epidemic' is a lot of hot air. A scientific team has shown that carrying extra layers of fat can be life-saving in numerous pressing situations, such as in the recent case of the miners trapped underground for six weeks. "If those miners had been more obese, they could have survived the ordeal and still be here to tell us about it", a representative of the association stated in a press release yesterday.

Rising young actress Seyge Grine looked the part of a true starlet yesterday as she attended the premiere of the much vaunted biopic of late billionaire Reub Yaute; the beloved genius Orninican entrepreneur, marketer, designer and inventor of the original iYglass 1.0 and all the other cherished designer Rubella Corp products that are such a big part of our everyday lives, dating all the way back to the Rubella Personal Computing Workstation A100, which was released more than forty years ago.

The stunning youthful beauty sported a form-fitting sleeveless magenta frock with a plunging neckline and wide skirt, tailored perfectly for her by her favored fashion house; Oreolo. Clinging steadfastly to her petite frame, Seyge's summery dress was garnished with a low-hanging custom-made Penderitaan Itu diamond and pearl necklace that accentuated her ample chest.

The twenty-eight year old's sparkling red Chilblain stiletto heels, bright orange lamb-skin Edguar Leduin handbag, Splurgeco Thulian-pink lipstick and exclusive horn-rimmed iYglass Sunglasses completed her brilliant ensemble as she walked the red carpet accompanied by her gorgeous heir/musician boyfriend, forty-three year old Garth Herne-Pongri; who wore a tailor-made Brey Gegregerre double-breasted damson evening suit with vintage white ivory buttons. A special exclusive pre-release of the new iYwatch Pre3 that has only been sent to a few hundred highly-influential dogs proudly adorned his wrist.

Fashionista Seyge can next be seen in the side-splitting hilarious wedding comedy, 'Brenda's Big Day', where she plays a beautiful, independent, but cynical wedding planner that had given up on ever finding love, until the moment Mr. Teddy Right walked into her office, with his mean and controlling bride-to-be in tow.

The Public Safety & Protection Agency has been decommissioned, and its terror-threat level system has been officially discontinued by the Justness League of Orninica. Take care, Orninicans.

## Chapter Thirty: Student II

Every time I try to eat this swill, I have to clench up to make sure it doesn't come running right back out again. It's so bad. They won't even tell us what's in it exactly, but it doesn't look like any food I've ever seen. It's mostly brown sludge, with some sticky green chunks and these wiry white fibers. They just call it a 'nutri-meal', whatever that means. Honestly, I'd almost rather eat dirt than finish this plate off.

They ship them here in these little foil packages with no labels on them, and somehow they're already heated when we open them, right out of the box. Must be some kind of new invention that keeps food steaming hot for weeks at a time. Too bad it doesn't inject some fucking flavor into them as well, that would be a much more useful invention.

The others are better at getting used to eating this stuff, they're munching away like it's a nice big plate of vanilla pudding or something. There's even a few daring chubsters that are asking for seconds. I guess some guys will get used to anything. Maybe I can trade the rest of mine to one of them for a pocket knife or a lighter or something. I bet both those things would be more nutritious than a nutri-meal.

So the good news is they're ending the dental camp early. They made us all help them set up one of those catapults outside, and we're all going to get launched out of it in the morning as soon as the bots arrive to operate it. They're afraid that some of us might have too soft a landing though, since there's nothing but meadowland out here, so they're aiming the catapult at a brick wall just to make sure no one walks away from the throw.

The wall's only a few steps away from the catapult, so we're not even going to get airborne for more than a moment really. It's such a bummer. At least I'll finally be done with this shitty fucking camp, though. It's really driving me nuts. They act like dentistry is the most important thing ever invented. It's like a creepy cult or something. Just like a cult. Yeah, I'll probably be better off splattered on that wall than staying here for another two weeks. At least I won't have to learn about fucking dentistry any more.

All the camp activities are tooth-related. They've got these big rocks painted white and arranged like teeth, and we have to brush them with a giant toothbrush to demonstrate the correct brushing method. Even the rare fun stuff is dental-oriented, like the canoes are made to look like big toothpaste tubes and we have to answer dental trivia while we row them. There's even a water slide that works like like a giant water pick, but they hardly ever let us near it. It's so mental. Makes me want to pull out all my teeth one by one and throw them in the lake.

