

THE CAGE ENIGMA

A

Novel

Written

by

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CHAPTER 1

“One cage, five prisoners, one survivor: who when up was opened down was closed, who when opened was there closed was not, who when standing up was upside down.”

(Stonehenge, England,
Unknown Author)

It was a sunny day at a coastal mountain top where a steel cage oddly contrasted with the natural landscape.

Five people lied unconscious inside the cage. Three men and two women: Ralph, sharp hair and nice

suit; Teo, sloppy hair, unshaved and baggy clothes; Mic, long hair, goatee, T-shirt and ragged jeans; Pat, dress and long old fashion hair; Bel, new jeans, modern shirt and short hair.

Ralph's eyes opened. As he looked around his laziness faded. His surprise grew to desperation.

Ralph tried his cell phone. Not working. He tried to wake the others, shaking Bel and Teo. "Wake up, buddy. Who the hell are you?"

"Not yet mama... not yet..." mumbled Teo.

"How did I get in this shit?" said Ralph, intrigued.

Teo continued sleeping.

Bel stood up and looked around. "Wow... Where... Jesus Christ... God all mighty... How... And who are you?"

"Who are you?" redirected Ralph.

"I asked first," insisted Bel.

“I woke up first. And I asked you first.”

“I was sleeping. I didn't hear you. You heard me. So I asked you first.”

“Lady's first,” said Ralph politely.

“I'm not a 'lady.' Who are you? Who the hell are you? And who are these people? What am I doing in a cage at the top of a mountain? How did I get here? Did you drug me?” asked Bel rudely.

“Mama... shssh... I'm trying to sleep...” wined Teo.

Mic and Pat woke up. Mic ran his hand on his hurting neck. Pat had a headache and put her hand on her forehead.

Bel tried her cell phone but gave up. It was not working. “Wake up idiots! Look around. Where are we?”

“No one would kidnap you. Trust me. You're a pain in the ass,” said Ralph.

“Thank you. But I don't remember walking into a cage,” added Bel.

“Neither do I, crazy lesbo.”

“I didn't say I was a lesbian.”

“I'm saying you are.”

“Oh. So you know me?”

“I know now. Shut up. Just shut your onion stinking trap.”

Ralph stared out side holding on the cage bars. “Hello!! someone out there?!” he yelled.

Mic got up. “Ouch... it's echoing in my brain...”

Pat freaked out walking around. “Who are you guys?! Why are we in a cage?! What is this?! Where are we?! I want to get out. Now. Now!! I want out!! Get me out!!”

Teo woke up. Bel tried to comfort Pat, embracing her.

“Get off of me!” yelled Pat.

“Mamma. Turn the TV off!” said Teo before he went back to sleep. Pat start crying.

“This guy would've stayed napping at the world trade center while the towers collapsed” said Bel.

“Hello. I'm Mic,” he said to Bel with a smile.

“Someone nice. I'm Bel,” she replied almost blushing.

“So you're a bisexual lesbo?” started again Ralph.

“Listen, ‘buddy’, you better watch your mouth or only one of us will come out of this cage alive.”

“Me.”

“Don't trust yourself too much. We need to think of a way out.”

“Your brain needs help. Why am I not surprised?”

“I smell flowers,” said Mic as he looked around.

“Great. A pot head, a lesbo, a sleeping moron and a cry baby,” said Ralph.

“And an idiot,” added Bel as she shook the steel bars, looking for an opening.

CHAPTER 2

“There's no door. Sealed all the way around,” said Ralph.

“Okay. Let's start somewhere,” suggested Mic.

“ ‘Let's start somewhere.’ A helpful genius,” ridiculed Ralph.

“Where were we, before we got here?” insisted Mic, focused and thoughtful.

“That's a smart line of thinking. But I don't remember,” said Bel.

“I remember, having breakfast,” said Ralph.

“Oh, that's of great help, Einstein. You just happen to have breakfast every god damn day,” said Bel.

“I remember driving alone. At night... A road... Somewhere...” said Pat.

“I remembered being on top of the American continent,” joked Bel.

“At least I remember something,” added Pat.

“...A normal person. I'm Ralph, by the way. Friends call me Ralph,”

“I'm Pat. My sisters call me Pat.”

“Pat and Ralph. Normal human beings. We're in danger,” said Bel.

“I remembered where I was,” said Mic as Teo started to snore.

“Wake up this idiot! Stick your foot up his ass,” barked Ralph.

“Let the poor guy sleep,” disagreed again Bel.

“I was in a field. Near my Grampa's house,” continued Mic.

“Checking on your pot plantation?” joked Ralph.

“I was hunting rabbits.”

“Jesus... mother of god. An animal killer. An assassin of life. I'm vegetarian. I dislike carnivores and I hate hunters,” protested Bel.

“I'm a hunter since I was born,” said Ralph proudly.

“I don't kill them. I just capture and sell them alive to the university.”

“That's comforting. You don't kill, you sell them to be tortured and have a painful scientific slow death,” said Bel.

“I'm waking this guy. I need to hear some fresh new voices. Fresh ideas. Wake up, sleeping bastard.” Ralph shook Teo.

“What mama? Is it noon, already?” asked Teo with his eyes half closed.

“I'm not your mama and I have no idea what time it is.”

Mic looked at his wrist watch.
“Eleven fifteen.”

Bel checked hers. “Mine says it's almost five in the afternoon.”

“That's crazy,” noted Ralph.

“Mine says two. I had an appointment with a dentist,” said Pat.

“You where driving on a road somewhere, to get to a dentist? Was he going to examine you teeth or your vagina?” asked Bel.

“My dentist is down town. I just said what i remembered last.”

“Downtown where?” asked Ralph.

“Seattle.”

Ralph was intrigued. “I'm from New York.”

“I live in San Francisco,” added Mic.

“Chicago,” completed Bel.

Teo stood up, eyes half shut, staring slowly at everyone. “Did I miss something? Where's my mother?”

“Must be cleaning your diapers,” answered Bel.

“Who are you? My sexy nanny?”

“No, your hooker.”

“So can I park my Cadillac in your garage? Mama! Damn... What is this place?”

“What did you say?” asked Bel.

Teo yawned. “What did I say... Where are we? Why are we in a cage? Nice view. But I need to take a leak... and a dump.

“Oh no. No, no, negative. No way. Hold it. Keep it. Die if necessary,” said Bel

A moment later, Teo, Ralph and Mic took a leak at three different sides of the cage. Bel and Pat looked away at the fourth side.

“I think I'm breaking the world record of long distance pissing,” bragged Teo.

“At least our piss is getting out of here. Bel. Don't try to peak,” said Ralph.

“Don't worry. I would need binoculars to see your little wiener.”

“You can look at mine if you let me look at yours,” said Mic.

“I saw it already.”

“Please. Can we focus on getting out of here? I hope this cage doesn't get smelly...” complained Pat.

Mic and Ralph finished off. Teo seemed to be just beginning with a powerful jet.

“Damn. Are you filling up a pool?” asked Mic.

“Must be the six pack of beer. Just before nap time,” said Ralph.

“Twelve pack of juicy juice,” said Teo.

