

## Chapter 2

*What happened to Frank among the vulgars*

It was quite a long way down the hill to the main road, if one chose to take it on foot. Things had grown frightfully dark when Frank arrived upon the shoulder, wondering at the lights that flew by. At length, a car slowed beside him. A light rain picked up as the window rolled down. Frank noticed that the car was decorated with the sigils and equipage of the local sheriff.

Feeling reassured, Frank pled his case to the sheriff. He had been fired without cause, his rightful property had been seized, and his darling Missile-Tits must be apprised, as well as their lawyer!

"You're that pervert with the rhino dust?" None of these reflected the words Frank expected to hear from the sheriff.

"I beg your pardon?"

"Your name-a Frank?"

"Yes, officer, sir."

"O-Kay!" The sheriff opened his car door and stood, and approached him. Before Frank could put up his guard, the sheriff cold-cocked him. He threw a full-force, un-apologetic uppercut from the right fist to the left jaw. Frank crumpled, losing consciousness.

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There were no numbers in what happened next. Who counts the hours of pain and darkness? Who gives thought to the weight and measure of blood and shit? Who wills himself toward a deeper knowledge of such spaces?

Not Frank.

Time passed. Darkness blessed. Light burned, and so did fire and leather and steel. Words from his very core that should mean everything came to mean nothing, while words from his oppressors that should mean nothing came to mean everything. Frank puked, and bled, and shat a great deal more than a healthy person ever should.

At length, the storm-cloud of false charges fell away to nothing. Frank won his freedom, though his mansion and all its prizes had been sold away. His jailers brought him out to the road, where he patiently awaited the charity one might expect from the best of all possible motorists.

A grand motorcade passed in the night, their engines barking and drowning the songs of the insects and the souging of the leaves. Their lights shone over-bright in a multitude, mounted everywhere upon their frames, playing over Frank's hunched and miserable form like waves slapping a shore. Before their noise could fade into the west, one of the humbler machines returned to him.

"You need a ride, there, Fella?" A narrow-faced man in a baseball cap with friendly eyes and a thin beard reached across the front seat of his lifted pick-up to throw his passenger door open. Frank climbed in, heedless. The driver looked Frank up and down, and let his face convey the simple and ancient question.

"My name is Frank. I just got out of jail, though I still don't know how I got there to begin with. I have nothing to offer in exchange for your help, but I am grateful you stopped!"

The driver's expression emptied as his mind absorbed this information. At length, his eyes refocused. Then he shook his head and turned to his window, rolled it down, and spat. "Buddy, don't worry about the ride. This one is on me." Frank felt unsettled by the grin that accompanied these words, but he leaned back and buckled in anyway. What else could he do?

Frank slept as the motorcade bounced through the night, and woke in the morning to find himself alone in the truck, parked in a line with its fellows. The drivers had all made their way to a campground; colossal RV's parked next to high-tech, low-profile polymer tents. A roaring fire blazed in the open, while a TV flickered from beneath a broad tarp. At the bar beneath the TV, the drivers sat cleaning their guns.

Among them, Frank learned to assemble and disassemble every firearm in recent production, and to apply oils and brushes in the maintenance and cleaning thereof. He learned to shoot, though his incompetence earned him shocking verbal abuse and a broad selection of choke-holds, arm-bars, take-downs, and wedgies. Farts and loogies were applied to further his humiliation, in observance of long-standing camp traditions.