A couple of times I sabotaged the dumb dental activities so they had to let us do something else. The other day, I hid all the stupid rock brushes, and they had to just let us play ball and swim in the lake instead. But then later they saw we were all drinking from the lake, so they made us stop what we were doing and had us pour tons of barrels of aluminium fluoride into the water. Those barrels were heavy as fuck. Didn't really want to drink that water after seeing that nasty stuff pouring out of the barrels. Man, dentists are screwy.

It wouldn't be so bad here if they just left us alone, you know? If we didn't have all this dumb dentist shit to do, we could have a really great time. But every time we start to have a bit of fun, the counselors all rush in and try to ruin it with more tedious dentistry bullshit. It's almost enough to make a guy want to burn the whole place down, but I guess there's no point now, since we're all gonna die tomorrow. What really sucks is I only came here because my dad promised to get me a car, and now I'll never even see the damn thing. What a gyp. I wonder if he bought it yet, and it's waiting in the driveway back home all shiny and new. Shame it'll never get driven by me even once.

I mean, if I had gotten the car when it was all over with, then at least it would have been kind of worth it. My summer would have still been a total fucking waste, but I would have been sacrificing it for something at least. It wouldn't have just been a total miserable waste of time and effort.

Now everyone's gonna die and my whole last summer was a total bore-fest. You know, there aren't even any girls here? It's such a shitty situation. They could at least bring in some girls from another camp or something for our last night on earth. Let us have a couple of hours of fun before they launch us off into that brick wall. Well, most of the junior dentists here are total bore-holes anyway, so they wouldn't know what to do with a proper horny girl. But actually, that would just leave more honey for me, so it would work out, I guess.

They pretty much shut down the net completely now. Whenever I turn on my iYglass and try to go online, it just plays the same stupid video of the preachy Justness League clerics talking about following the humans on the 'ultimate quest of enlightenment'. They play an animation of a giant catapult launching hundreds of dogs into the sun, while rockets follow in the background, and then when they reach the sun, the dogs turn into these shiny light beings or something, all smiling and pleased, and Bahman and Soupman and the rest of the humans are all there on the sun, and the dogs and the masters all join hands and sing and spiral around in twirly circles, and then they turn into this big blue flame that gets sucked into the sun. It's really fucking lame, if you ask me.

If Bahman is such a bad-ass messiah of justice, then why does he need to wear a mask? Seems like kind of a weird thing for a holy savior to need to hide his identity from everyone like that. There's a lot about religion that doesn't make much sense come to think of it, but it's like there's this mental block in my mind that cuts me off whenever I start to analyze it too deeply, you know? I don't know if I'm really going

to go to the cave in the sky and meet Bahman and Soupman when I choke, but I guess it would be better than just suddenly ceasing to exist forever.

Or maybe the cave is just as dull as dental camp and I'll want to do myself in the whole time I'm there, which I guess is infinity. That would really fucking suck. I really hope it's not going to be anything like this place, and there better be girls there, millions and billions of them, and all of them raring to go. Yeah, there'd better be around the clock wild animal fucking going on up there, or I'm going to be pretty pissed off.

I'm just sorry I don't get to be with a girl just one time before I die. That's what really sucks about all this. Even prison convicts get conjugal visits, but junior dentists don't get shit all. If I knew this was going to be my last summer ever, I would have never given in to my dad. I could be laying on a beach right now next to a fine little bikini babe instead of sharing a tent with drooling Froggy Joe and his rock collection.

Really wish I could convince them to let us have a little farewell party. They won't hear of it, though. They're even still making us all recite the precious dentist's code to everyone after dinner tonight. They've had us memorize it all month, it's like five pages long. We don't get dessert unless we recite it perfectly. What's the point even any more? I kind of wish I could just get onto the catapult now instead of waiting until the morning, so I can skip that whole stupid dinner. It's going to be such a pull down. Maybe I can just stay in bed and say I'm sick...

Nah, they would make me go to the nurse and she'd say I was faking again. Every time you get caught lying like that, they make you clean the toilets. I don't want to spend my last night on earth scrubbing a disgusting toilet bowl. I'll just have to finish memorizing the damn dentist's code.