“Never heard of that. Must be a dollar a dozen coupon deal,” said Bel.

“Not a coupon guy. My mother does the shopping. I do the eating and drinking.” Teo finished with a powerful jet and shook his wiener like he was strangling a chicken.

Bel stared. “It won't stretch. Trust me.”

“I'm actually thinking about an operation to reduce the size of the monster. I don't like hurting my female partners.”

“Is that how you call your right hand?” said Bel.

“Yes. And it's time to get out.” Teo grabbed the top of one side of the cage and rammed the adjacent side with his two feet. The cage was still solid as rock.

“Nice try. But this cage looks pretty solid. Actually, amazingly solid. Very tight,” said Mic.

“Let's try everyone together hitting the same side. Maybe it will turn,” suggested Ralph.

“And we'll roll down the hill, die and free our souls. Great plan. I pass,” announced Bel.

“Let's try. On the count of three. One, two, three,” counted Mic. He, Teo and Ralph jumped with their feet and hit one side. Nothing happened. Pat hit it late softly.

“You go girl. I think the paint gave in,” said Bel.

“I think I stretched a muscle...” complained Pat as she sat in pain.

Teo shook the cage bars and yelled like Tarzan. “Ahahhahahh!!!”

“Mama's not going to hear,” said Ralph.

“I'm calling Cujo. My pit bull.”

“We need to focus on developing a theoretical solution. And then implement it,” suggested Mic.

“Just do it. Saves time,” said Teo.

“We need to know who the hell put us in here,” said Bel.

“A serial killer. Like Hannibal of the silence of the lambs,” suggested Pat.

“Good. We'll beat the shit out of him, when he shows up,” said Teo.

“No. This is just too weird. Even for a psycho weirdo,” disagreed Ralph.

“Shouldn't we be in a dark basement?” asked Mic.

“Right. What is this? An environmental mountain climber vegetarian serial killer?” said Bel.

“Why not? There's no one around. Where are we?” asked Pat.

“No where around a TV set,” complained Teo.

Ralph tried his cell phone again.

“Still not working.”

Bel tried hers also. “Mine neither.”

“We're in the middle of nowhere,”
said Mic.

CHAPTER 3

“We have to start thinking about food,” remembered Teo.

“Unless you are a cannibal, you'll be on a diet,” said Ralph

“That's it. Maybe this is a new kind of forced diet program spa. They drug us and put us here. My mother would do that,” said Bel.

“Now I see where your lovely personality came from,” teased Ralph.

“I think she's a pretty nice girl,” disagreed Mic.

“Thank you Mic. But I took it as a compliment, considering the source.”

“I'll keep the compliment anyway.”

“I would consider cannibalism if you died of a heart attack or of boredom with yourself,” said Bel to Ralph.

“I'd eat you well done if we had a good barbecue sauce,” answered Ralph.

“I'll barbecue my own leg. Damn, I'm hungry,” complained Teo.

“We'll you all shut up! This is giving me the creeps... We'll all be sausages and burgers for this psycho's barbecue,” warned Pat.

“Wait a minute. Let's not start thinking a hypothesis is a conclusion,” theorized Mic.

“What?” said Teo.

“Let's yell together. Make a lot of noise. Someone might hear us. Help!!!” yelled Bel.

Everybody starts yelling “help!” except Teo who stared up front.

“Sshhh! I think I saw something moving. A rabbit or a rat. We got to get the cutie in here. Will be a nice appetizer.”

Everybody looked but they saw nothing.

“You and your stomach should go back to sleep,” said Ralph.

“There must be someone watching us,” reminded Pat.

“You should cancel that dentist appointment and schedule one with a shrink,” suggested Bel.

“You should go with her for a double-header,” added Ralph.

“I have my own analyst,” said Bel.

“Poor bastard. People will do anything to make a buck,” said Ralph.

“What do you do for a living?” asked Bel.

“I’m a financial manager. How about you? Is there someone crazy enough to hire you?”

“I’m an architect. I have my own office. What about you Mic?”

“I’m a student. Phd in microbiology.”

“What the hell is that? You study germs? Virus?” asked Teo.

“Something like that,” said Mic.

“I’m an automotive engineer. But some people call me a mechanic. What about you Pat. I’ll bet you are a kindergarten teacher, hairdresser or decorator,” guessed Teo.

“I’m an unemployed nurse. I work with my sister at a flower shop,” explained Pat.

“Great. So we have absolutely nothing in common. We come from different places and different professional backgrounds,” concluded Mic.

“Different species too,” added Ralph.

“I knew you were not human,” said Bel.

“No, I'm human. You're some kind of monkey. Teo is a pig. Mic is an owl, Pat is a cute squirrel.”

“So I'm a cannibal after all. I love pork sausage,” said Teo.

“And you are a snake, Ralph. But not venomous. Just a stupid snake that wished it was venomous,” explained Bel.

“I'm not a squirrel,” said Pat.

“We're in a zoo. This is it. Somebody is studying us. We're guinea pigs,” said Mic. He checked his arms.

“I'm suing somebody for this,” protested Bel.

“Check your arms for injection marks,” said Mic. They all checked.

“Nothing,” said Ralph.

“I'm fine. Just a mosquito bite,” said Pat.

“Can we eat mosquitoes without getting a disease?” asked Teo.

Mic examined Pat's arm. “Check for mosquito bites.”

They looked all over, including under their shirts.

“So what is your idea? We're mosquito lunch? Virus research? Quarantine? I have no marks.” said Ralph.

“Neither do I. Thank god. I hate mosquitoes.” said Bel relieved.

“Aren't you a tree lover, animal worshipper? Aren't mosquitoes also creatures of god?” asked Ralph.

“Yes. I mean no. I kill them in self defense. They are blood suckers

such as yourself. That's it! You're the mosquito that's suppose to bite us,” said Bel.

“I'm not biting you. Unless you just want some casual sex. But I find you very unattractive. I would prefer Pat,” replied Ralph

“Thank you but I'm not into casual cage sex with a stranger,” declined Pat.

“I'd prefer to have sex with a mosquito then with you,” said Bel to Ralph.

“So you also like a sassy little mosquito...”

“That's it. This guy is some kind of porn pervert. He must be filming us to show on the internet.”

“I'm in. Where do I sign?” asked Teo.

“You're dreaming. You're like those house wives that fantasize of being a hooker or a porn star. I'm

sorry to break it for you. this is not it.”

“I'm with the serial killer idea,” said Pat.

“Porn creeps. And he is in it,” reaffirmed Bel.

Mic gave his opinion. “This is some crazy scientific experiment.”

“It's some kind of food test. They'll starve us. Then they will serve us an all you can eat buffet,” theorized Teo.

“This is some weird stuff. I have seen a lot of weird stuff in my life... this is out of this world,” concluded Ralph, followed by a weird noise.

“Did you hear that?” asked Mic.

“A rock falling,” guessed Ralph.

“Food source moving,” disagreed Teo.

“He's coming for us. I told you,” winned Pat.

“I didn't hear anything,” said Bel.

“And you're also deaf? You're defects just keep piling up,” fired Ralph.