You know, maybe I shouldn't have been such a dick to that girl I was talking to online back home. She wasn't like a perfect underwear model or anything, but she was pretty hot I guess. And I think she really liked me, too. I wonder what she's doing right now. She's probably scared about the catapulting. If the Internet was still working, I'd totally look her up tonight. At least we could hang out online for a bit before the morning. Really sucks that they turned off the net. Fuck.

# Chapter Thirty-One : Senior Citizen III

I can't get the news site to load, been trying all day, so I don't know if this message will go through. I've been standing in this bloody line at my local catapult loading station for thirty-eight minutes now. It's completely asinine. The summons said to be here at 7:30 to take my turn, yet here I stand at 8:08, and there's still more than a dozen groups ahead of mine, and they don't even think to offer us seniors a chair. They can't expect us to stand in line for hours! Why the hell do they tell us to be here at a specific time if we get here and have to stand around waiting like a bunch of dirty migrants at the border? It's just bad organization, is what it is. Isn't the whole point of having bots managing something like this to have it done prompt and orderly? I just don't understand it.

If they had put even a molecule of thought into this, we'd arrive at the catapult on time, climb right in, an orchestra would play as we recite the anthem, maybe raise a celebratory glass with the local priest before he presses the button, and Bob's your uncle. A princely send-off fit for any proud Ornicican. But instead, they're herding us through this long winding line, no one of flesh and blood in charge, no music, nowhere to sit while we wait, pups are vomiting all over their seats on the catapult, and they're not even hosing it down before the next group gets on. It's complete disarray!

I wouldn't mind the wait so much if it weren't so damn cold today. I spent an hour when I woke up this morning salting the thick layer of ice covering the driveway. Not that I needed to get the car out of the garage, mind you. It specifically says on the summons not to bring your car with you because there's no bloody parking, so I had to leave it in the garage and walk here. Five blocks! My poor feet are killing me. But anyway, I can't just leave the house with all that ice on the driveway, it's not right. It's bad enough that the weeds in the flower beds are back again, but I didn't have time to deal with them because I had to make this appointment on time.

Now I can't stop thinking about the damned weeds. I should have woken up earlier so I could spray them. Anyone that walks by the house now is going to think I was a lazy good for nothing that didn't even maintain his landscaping.

You know the kind of riffraff that let weeds take over their front yard? The kind with the six screaming flea-bitten pups, somehow each a different breed, and the never-ending stream of social workers banging on their door. The kind of dogs that shouldn't even be allowed onto the catapult since all they've ever done is leech from the rest of us and complain about it all the while. No, they should just drown those types down

in the river and reserve the catapults for hard-working taxpayers. At least then this line wouldn't be so damn long.

They could at least do the pups on a different day than the grownups. How much high-pitched wailing and bawling can I put up with? I'm this close to losing my damned marbles. Honestly, it's really shocking how downright cowardly and unruly the pups in the line are. When I was a pup, I always did exactly as I was told or I knew I'd get what for. You wouldn't ever catch me shedding a tear, let-alone kicking and screaming and trying to run away.

Lucky we've got a lot of drones here, since the parents aren't doing anything to contain their little mongrels. They're basically just asleep at the wheel, staring into space all blank and expressionless. A lot of them don't even have their iYglass with them, so I don't know why they're acting so damn dazed. Probably a bunch of hopped up drug addicts, I bet.

The moment the parents let go of them, the pups make pathetic attempts at getting away, but the drones just bring them right back every time, and the parents don't even bother to thank them. Just keep starring blankly at the catapult while the pups whimper and howl. Just pathetic parenting.

Fortunately, the drones do spray some gas over us periodically to keep everyone calm, but it's pretty windy out here, and it doesn't look like it's reaching the smaller pups at all. This really should be an exciting day for them, especially since they're undoubtedly all used to lining up at theme parks all day long to get on a useless roller-coaster. At least this ride has a purpose and doesn't cost an arm and a leg to go on. And when it's over, they get to meet Bahman and the prophets in the great cave in the stars. What more can a miserable little runt ask for from life than that?

I wonder what Bahman is going to say when he shakes my hand. I know he'll want to recognize my great service to the country, fighting in two great wars and losing my big toe to frostbite while I was liberating miserable brainless deluded dogs from communism. Almost took a bullet in the eye at one point, but I tripped and fell just before the commie bastard fired, and it just singed my fur. Of course, his eyes didn't fare so well when we caught up with him. Kept them as a souvenir for a while, but my whore wife made me throw them out when she swindled me into marrying her.

I'm sure Bahman, as a great fighter for justice, will want to hear all my old army stories. We'll probably have a drink together and he'll pat me on the back, congratulating me for living such a full and honorable life. He'll likely compliment me on my flower beds, tell me they're the best on the street. Of course, if he sees those damn weeds, he might change his mind. I wonder if I can pop back home and give them a spray without the drones noticing. Probably not a good idea, I might lose my place in line if I do that, and there's no way I'm going to start over at the back of the line. I'm not some hoodlum living on government handouts with nowhere to be like the rest of the damn dogs in the line.

Why have they grouped me up with all these sorry losers anyway? If they had put any thought into this at all, they'd have the upper echelons of society get priority;

have the noble upper-society types all show up on Monday. And then, on Tuesday, have the next best citizens; us hard-working war veterans line up together. The rest of the rabble can be carted in and stuffed into the catapult the remaining days of the week. That way, only the ragtags would have to stand in line for ages. I tell you, if they would just listen to my ideas, this society would be a hell of a lot more orderly. I have the answers to all of society's problems, but no one listens. It's such a waste.

It's so frigidly cold today. I honestly can't remember a colder summer than this, it's like the bloody ice age out here. I should have worn an extra sweater under my jacket, but I didn't want to be too hot when I get to the cave in the sky. Who knows how long the antiperspirant I put on this morning is going to last? I'm sure Bahman keeps the air-conditioning up there at the perfect temperature. I really hope I don't start drooling before I get on the catapult. That would be just my luck, wouldn't it? To finally meet Bahman in the cave in the sky, and he comes to shake my hand, and finds me drooling all over the floor because the antiperspirant rang out. He'll think I'm a without any decorum or class, like a common mongrel.

Damn it, damn it, damn it, why didn't I bring a tube of tongue antiperspirant with me? It would have fit in my pocket with a bit of effort. I don't know what I was thinking. Then again, I'm sure they must have a store in the cave that sells some, before we get to the reception area. Probably even a special heavenly kind of antiperspirant that lasts all day. Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. Not to worry then.

Bahman will surely want to talk about my car and how I've kept her in mint factory condition for forty four years. That's no easy feat when you've got all the potholes on my street to contend with. And he'll no doubt want to have a look at all my medals. This uniform still fits perfectly after all this time, I'm sure he'll mention how smart I look in it. I wanted to bring my golf trophies with me to show him, but they don't let us bring anything on the catapult that won't fit in our pockets. With the exception of a bottle of water, they let us bring that thankfully.

I hope Bahman doesn't know that my mother was only half Pekinese. Well, he is all-knowing, so I suppose there's no way he doesn't know about it. I just hope he doesn't bring it up in front of the rest of my old regiment.

Sure, most of them were half-breeds at best, but they always looked to me to class up the unit, always seeing me as the the well-bred dignitary of the group; something to aspire to. It would be very embarrassing if Bahman mentioned that I wasn't entirely pure of blood. Even the old sergeant once came up to me and declared how much he appreciated my staunch character. "Private Teacup, you do us all proud, blaring your fancy music out of your trench and always acting the part of a proper Pekinese VIP", he told me. He'd be devastated if he knew I was only three-quarters. I might have to take Bahman a side for a bit and tell him to keep it under his hat. I know he'll understand.

He'll probably even want to invite me to enter the part of the cave reserved for pure-bloods, since I'm so close to being one anyway. I would certainly fit right in with

the aristocratic members of society. I've even been told on two separate occasions that an air of grace follows me about at all times.

Oh it's about time, my group is finally boarding, got to go now. Certainly hope my hat is still on straight.

# Chapter Thirty-Two: Professor of Antiquities III

I suppose there will be no one left to read this journal entry, can't even seem to get online to post it to my journal. My summons came today. I'm actually loaded into the catapult right now, with nine of my equally doomed neighbors. I'm dictating my final thoughts, through my iYglass, for whatever good it will do, as the bots wait for the clouds to clear so that my group may be properly pointed at the sun when they push the button.

I've never been particularly politically active, honestly I've only ever really had an interest in history. Things were getting really dire in recent years, I'm not oblivious to that fact. As a student of history, it would be impossible to ignore the patterns of a collapsing empire in the midst of its final, spiteful tantrum. Sitting here, locked into this over-sized catapult, waiting to be splattered across the sidewalk, right by the post office on Rutgers Street I estimate, I suppose there's no reason to censor myself any longer.