“Yours are all very clear,” shot back Bel.

“Shhh. quiet,” said Mic.

Ralph tried to listen again.

“Nothing.”

“It's him. I know it,” said Pat.

Teo kneeled. “Come here kiddy, kiddy, kiddy.”

“I told you guys, it was nothing. Mic, can't your science get us out of here?” asked Bel.

“Good question, Bel. Very good question,” complimented Mic with a pause.

“And the answer is?” asked Teo.

CHAPTER 4

Moments later, everyone was sitting with their backs resting against the cage bars, bored and hopeless. It was getting dark.

“What if he's a vampire, just waiting for sundown?” asked Pat.

“I just want someone to show up. Dracula, Werewolf, Frankenstein, a ghost... Anyone.” said Bel.

“Be careful, you may get what you wish for and then you are going to cry for mommy,” warned Ralph.

“Try your cell phone. Maybe we can order a pizza and have the pizza delivery guy get us out of here or call the police,” suggested Teo.

Bel tried the phone and shook her head.

Ralph tried his. “No line...”

“It might get cold, we should stay together,” suggested Mic.

“Why don't you stop beating around the bush and go for it?” asked Ralph.

“Go for what?”

“Bel. Don't you want to bang her? I'll stay with Pat. And Teo can freeze to death alone.”

“The attrition of my hand against my penis will give all the heat I need,” replied Teo.

“Let's just stay where we are and pray for rescue,” said Bel.

“I need to pee,” said Pat.

“As soon as it gets dark.”

“Wait. How will you get it out of this cage?” asked Ralph.

“They can stick a hose up their ass,” suggested Teo.

“It doesn't come out of our ass. Didn't your mommy explain you this?” asked Bel.

“Really? How many holes you girls got down there?” asked Teo.

“Maybe we should keep it, in case we need water,” suggested Mic.

“Lemonade. Good idea,” said Teo.

“If you want to die sooner just hang yourself,” added Ralph.

“It could be distilled,” explained Mic.

“Really. How?” asked Pat.

“I still don't know.” said Mic.

“Great. While you think we'll die from the smell,” added Ralph.

“Will you all just shut up. I'll put my ass against the bars and squirt it away,” explained Bel.

“That's more information than I need to know,” said Ralph disgusted.

“No, go on, I'm kind of turned on,” stimulated Teo.

“I'm completely turned off. Can we change the subject? I'm sorry I brought it up... Let's sing,” suggested Pat.

“No please, torturing prisoners is illegal,” protested Ralph.

CHAPTER 5

It was night in the cage when they were all asleep separated from each other.

The next day, the cage was now on a beautiful beach. They were all still asleep but piled up together.

Teo was hugging Ralph who was hugging Bel who was hugging Mic who was hugging Pat who was sucking her thumb.

Bel almost woke up. She hugged Mic tighter.

There was a hand on her ass, but she realized that Mic's hands were in front of her.

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Bel turned around to realize the hands belonged to Ralph. “Hey... get your hands off of me, you pervert,”

Ralph woke up and realized he was so close to Bel and that Teo's breath was right on his ear. He jumped up surprised and disgusted. “Now I know what my nightmare was all about.”

“Your hand was on my ass,” said Bel.

“Why did you put your ass on my hand?”

Ralph stared speechless at the landscape: ocean and beach.

Bel looked around trying to wake her self up.

“I could swear I'm seeing a beach...”

“You are,” said Ralph.

Bel jumped up. Pat woke up.

“God all mighty... Jesus Christ.

What is this...

What is going on here?! God have merci on our

souls...” said Bel.

“We're still alive. Thank God,”
said Pat.

“This is crazy... I don't think we're
alive... This
must be heaven... Or hell.”

Mic woke up and found that there
were oranges, bananas and apples on
a corner of the cage. “Santa Claus of
food paid us a visit.”

Teo woke up. “Did anyone say
‘food’?” He jumped on the bananas.

“Hey, king of pigs, hold your
mouth. I'm hungry
too,” said Ralph.

“Take only your share. One fifth,”
said Mic.

“I don't think the bananas are a
multiple of five,” said Teo with his
mouth full.

“Oh god give me one of those,”
asked Bel.

Mic, Teo and Pat stared speechless
at the seaside landscape.

“Weren't we at the top of a mountain? Did I miss something?” said Teo.

“I saw nothing,” said Mic.

“I slept like a rock,” said Pat.

“This is not from this world.” said Ralph.

“We're being tested by some lab or government agency. We're in some kind of quarantine,” speculated Mic.

Pat gave her opinion. “I'm saying. There's a Hannibal Lecter playing us. He drugged us and is moving us around.”

“I think we're dead. This is after life,” said Bel.

“Your brain is dead since the day you were born. I'm alive and kicking. And I'm going to kill who is responsible for this,” fired Ralph.

“At least they brought us food,” celebrated Teo.

Everyone struggled to get their share of food.

“Relax, everybody. There's two oranges, two bananas and an apple and a fifth of an apple for each,” explained Mic.

“I'll trade my fifth for one banana,” proposed Teo.

“I'll give you one banana for one apple,” counter proposed Pat.

“Half an apple,” said Teo.

“Deal. What about a knife to cut it?” asked Pat.

“There's no knife. I'm going to eat my fifth of an apple and my half,” explained Teo.

He bit two apples, drooling and letting drooled over pieces fall. Then he offered the rest to Pat and to the others but nobody took it.

“You can keep it. The deal is off,” said Pat.

They devoured everything. Ralph couldn't take his eyes from the landscape. “This is weird... This is very weird...”

“Can you see anyone? Any other lost souls?” asked Bel.

“Only sea and sand. I doubt we'd sleep on our way down from that mountain.” said Ralph.

“Never underestimate the power of drugs,” said Teo.

“We must have inhaled some kind of vapor,” said Mic.

“He's coming to finish us... He's feeding us. He must be a cannibal.” said Pat.

“We're not going to have a lot of meat with this kind of vegetarian diet. I want red meat,” demanded Teo.

“I hate meat. Rare should be a crime,” said Bel.

CHAPTER 6

Moments later Bel tanned. Pat tried to hide from the sun, shielding with her shirt. Teo napped with his feet up in the cage bars. Mic was thinking and watching the ocean waves.

Ralph walked around impatient and sweating.

“Damn it's Hot.”

“Relax and enjoy,” said Bel.

“You'll get skin cancer, I'm telling you,” warned Pat.

“I think I have an idea,” said Mic.

“Good. Let's hear it,” said Ralph.

“Oh, so now he's a genius,” said Bel ironically.

“We're in a desperate situation, here. Anything is better than nothing,” replied Ralph.

“I was kidding. I can't think of anything. My brain is toasting,” said Mic sitting beside Bel who was disappointed. Ralph kicked the cage bars.

“Relax, Ralph. For once in your life,” said Bel.

“You're a bunch of losers. Let's take turns ramming this cage.”

“I was kidding when I said I was kidding. I have a theory. Time will tell if I'm right,” affirmed Mic.

“Time? I guess we have all the time of the god damn world,” said Ralph banging the cage bars again.