Until now, I always felt the compulsion to bury the long-stifled voices in my head telling me how utterly outrageous all this is. This madness that consumed our leaders, all utterly and irredeemably corrupted by greed, power and dogma, has been allowed to go too far, and now all of us pay for it with our lives. I should have stood up and opposed the madness a long time ago. But I didn't. None of us did, and now we will be punished for our silence and inaction one last time.

I'm sure I'm expected to be in full support of this final plan to follow in the masters ultimate footsteps, after all, my entire career has consisted of putting the pieces of the human jigsaw together so that we can adopt their laws and customs as our own.

I'm starting to realize, especially since my journey to Nureongi, that I may have been properly misguided. In fact, I may very well have wasted my entire pitiful life aspiring to the ravings of madmen that ultimately destroyed themselves.

I spent my whole time in Nureongi running after rusted knickknacks left behind by long dead men, when right before me was this awesome interconnected civilization. Disparate cultures living side by side, dogs wholly unconcerned with matters of wealth and hubris, cooperating with each other of their own free will.

No constant threat of force necessary to compel them to be civil to each other. No all seeing eyes needed to protect them from themselves. They worked together because it is natural to do so, easier than to work alone. A world completely unlike any I've

ever thought possible. The dogs of Nureongi were happier than any Ornican. Their society was the only wonder of the world worth seeking, and I was blind to it.

If one day another civilization rises up to replace our soon to be annihilated one, if our hamsters suddenly rise from their cages to build courthouses and radio stations, I only hope they don't get it in their minds to recreate our civilization or follow our example in any way. Our civilization was only ever successful at being a facsimile of man's broken spirit.

Every decision we've made for more than a generation has been completely amiss. We haven't followed any kind of logical trajectory in anything we've set out to do. It's simply been a giant charade. We'd find random historical relics, and then wangle ludicrous policies out of them, that only really acted to expand the power of a few wealthy power elites. These elites then used their new powers to further grow their personal wealth to obscene ratios and oppress the rest of the population under them.

Our whole system of living, just like the humans before us, was designed around the idea of accumulating wealth. Except our wealthy-born leaders made sure to keep the wealth perpetually out of reach for the rest of society.

Yet by some inexplicable lapse of logic, we allowed ourselves to be convinced that this fundamentally defective system of living they foisted on us was somehow in our favor. That some day, some how, we too would have the chance to join the power elites in their secret societies and exclusive country clubs. It would just take some dedication and hard work and then it would all be worth it. What gullible fools were we.

We die today as clueless as ever. We never grew, or learned a single thing in our entire doomed turn on this earth. We were not cultured, nor distinguished, advanced or civilized. We certainly weren't important. We were only silly little specks on a big blue ball of chaos whirling through space.

It is very freeing to admit to these truths. Finally piercing the protective film that covers my mind; releasing my ego. I suppose the only real wisdom comes to you when there's nothing left to cling to, and your whole state of existence is in shambles.

The only truth that I now know as I wait to die is that I know nothing.

The moment the rich were ripped from the earth by the Braniso explosions, we could have finally freed ourselves. Rebooted our civilization and created a self-sustaining utopia, much like the Autonomous Tribes of Nureongi have managed to do so successfully. But instead we stumbled around aimlessly, waiting to be told by the newscasts what to do next. And when the clerics took over and told us mass-suicide was the only acceptable path of action. we didn't even bat an eyelid. We all die just as we lived, sheep lining up at a slaughterhouse.

I realize that the ruins of the human civilization never really taught me anything of true value, but sitting here, waiting to be executed, to join the ruins of our own fallen civilization, I finally feel a tremendous relief. I am unbound for the first time.

Vivid flashes of a wasted life play before my eyes. I can't stop the images, they pound through my head like trains rushing past a platform at full speed. Suddenly relief is replaced with intense regret.

I was part of the problem. I am responsible for all this lunacy. It is my fault, and I deserve this horrible undignified end, to match the waste of a life I led. A life of craven passivity and blind obedience to deviant posturers. My senseless inaction has caused all of this. I am Orninica. I am guilty.