Teo woke up. “Alleluia! Are we getting out?”

“Help me,” said Ralph.

Teo got up. “I need a little exercise.”

They took turns banging against the cage bars.

“Stop with this nonsense. He'll hear us,” said Pat.

“There's no big bad wolf coming for you. It's you're favorite sexual fantasy, isn't it?” asked Ralph.

“Mine is Benicio del Toro or Andy Garcia,” said Bel.

“I like Johnny Depp,” said Pat.

Teo got excited. “My thing is a threesome with Britney Spears and Cristina Aguilera. Then Cameron Diaz and Lucy Lu join the party.”

“They are your dream. But you would be their nightmare. I'm a seventies guy: Brigit Bardot and Jane Fonda,” chose Ralph.

“You look more like an escort service guy. What about you Mic?” asked Bel.

“I like the girl next door.
Somebody like... You.”

Bel smiled. Mic put his hand on her cheek.

“Oh god, are you falling for this corny shit?” said Ralph.

“Are you jealous?” asked Pat.

“No, I just can't stand mommy girl and daddy boy crap,” said Ralph.

“You should talk to my shrink. She's great with guys like you. Do you want her number?”

“If she's fuckable. I'll do her while she gets down on you,” replied Ralph.

“You're a lost case,” said Bel.

“Are we going to waste our time waiting to die or are we going to do something? He's coming for us, I'm telling you,” said Pat.

“Who is he?” asked Mic.

“A Hannibal Lecter. A serial killer.”

“What if ‘he’ is a ‘she’?
speculated Bel.

“That would be cool. A
dominatrix. She's going to rape us.
She's keeping us as sex toys,” said
Teo.

“Maybe he or she is one of us,”
said Mic.

They looked suspiciously at each
other in silence.

CHAPTER 7

“I was just kidding,” said Mic.

“That would be an ice cold twisted son of a bitch,” said Ralph.

“Maybe ‘he’ is you,” provoked Bel.

“You would have been chopped up by now. Trust me.”

“He would need an accomplice to move us around,” said Pat.

“All he would have to do is drug us while we where asleep, get out of the cage and haul us from the mountain to the beach,” theorized Mic.

There was another awkward moment of silence.

“Ralph was the first one up twice,” accused Bel.

“Listen to yourselves. This is all too weird, even for a psycho serial killer. I would have wasted you all a long time ago.”

“You don't come across as an intelligent psychopathic serial killer,” said Mic.

“I agree, he doesn't have the brains to have such a twisted brain,” added Bel.

“Maybe he's a copycat. I'll bet there's some book or movie out there describing this whole thing,” said Pat.

“This is not a one man deal. It's an organized endeavor. Scientific perhaps. They must be watching us right now,” said Mic.

“Hey guys! Can we have some pizzas?!” yelled Teo.

“...My father saw an alien space craft when i was a kid... my brother and i saw the lights... this might be it,” said Ralph, ashamed.

Bel laughed. “Aliens! I knew you had some childhood screw up.”

“Forget it. You're right. I'm the Seattle green river killer. You're all going to die.”

“Not me. I'll slash your jugular before you even think of killing me,” said Teo.

“I'd get you before you even started to move your fat belly,” came back Ralph.

“Let's forget this whole thing. I don't like where it's going,” said Bel.

“Where's it going?” asked Teo.

“To where we start to hate and kill each other,” answered Pat.

“Then we'll go cannibal on each other,” said Teo.

They stared at each other in silence.

“Not a bad theory,” noted Mic.

“I think we'll soon meet god or the devil,” said Bel.

“Why don't you kill yourself? If you think we're all dead, it won't make any difference,” challenged Ralph.

“I may be wrong... Unless you want to volunteer for the experiment,” replied Bel.

“Homicide, suicide... He's working our minds,” complained Pat.

Teo laid on a corner. “I'm tired of this bullshit.

Let's take a nap and let time decide who is right.”

“Do you realize you'll spend ninety percent of your life eating, shiting and sleeping?” asked Ralph.

“Yes. What about you?” said Teo with tranquility before closing he's eyes.

“You know what, I think he's our guy,” accused Ralph.

“I'm sleeping with one eye open,” said Bel

“To attack us when we fall asleep?” asked Ralph.

“I trust no one,” said Pat.

“And we shouldn't trust you either,” replied Bel.

CHAPTER 8

Later, they were all spread out, away from each other and against the cage bars.

“The sun will be setting soon,” noted Pat.

“The vampires will wake up for breakfast,” joked Mic.

“At this point, vampires sound better than a serial killer,” said Bel.

“Yeah, they'll give you a clean death and make you immortal,” agreed Teo.

Ralph put his ears against the cage bars. “I'm hearing something. Check it out.”

Mic and Bel tried to listen.

“It's Teo's stomach,” joked Bel.

“No... It's a... noise. Under water. Lava,” said Mic.

“There's tapping, clanking,” added Ralph.

“The waves must be moving things around,” said Bel.

Mic gave up. “Bel is right. It's the ocean.”

“That means it's not waves for sure. The noise has a pattern. There's someone out there,” disagreed Ralph.

Bel and Ralph stop listening.

“Are you in love with me, Ralph?” said Bel ironically.

“If you mean love as sex. Maybe I am. But Pat is my first option,” said Ralph.

“Thank you. But no thanks,” said Pat

“I didn't ask you for anything,” said Ralph

“In case you do. You already know the answer.”

“I wouldn't do you even if you were Adam and I was Eve all alone in paradise,” affirmed Bel.

“You both want it. The question is not if but when,” said Ralph.

“When and where. Because it won't be here,” said Mic.

“When, where, how and with who,” added Teo.

“‘Who’, definitely doesn't include you,” reminded Ralph.

“He's cute. Compared with you. But Mic is the cutest,” said Bel.

“Ralph is cuter, on the outside,” disagreed Pat.

“Thank you,” said Ralph.

“Cute like a porcupine or like Hannibal Lecter?” joked Teo.

“Let's change the subject. I even prefer to talk about politics or sports,” said Pat.

“Good job, Teo. Do you get a lot of cows with your bullshit?” asked Ralph.

“So Pat, you like politics and sports. I voted for Michael Jordan for president,” said Teo.

“I actually meant I hate politics and sports,” clarified Pat.

“I knew that. I was just testing your knowledge.

Michael Jordan wasn't on the ballot.”

“We need to stop wasting our time and work on knowing why we're here and how to get out,” said Mic.

“Forget the ‘why’ and concentrate on the ‘how to’,” said Ralph.

“‘How to’ failed. So at least we should know why,” disagreed Bel.

“How to get out is why we're here,” said Teo.

“That's a good theory,” said Mic.

“My brain works better when I'm hungry.”

“So someone is challenging us to get out? Who?” asked Bel.

“A serial killer,” said Pat.

“Some research freaks,” said Mic.

“God or the devil,” said Bel.

“Aliens. We've been abducted,” affirmed Ralph.

“The cops. FBI. CIA. Pigs,” guessed Teo.

“Who cares who. As long as we get out and kick their ass,” added Ralph.

“So we're back to how,” said Bel.

“We don't know how,” concluded Pat.

“Let's pretend to sleep and see what happens,” suggested Mic.

“Good idea,” said Teo.

“What if we fall asleep?” asked Pat.

“Than you'll die, a horrendous, horrific, bloody death. Are you

scared? Good. You'll stay awake,”
said Ralph.

They sat against the cage bars
staring at each other. Mic closed his
eyes. The others followed.

Mic opened one eye and checked if
the others were sleeping. He closed
his eyes again.

Bel opened her eyes slightly. Pat
opened and closed one eye. Ralph
opened his eyes checked the others
and closed.

Teo kept his eyes closed and
relaxed.

CHAPTER 9

The night came and it got dark inside the cage.

There was a strange metal screeching noise.

“Oh my god,” wined Bel.

“Lord have mercy,” added Pat.

“What was that?” asked Ralph.

“They are bringing tomorrow's food. I hope it's meat,” said Teo.

“I hope we're alive tomorrow,” said Pat.

“Shut up. All of you. Just listen,” said Mic focused on the sound of metal clanking.

“Canned food. I hope it's chili,”
said Teo.

“Knives, blades... a chain saw.
We're done. God have mercy. I don't
want to die,” wined Pat.

“At least say something original,”
asked Ralph.

“No one's going to die,” assured
Mic.

“I'm not. Can't guarantee no one
else,” added Ralph.

“I hope they hear it and whack you
first,” said Bel.

The cage shook. They screamed.
Silence and darkness followed.

“Stopped... In the name of the
gods of science, what was that?”
asked Mic.

“This is hell,” said Bel.

“It is a hell,” said Ralph.

“We agreed,” noted Bel.

“Now we can have casual cage sex
without guilt,” said Ralph.

“Sex here only if you're planning on renting your ass to the devil,” fired back Bel.

“Can you two shut the hell up. The psycho serial killer that put us here might be amused with this conversation. I'm not,” said Pat.

“Let's just sleep,” suggested Bel.

“Can I take off my clothes? I usually like to sleep naked,” asked Teo.

“No!” replied together all the others.

“We just have to wait for the unknown. Uncertainty is a double edge sword. Fascinates and scares the shit out of us,” philosophized Mic.

“The only thing certain in life is death,” added Teo.

“That's encouraging. Thank you Teo,” said Bel.

“The truth is to rough for you? That's why you are a woman. You

have a pussy and you are a pussy,”
fired Ralph.

“You are one of those guys that
likes to talk tough. But when things
get tough you piss and crap your
pants,” shot back Bel.

“He'll step on everyone's head to
save himself,” added Pat.

“You bet I would step on anyone
on my way out of here,” confirmed
Ralph.

“I would knock you out before
you had the chance of taking your
foot off of me. I'm sleepy. wake me
up when the food arrives,” asked
Teo.

“I'm staying awake all night,” said
Bel.

“I'll stay awake with you,” said
Mic.

“I couldn't sleep even if I tried,”
said Pat.

“I'm taking a nap. I'll be half
awake,” said Ralph.

CHAPTER 10

The next day, the cage was now in a jungle next to a creek.

In the cage, everyone was sleeping to the sound of the creek flowing.

One of Ralph's eyes opened. “No, no, no...”

Mic's eyes opened. “Now we'll know,” he said after waking up Bel.

“Know what? What is all this freaking crazy shit?” asked Ralph.

Bel tried to wake herself up rubbing her eyes. “A creek. How lovely. How crazy. I give up. I give up! You heard me?! I give up!!”

Teo woke up. "I'm innocent! It wasn't me!"

Pat woke up but kept her eyes shut. "Are we free? Tell me we're free."

"We're free. But still inside the cage," said Teo.

Pat opened her eyes. "Where's the beach?"

"Beach summer time is over. We're in a jungle now," answered Bel.

"Wasn't someone going to stay awake? What happened?" asked Ralph.

"Weren't you going to stay half awake? Ask your other half," said Bel.

"My two halves slept because you said you were going to stay awake. I knew I couldn't trust a woman."

Mic checked the side of the cage. "We did not move."

“Oh, I guess the beach went out for a walk. Or is it in the bathroom taking a leak?” joked Ralph.

“I placed a stone and a stick on the side of the cage,” explained Mic as he checked again. “They are in the same place. We did not move. I knew it.”

“We did not move? Are you blind?” said Bel.

“He's insane. And I'm next. I want to get out of here,” wined Pat.

“Please, spare us from your cry baby freak outs,” complained Ralph.

“Take a look yourselves. How could we move and the stone and stick be in the same place?” asked Mic.

Ralph checked it out and picked up the stone and stick.

“So what are you saying, Einstein? We moved in a time warp, energy field or I don't know what?” said Ralph.

“You don't know what,” stated Bel.

“What we're seeing is not what we're seeing?” said Teo.

“Touché. Bingo,” confirmed Mic.

“I'm lost,” said Pat.

“Throw that stone, Ralph,” asked Mic.

“Where?”

“Anywhere?”

Ralph threw the stone across the creek into the jungle. Bang! It hit metal and fell on the same side of the creek.

“What was that?! I was expecting a ‘swoosh’, not a ‘bang’,” said Teo.

Pat took her shoe off and threw it to the other side. Bong! It hit the air and fell to the ground.

Teo tried with his both shoes. Bang! Bong! “Our cage is in a cage. What goes around comes around.”

“What are we looking at? A scenario?” asked Ralph.

“But things are moving. The creek is moving. The jungle leafs are moving,” said Bel.

“It's some kind of three hundred and sixty degree projection dome,” said Mic.

“I don't think it's possible. Have you ever seeing something like that?” asked Pat.

“I have never seen, heard or read about anything like this. Very high technology,” said Mic.

“This is weird. I knew it was weird stuff. Not from this world,” added Ralph.

Mic took his two shoes off and threw them in different directions. They banged something and fell to the ground.

“Hey you assholes! We got you!” teased Teo.

He showed his naked ass against the cage bars.

Ralph stared ahead intrigued.
Suddenly there was darkness. Inside
the cage it looked like night.

CHAPTER 11

“I knew it,” said Mic.

“I knew you were a genius,” said Bel.

“He's no genius. Who did this is a genius. Or not from this planet. I was right. I'm the genius,” said Ralph.

Seconds later the cage was now in the middle of tall sand dunes in a bright sunny day.

The five prisoners stared stunned with their heads against the cage bars.

“We have been tele transported to the Sahara desert!” exclaimed Teo.

“We're still in the same place,”
affirmed Mic.

“Looks so real,” said Pat.

“As real as a wig,” said Ralph.

“This is very weird,” said Bel.

“We finally agree on something,”
said Ralph.

“Looks like ordinary, old fashion
sand to me,” said Teo.

“Where are we? This is not from
this world, I'm telling you,”
reminded Ralph.

“I think I see an oasis. A mirage.
Isn't that the ocean?” asked Teo.

“Fool. We're inside some place.
It's a projection. Got it?” said Ralph.

“This is very good work. Amazing
good work. Who did it is in fact a
genius,” said Mic.

“There's nobody on this planet
genius enough,” said Ralph.