Maybe this sudden eradication of our civilization is necessitated by the laws of the universe. In order for a new, better way of life to arise, the old must be wiped clean. Maybe this is the way it was always meant to end for us; this farce we call our reality.

But perhaps there is a glimmer of nobility in all of this chaos. Orninica's earth sacrifices itself so that hope can rise once again, and whatever creature one day stands up to take our place will have a clean slate with which to establish their new world.

Maybe they'll get it right next time, coming in without ever knowing the crippling influence of corruption and greed. Maybe they'll put the needs of the many ahead of the luxury of the few. Maybe this tragic loop of societies built on arrogance, greed, stripping of liberty and eventual self destruction will continue until someone, someday breaks the cycle, and survives the attack that will surely follow from its neighbors for daring to be free.

No one else on the catapult or in the crowd of dogs waiting for their turn seems to be very afraid. I suppose they resolved themselves to the chaos of their lives long ago, and don't quite know how to interpret this final great injustice upon them, as anything more than one last affirmation of futility. We certainly lost any ability to stand up for ourselves long ago.

Orninica was a nice place once, but it was fleeting. Almost from the start, we willingly gave away every natural freedom we were born with, and for what? I don't know any more. Was there ever any logic to it? I just can't seem to remember. It doesn't matter any more, none of this does.

The clouds are clearing now. The sun is finally showing itself.

## Chapter Thirty-Three: Spy III

I was all ready to die. They kept delaying my execution for weeks, until finally, all the citizens were gone, and only the leading clergy were left alive. They brought me to the rocket launch site, and it started to look like they were taking me with them, to die in space. But as they boarded the rockets, they removed my chains and told me I was free to go. To be the only living witness of the great Orninican civilization.

I watched as the rockets departed the earth on their journey to find their nirvana. I looked up at the sky until the last rocket was no more than a speck. I didn't know where I'd go or what I'd do now, so I decided to walk back to the restaurant to gain my bearings. I did notice the clergy didn't bring with them the remaining power-elite. I assumed they were left behind to repopulate the earth with nothing but purebred elites, as was surely their long held goal. I would soon discover I was wrong.

It took several days to walk back to Rover Avenue. On my way through the empty streets, with only drones and janitor-bots for company, I passed piles of decaying corpses. I saw one fellow who had somehow managed to survive the catapult, I suppose by landing on someone less fortunate. Regaining consciousness, he struggled to stand up. But the drones saw him too, and in the blink of an eye he was down again. I had to dive for cover to avoid the ricochet, but I was a little slow and the bullets grazed the side of my face.

It seemed that they were programmed to shoot on sight any dog that had managed to survive the purge. Not seeing the Nureongi as members of their race, the clerics must have made an exception for me and added it to the drone's network. The janitor-bots were working as fast as they could to remove and incinerate the dead from the streets, but there were just too many, so they were piling them on top of each other and setting colossal bonfires. There were some paths that were so piled with bodies waiting to be burned that I had no choice but to climb over them to pass. The air was thick with smoke and the foul smell of burning flesh. My eyes and nose stung.

I couldn't help but feel responsible. My actions had surely led to this massacre, there was no getting around that. To be honest, I was frustrated that the clerics hadn't executed me. I was completely prepared to die, and when they didn't pull the trigger, I was left feeling barren. Regret began to set in as I passed more and more corpses and plodded through the thick carpet of blood that stuck to the road. Every water-body I passed was stained bright red with all the run-off.

For a long time, I tried to convince myself that the Orns would be better off dead. That the only way to free them of this cycle of tyranny and enslavement was for them to meet their ends, released from their strangling restraints once and for all.

I suppose it made it easier to pull the trigger on my plot after I'd convinced myself that I was freeing them by killing them. Knowing I'd be putting to death not just the power elite, but any innocent bystanders that were within the blast zone, made it especially important that I swallow this pill.

I had never expected or planned to live for very long, after my decision to carry out the Braniso plot. It felt unjust, that I should live when so many innocents had been led to slaughter, that hundreds of millions of pups all around the world were splayed out dead on the roads, while I somehow continued to draw breath.

I didn't much like being alone with my guilt-stricken thoughts on this long walk, and I knew it would likely be many years before I'd get back to Nureongi and hear a voice other than my own. Even if I did get home someday, I'd still have to live with what I'd done until my very last moments in this life. Being a long-gone martyr was really a much more comfortable plan than being forced to bear witness to all this senseless carnage.