“I'm as genius as is gets. Not
because of what I do but because of
what I don't do,” said Teo.

“I just want to get the hell out of here. Can you not do that?” asked Bel.

“Yes, I can't. Anyone else would tell you they could, but can't. That's why I'm a genius. Everyone is born a genius. They dumb up as they get older. I'm still the real deal,” said Teo.

“So I'm a genius too,” said Pat.

“Yes you are indeed,” confirmed Teo.

“And Ralph is retarded. He has dumbed up considerably,” noted Bel.

“Not as much as you,” replied Ralph.

“Hello, geniuses. Can we focus here? Mountain, beach, jungle and now sand dunes. There must be a symbolic message,” speculated Mic.

“Symbolic message my ass. This is like an aquarium. We're the fish

and the landscape is the decoration,” disagreed Ralph.

“I'm surprised to agree with your dumbed down observation,” said Teo.

“So dumbing down is good?” asked Bel.

“Sure, considering you tend to dumb up. If you dumb down you are going back to be the genius you always were,” answered Teo.

“So if I become stupid as you I would be getting smarter?” joked Bel.

“No, you got to become as stupid as you were to become smarter,” added Teo.

“What all this has to do with anything?” asked Pat.

“With what?” asked Mic.

“These sand dunes. Or the jungle,” answered Pat.

“Nothing. That's why we can think based on what we don't see or hear.

If you are dumb. Meaning smart. A genius as you were born,” philosophized Teo.

“Shut your mouth. Use it to do what you know best: eating. I think we've being abducted by aliens,” affirmed Ralph.

“Dumb,” disagreed Bel.

“Smart. I always said we've being abducted. By who I didn't know,” said Pat.

“Possible, but statistically improbable. Chances would be of one in a billion,” said Mic.

“Chance of what?” asked Bel.

“Close encounters of the fourth kind,” explained Teo.

“What kind is that?” asked Pat.

“Alien ass probing kind,” clarified Teo.

“This is human work. Very high tech but possibly human,” said Mic.

“Possibly? This is not human. It's alien,” disagreed Ralph.

“Maybe we're dealing with a billionaire high-tech psycho,” suggested Bel

“Maybe you should work on your dumbing down to smart up. Where have any of you seen something like this? We're in serious trouble if we don't get the hell out of here. So less quit the bull shitting and focus on the get outing,” said Ralph.

“Oh my God, a new man reborn. Dumb but smart,” agreed Bel.

“He's right. We got to get out,” said Mic.

“Teo was right. Smart but dumb. Wanting to get out is not the problem. ‘How’ is the problem. And unless someone has an idea of how, we should just shut up and quit the bullshit,” said Pat.

“I always knew you were a genius, Pat,” said Teo.

“You're a genius if you know the ‘how’ not if you know that there should be a ‘how’, said Ralph.

“No, if there is a ‘should-be-a-how’ than there isn't a ‘how’ but just a ‘should be’ and we're back in the same place,” clarified Teo.

“Actually worst. Because before there was a should, there wasn't a problem,” added Pat.

“You guys are losing me. Let's just think of ‘how.’ Any ideas?” asked Mic.

“We need to prepare ourselves to when the bastards show up,” said Ralph.

“Prepare for what? We're in a cage,” said Bel.

“We just improvise when whatever happens,” added Teo.

“When they come to kill us,” said Pat.

“They're not going to kill,” said Mic.

“They are going to take us back to their planet,” added Ralph.

“That would be great. The government wants to spend hundreds of billions to get a man to Mars. These guys will give us a free ride and save the taxpayers a lot of money,” pondered Teo.

“There's probably a crazy lunatic listening to us right now and laughing his heart out,” said Bel.

“I don't think ‘they’ are crazy or laughing. They are studying us. Measuring. Theorizing,” said Mic.

“We're just another sample of the species,” said Ralph.

“I think we just should enjoy the view. Look at it. They at least have good taste,” said Teo.

“I don't think piles of sand is exactly good taste. I prefer to look out of a window next to the central park in New York,” said Bel.

“The view from the Christ's statue in Rio de Janeiro is what I call a God created master piece,” opted Pat.

“I prefer the relaxing view from any roof top,” said Ralph.

“I don't think anything matches seeing Earth from out of orbit,” said Mic.

“Oh, so you must be happy with all of this. Maybe your one of them. Wouldn't surprise me if they could create a human replica.”

“What for? They have already the real deal.”

“Invasion plans, my man. Invasion plans. You need to watch more TV and movies to broaden your horizons,” explained Teo.

“Why invade if you can easily control? The purpose of invasion is to enforce control,” disagreed Mic.

“That sounds like CIA talk. Are you with the agency, Mic?” asked Teo.

“This is an army thing. We must be in a pentagon dungeon,” said Pat.

“I would be happy if that was the case. But I don't think it is,” said Ralph.

“I just wish the lights went on, the credits rolled and this was just a movie,” said Bel.

Suddenly there was darkness again. Light showed through a door frame opening and from a small window in the metallic wall.

“Wish granted. They love you as much as I do,” said Ralph.

CHAPTER 12

“I'm seeing a wall and a window. There's someone out there,” said Teo.

“I don't think a serial psycho killer could afford all this,” said Pat.

“You are right that you were wrong. And probably always will be. Wieners imagine too much stuff,” said Ralph.

“The world has so many multi billionaires that it wouldn't surprise me if one of them is a serial killer,” noted Bel.

“Maybe I'm not wrong after all,” said Pat.

“You're a great psycho analyst. She was cured of a delusion and you just brought it back,” said Ralph to Bel.

“You're the loony. We were not abducted by space frogs or green lizards.”

“It's a better theory that your heaven and hell bullshit. You should get rid of your shrink and see a priest. You're a repressed religious fanatic.”

“And you are the devil, himself.”

“And I'm the messiah,” said Teo.

“I saw something moving,” interrupted Mic.

“Where? I don't see it.”

“A shadow, behind the window.”

“Hey jerk! Let us out!” barked Bel.

“Great. They're going to let us rot in here,” said Ralph.

“Oh, so now the aliens are fluent in English.”

“Why not? We deciphered the Egyptian little things, didn't we? My father was abducted by aliens. I saw the space craft. My brother also saw it. My father never returned. We've being adducted. I'm telling you. I hate to be always right.”

There's a shadow of someone behind the window.

“Oh my god, it's them,” wined Pat.

“Them who?” asked apprehensively Mic.

“Freaking aliens. Martians, Plutonians, Balthusians, who cares. We're never seeing Earth again,” said fearfully Ralph.

“Alien cuisine... I'm curious,” said Teo.

“Alien my ass. That freak is probably masturbating,” disagreed Bel.

“This is not time for your sexual fantasies. They are not going to probe your ass,” said Ralph.

“Oh, I understand. You're jealous. The ass probing is just for you.”

The shadow stared behind the deemed light window.

“We come in peace!” yelled Teo.

The door opened. Light came in.

“We're history,” murmured Pat.

“This is history,” said Mic.

“Aliens or not I'm killing these bastards,” barked Bel.

“They'll let you go or kill you once they get to know you. It's a fifty fifty chance you have,” pondered Ralph.

“It's lunch time. Balthusian burgers: green, looks like a sausage but tastes like a burger with onions, peppers and ketchup. High-tech, simple and delicious. That's my kind of intergalactic cuisine,” traveled Teo.

A small dark figure entered. There wasn't enough light to know who or what it was.

“Let me out. Please?” asked Pat.

“‘You’ out? What about ‘us’?”
said Bel.

“I meant us,” noted Pat.

“Who cares what you meant.
We're not getting out of here,” said
Ralph.

“Don't be so negative. They can't
keep us for ever,” said Mic.

“Tell this to my father.”

“I'm getting out. Dead or alive,”
affirmed Teo.

The small dark figure just stared.

“Who are you? Speak to me you
freak!” yelled Bel.

“In the name of the United
Nations diplomacy, shut your trap,”
said Ralph irritated.

“Hello. Can we talk?” tried Mic,
sweetly.

“They don't speak our language,
idiot,” jumped in Ralph.

“I thought you said they did,”
noted Bel.

“I said they could. Doesn't mean they are fluent in chit chat.”

“He seems like a nice cute alien. Like E.T. of that movie,” said Pat.

Teo made the alien contact sound of the movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind. “Dah rah, dah rah rah, dah rah dah rah rah.”

The small dark figure slowly moved out.

“Where're you going?! Hey you! I'm talking to you! Let us out!” yelled Bel.

“We're never getting out of here. My father never did,” lamented Ralph.

Pat was optimist. “At least he didn't kill us.”

“This was a close encounter of the fourth kind. I saw something greenish on him. Froggish. Lizzardish, perhaps.”

“I'm always right. I hate to always be right. Who

is the genius after all? All I can think right now is what should be my next asset portfolio move before I never see Earth again,” said Ralph.

“Sell everything or invest in alien fighting defense contractors,” suggested Teo.

The door closed. Lights turned on full bright. The cage was in a room with metallic walls carved with exotic geometric forms.

Inside the cage Mic celebrated. “Alleluia. I see the light!”

Ralph was preoccupied. “We need to get out. Or we'll never see Earth again.”

CHAPTER 13

Bel checked out her cell phone. “I have a signal!”

Ralph grabbed his. The cage started to shake.

“We need to contact the government. Airforce. Police. CIA. FBI,” suggested.

“I'm calling my mom,” said Bel.

“What is she going to do? Cry?” asked Pat.

“She's got great ideas. Except when it's about my life,” explained Bel.

The cage shook harder, a high-tech engine sound started to grow.

“Ladies and gentleman I guess we're taking off. That's why the cell phone has a signal. They must have lifted their cloaking device like the one of the Klingons of Star Trek,” explained Mic.

Scared, Ralph went to a corner of the cage with his cell phone and dialed with his back facing the others.

“I always wanted to go where no man has gone before,” said Teo.

“Can you just shut the fuck up!” yelled Ralph impatiently as he continued struggling with his cell phone.

“I'm getting a busy signal,” said Bel.

“Call the police!” yelled Pat.

“Yeah, sure. ‘Officer, I'm aboard an alien space ship. Can you send a patrol car?’” joked Bel.

“Call the Airforce radar station. They'll pick up the space craft signal,” suggested Mic.

“And how are they going to get us out of here? Teleporting?” asked Teo.

Ralph talked on the cell phone trying not to let the others hear. The cage continued to shake.

“At least they could give us a window with a view,” complained Bel.

“I just want to go home. I had an appointment with my dentist, I was going to see a play on Saturday...” wined Pat.

“No, I'm not calling your dentist,” said Bel.

“Let me call my dad,” asked Pat.

“I want to call my mom,” said Teo.

“I guess I should call my grandmother,” said Mic.

Ralph and Bel were busy on their cell phones.

“My battery is dying,” said Bel.

“We should just relax and enjoy the ride,” suggested Teo.

“The scientific opportunities here are endless,” noted Mic.

“If they keep us alive,” reminded Bel.

“Why would they kill us?” asked Pat.

“Why do we kill cute monkeys and little white rats?” said Bel.

“They won't kill us because we're an intelligent species,” said Mic.

Teo was optimist. “They'll force us to procreate.”

“Not with me,” rebuffed Bel.

“I just want to go home,” wined Pat.

“Oh, Jesus. We know that. Annoy that thing when he shows up again,” said Bel.

Meanwhile, Ralph continued working on his cell phone.

“What are you doing, Ralph? Calling your stock broker or your insurance company?” asked Mic.

“No, he's disconnecting his light, cable and phone service,” joked Bel.

“Looks like a good idea,” said Teo.

“Shut up, all of you,” ordered Ralph.

Bel tried her cell phone again. “My mom must be shopping.” She listened and turned off the cell phone. “It's over. We got it on tape.”

CHAPTER 14

“Thank God. This gradual and natural build up thing was taking for ever,” said Pat.

“What are you doing? That's not what we rehearsed,” questioned Teo.

“We got what you wanted. I can't take this crap any more. I desperately need to go to the bathroom. After I want to go to a free buffet of decent food with a lot of meat,” said Bel.

“And I want one hundred pounds of ice cream,” said Pat.

“I'll be deducting twenty five percent of your proceeds for breach of contract,” said Teo.

“What a greedy dork... You got your money, didn't you?” protested Bel.

“The sooner we get out the better,” added Pat.

“What's going on here? What are you talking about?” asked Ralph, intrigued, turning off the cell phone, as the shaking of the cage and the engine sound stopped. “It stopped... What is over? What did you get on tape? What did you rehearse?”

“We have a good news and a bad news,” said Mic as everyone looked at Ralph who was surprised and intrigued by their changed and relaxed looks.

“Looks like we're going nowhere,” advanced Teo.

“The good news is that we're not going to where no man has gone

before. We're staying right here on mother Earth,” added Mic.

“The bad news, Ralph, is we heard and taped your financial transaction. Your portfolio asset moves. Your transfers,” complemented Bel.

“What are you all talking about...” said Ralph, confused.

Teo pulled a small leverage at the corner of the cage. Mic helped him push one side of the cage open, took out a remote control and pressed a button.

The gray metallic walls disappeared. The whole room turned out to be an all white dome with the cage in the same place.

Inside the cage, Ralph was surprised and speechless.

“Ralph, I'm sorry. I'm a hired actress,” said Pat.

“So am I. But I'm not sorry,” said Bel.

Mic introduced himself. “Special effects guy. Three hundred and sixty degree dome scenarios with motion and temperature control. Wasn't the boiling sun and the cage shaking great? I did also some acting on the side.”

Teo's sloppy attitude was gone. He now had a firm military look and confidence. “I'm a private detective. I'll keep my name and of my associates private as well. We have been hired by your former employer, which I'm sure you remember their name and address.”

Ralph was stunned and incredulous. “What is this... I don't believe you.”

“Denial won't change anything. The fact is that you have stolen over thirty million dollars from your former employer. You smartly betrayed their confidence, illicitly appropriated funds of their property

and enriched yourself in an unlawful manner,” remembered Teo.