I wondered if maybe I shouldn't return to Nureongi at all. After years in this place, my heart was likely blackened beyond saving. What if I contaminated my peaceful, freedom-loving brothers and sisters with my years of serfdom, and my fierce, murderous plotting.

But then again, the brutal war fought against them probably already had that affect. I hoped they hadn't lost sight of their spirits. I hoped they hadn't also been changed forever by the war.

Every time I crossed through a suburb, I was very tempted to take one of the neatly-parked cars sitting idly in every driveway, but it was far too risky; especially now that the drones only had one dog left to police. They surrounded me constantly like a swarm of hungry mechanical locusts. At night, when the drones became especially unnerved at my suspiciously long walk, I had to take shelter in the lobbies of hotels to avoid sending them all into a frenzy. They were some of the only buildings that weren't locked and unapproachable.

Several times, overzealous drones latched onto me and airlifted me to the nearest police station or security checkpoint, and then, confused that the place was empty, dropped me down and departed. This made the walk take a lot longer than it would have. In one particular town, I was dropped at the same station nine times by different drones. They must have been set to a particularly high alert setting.

After that frustrating experience, I tried my best to bypass what used to be major population centers. Because of this, there was a lot of desert to cross. But I suppose all of Orninica is technically a desert now that the trees are gone. Maybe even all of the world.

As I entered the city, it looked oddly unfamiliar. I'd never seen it like this before; completely devoid of animation. It was more like a model of the city I'd once seen at the miniatures museum. Especially jolting was the almost total silence. I don't think I'd ever fully realized how alive the city was before this eerily still moment.

Finally arriving at the financial district and turning the corner to the big Fitzcorp building, I saw four bodies lined up neatly outside. These weren't catapult victims; these dogs had gunshot wounds to their heads. They'd been lined up against the building and shot dead. Looking closer, I recognized one of them as Gerald Fitz, one of Maurice Fitz's grandsons. He used to have his own reality show on TV. As I passed more famous buildings, I saw the same scene again and again. All the wealthy socialites that had lucked out and escaped my Braniso plot, lined up and shot dead. Most of them young pups.

The drones above didn't seem to be operating as normal. Instead of following me around suspiciously, recording my every move, they seemed to be completely oblivious to my presence. Some of them flied in circles aimlessly, others collided with buildings. There were no janitor-bots in sight. No catapults either, since no one lived in this district. Just short rows of impeccably-dressed rich folk with their brains blown out.

I reached my restaurant. There wasn't much left of it, they were very thorough in stripping it bare when they were looking for evidence. But the old bench was still standing outside the door. I sat at it and took one last look at the long black street I'd given so many years to. The buildings didn't seem so big and menacing all of a sudden. I took a deep breath. The air didn't choke my lungs as I expected. I could even have sworn I could hear birdsong in the distance.

I suddenly realized I was still wearing my clothes. I took them off and set them on the bench. I noticed the yellow roots in my fur beginning to show again for the first time in five years. I remembered Outa's soft golden coat and let out a longing sigh. I had no idea if she had managed to survive the invasion, or if anyone I used to know was still alive. I decided to put that out of my mind.

It was time to finally leave this place behind forever.

I would have a long journey ahead of me to get back home to Nureongi. But I was grateful I was there to witness the last days of Orninica before time took it and withered it down into sand.

# Epilogue

In their haste to depart the earth for the sun, in search of their so-called masters, the Orninican clerics have just narrowly missed the one and only chance to actually meet the mythical humans they so honored.

Far away from the heart of the late Orninican civilization, in what was the last remnants of the Amazon rain-forest, the last tree is felled by the unstoppable loggerbots, and out of the sawdust and leaf-litter climb the very last survivors of a long concealed tribe of Homo sapiens.

These timid great apes have managed to stay hidden in the trees for thousands of years, far predating the tragically brief age of the Orninicans.

The small tribe of thirty-odd members now have no choice but to leave their ancestral homeland and begin a desperate quest to find sustenance in other lands.

As it becomes more and more obvious that a brutal ice age rapidly approaches, and with their lands also stripped bare, the surviving Nureongi gather their wounded and also begin to think about migrating.

Perhaps their paths will meet somewhere along the way.

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