“We got your Cayman Islands bank name, account number and password. We monitored your transfer to your brother's account. Ten million dollars, that is what I call brotherly generosity!” said Bel, high fiving Pat.

“No need to be that specific my dear. The fact is that when you transferred money to your brother's account, believing you would never return to mother Earth...” said Teo as Bel smiled and Pat started laughing.”

Ralph imploded his anger.

“We found out about your so called father's alien abduction through your brother. He thought we were helping your employer find your father and to make you a surprise,” added Mic.

“By the way, your father is alive and kicking right here on Earth. He lives in a small skunky apartment in Miami,” said Bel.

“I don't believe it... What was all that serial killer, scientific experiment, heaven and hell bullshit for?” asked Ralph.

“We wanted you to find out your own bullshit truth,” answered Bel.

“Anyhow, your superstitions or repressed family entanglements were your doom and my client's enlightening epiphany,” elaborated Teo.

“God... What did you say?” asked Pat.

“That was beautiful. Poetic,” complimented Bel.

“Thank you for the compliment, Belinda. But the timing is inappropriate.”

“What he's trying to tell you, Ralph is that you're busted. Toast. No more,” humiliated Bel.

“You're all crazy... Crazy bastards,” barked Ralph grabbing Bel and pushing a pen against her neck. “I'll make a hole in her jugular. She'll bleed to death.” he said pulling her away to a corner.

CHAPTER 15

“Relax. Consider that murder carries a much harsher penalty than fraud,” pondered Teo, calm and confident.

“A long time in prison. In a cage just like this one,” added Pat.

“He doesn't have the balls to do it,” challenged Bel.

Ralph rubbed himself against Bel's ass. “Do I have the balls? Tell me.”

“The police is outside,” warned Mic.

“I don't think so. If they were we would have seen them by now,” said Ralph gaining confidence.

Bel's neck bled. "You're hurting me."

"That's the idea, bitch."

"Let her go," said Teo taking out a gun and pointing to Ralph. "I was a sniper in the army."

"This is not the army. And that's not a rifle," said Ralph taking out his cell phone. "We're calling my bank."

"This is my last warning," threatened Teo.

"I'll take her with me to hell," challenged Ralph.

"I don't care. I have life insurance on all my associates."

"You'll be collecting that insurance if you don't put that gun down."

Bang! Teo fired but Ralph and Bel were still standing.

"Did you feel that bullet zooming next to your right ear? The next one will penetrate your skull."

“Shoot him. We have the money,”
said Bel.

“I'm not a murderer. Neither are
you. But I will kill in self defense if
it's my last recourse to protect life.”

Ralph grabbed Bel tighter. “I'll kill
her just for fun.”

“Don't make me terminate your
life.”

“You're not working for my
former scrooge employers, are you?
How did you hear about my money?
My brother would never tell you
anything. That's all bullshit.”

“You are right, Ralph. I was your
brother's girlfriend. I found out
about your money transfers to him
and about your father's alien
abduction bullshit stories,” said Pat.

“So, cute little innocent is actually
a greedy bitch,” said Ralph.

“Your brother is an asshole. And
so are you,” shot back Pat.

Ralph pushed Bel on top of Teo and jumped on him. They fought for the gun and fell to the ground. Bang!

Ralph stood up. Teo's chest was covered in blood. Pat leaned over him, stunned. "What have you done..." she said with her eyes soaked in tears.

Teo fought to stay alive. "Just bad luck," he said before dying.

Pat leaned her forehead against his. She stood up. Her tearful eyes turned to anger. "You'll regret this."

Ralph pointed the gun. "Looks like you're collecting his life insurance."

"I don't think we're his beneficiaries," said Bel.

"Shut your trap, whore," barked Ralph. He grabbed his cell phone, dialed and kept his eyes on the others. "Not working. Mother fucking battery. Give me yours."

Bel showed him her cell phone.
“It's out of battery too, you scumbag.”

“Too bad. I guess I don't need you anymore. Goodbye,” said Ralph before shooting her in the head.

“God, you didn't need to do that,” said Mic.

“You're next,” threatened Ralph.

“Your money is gone. All of it. If you kill me you'll never get it back.”

“He'll never get it back,” disagreed Pat.

“I guess I don't need you, then,” said Ralph pointing the gun to Pat.

“Teo and I are the only ones that can get your money back. You just killed Teo.”

Ralph pointed the gun to Mic.

“She's lying. Teo was the only one. But I can help you. I want half.”

Ralph pointed the gun to Pat.

“He's just a computer nerd. You think I would come up with the idea and let Teo handle the money? I have the money. I'll give you half back.”

“Where? Or you'll die right here.”

“If I tell, you'll kill me anyway.”

“If you don't your dead. If you do, I'll give you ten percent for being smart. I hate being the target but I appreciate a good shooter.”

“Twenty percent or you'll never see your money again.”

“Fifteen percent.”

“Deal.”

“No deal. I bet my money is still where I sent it. You guys are it. There's no one out there.”

“Are you sure you can trust your brother? He was working for us.”

“Smart. But you're bluffing. I know my brother.”

“Oh yeah, you know your brother. When was the last time you saw him?”

“Doesn't matter. I take care of him.”

“When was the last time?”

“I always send him money.”

“Since he was six years old.”

“He likes me. He sends me letters.”

“You never answer them. He doesn't like you. You can't even recognize him. I was his girlfriend until you killed him. Take a good look at his face.”

CHAPTER 16

“You're a sick liar...” said Ralph staring at Teo's dead face.

Mic jumped on Ralph and they fought for the gun. Pat tried to pull the gun out of their hands and got shot in the stomach.

Mic bit Ralph's hand. Pat sat in pain and bleeding.

Ralph stabbed Mic in the neck with the pen. He broke free with the gun and with the pen stuck in his bleeding neck.

“I'm sorry. Does it hurt? Take it out. You'll die faster,” said Ralph sarcastically.

Mic put pressure to contain the blood loss. "Worry about your own pain," he said before shooting Ralph in the head.

"Call an ambulance. I'm dying," said Pat in pain.

Mic stumbled out of the cage and slowly dragged himself towards the dome's white wall. He reached a door, opened it but fell to the floor.

Next to Bel's dead body, Pat closed her eyes and joined her.

Ralph had a bullet in his forehead, he was dead with stunned eyes opened.

Teo was peacefully dead. So was Mic near the opened exit door.

Game Over.

Are you in a cage?

How will you get out?

There is no way out.

Because there is no cage.

The Cage Enigma.

A Performance Game by
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Press enter to restart or exit by
default.

It was day at the beautiful forest
and creek. The cage disappeared. A
leaf went down the stream spinning.

At the marvelous virgin beach, the
cage disappeared. A wave broke and
the foam rolled until the sand.

At the top of the coastal mountain
the view was amazing. The cage
disappeared. A bird launched into

the air and glided freely in the infinite blue sky above the immense ocean. From way above, a person walking away along the deserted beach could be seen.

Someone did survive.

Who when up was open when down was closed: Y.

Who when opened was there when closed was not: O.

Who when standing up was upside down: U.

Y.O.U.

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