

# 7 Scorpions: REBELLION

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Eloquent Books

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*This book is dedicated to my wife, my mother, Mike Wolter, Shawn McQuillan, and Milton Jackson. Without all of you, this wouldn't have been possible. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.*



## Prologue

**F**or years, people talked about various ways that the world would end - plague, floods, sunbursts, nuclear war, the Wrath of God, amongst others. The truth is, the world didn't end; it changed. Like the many significant changes in the world, this change was painful and wrought with strife. It began on May 7<sup>th</sup>, a day that began like any other day. People around the world went about their typical routines. Soon they found out that this day was different, and it started with a fierce video feed which came through every television, internet connected computer, and cellular phone. The feed showed the dark, shadowy figure of the last person to ever address the entire world through the modern communication system.

"Attention citizens around the world. It is time to take a break from the activity of your daily life and look around you. Do you see the mindless cattle that you have become? Slaves to your technology. Slaves to your governments or your warlords. Slaves to your limited knowledge of the world. You are poison to the planet as well as each other. Humanity has become a cancer, one that has raged out of control. It is time to mark this day on the calendar, the 7<sup>th</sup> of May, as the beginning of a new age. As God did with the flood, it's time to purge this world of the corruption and begin anew. Remember me, for I am the Zodiac, I am hatred incarnate, and I will watch this world burn in the cleansing fires of the apocalypse, and be reborn in my image!"

There was silence for a moment as the video feed ceased. The hustle and bustle of life came to a stop. The stillness was then

broken by an event that would come to be called the Flash Storm. First came a quick light, then massive explosions simultaneously lit off in every major city across the world. The intense heat, flames, and wind scorched and destroyed structures, cars, and people themselves. No one saw it coming. There was no warning. There was no terrorist chatter. There was no one to respond. In mere minutes, the entire world was thrown into chaos. Capital cities were gone. Governments were virtually wiped out.

In the days that followed, amongst the chaos and the rioting, the Dark Ones, also known as Seekers, blazed through the ruins of society. The brutal soldiers of darkness were completely covered in a black, mesh armor and wore helmets with blank faceplates. They were emotionless and relentless in their pursuits. On their shoulders were extraordinarily bright lights. They would come in the dark, their very presence striking uncontrollable fear in the remaining population. Their menacing lights were all that could be seen. They did not reason. They did not feel pain. They did not hold back. They did not stop. They began the worldwide genocide of humanity.

On September 6<sup>th</sup>, what most people came to call the day of the fall, Zodiac declared himself the Lord and Master of the North American continent. The remnants of the government and military had fallen. There were no more world communications. There was no resistance, no organization. Across the planet, mass hysteria gripped the survivors. Conflicts broke out. The Middle East was annihilated with the very nuclear arsenals that were meant as a deterrent.

It truly seemed that the worst parts of the religious texts had come to pass. The country that, love it or hate it, was always looked to for leadership had fallen. But then something happened. Out of the shadows, a glimmer of hope appeared in an unusual place. A man who had been in self-imposed exile for over a year came out of hiding...

# Chapter 1

**H**artford, Connecticut, had its fair share of street violence in its past. The former home of the state capital was anything but paradise. Then the Flash Storm came. The tall office buildings began to topple. The Charter Oak Bridge collapsed into rubble. The capital building crumbled into debris. The governor's mansion lay in ashes. It made gang violence look like a schoolyard kickball game. After the dust began to settle, a group of Connecticut residents got together to rebel against Zodiac's forces and a group of them set up shop in the ruins of the former capital. Somehow, some way, the Seekers discovered where they were, and attacked in force, soon after sunset.

The screams of the rebels could be heard for quite a distance as the Dark Ones descended on their ranks. There was no hesitation. If a rebel was in the sights of a Seeker, they were as good as dead. It was said that one could literally feel Zodiac's Grand Army draining the morale from the battlefield. One man was the exception, an outsider. He stood on the rubble of one of the fallen bridges and took aim with his rifle. He squeezed the trigger and sent a shot soaring, straight through the head of a Seeker. Immediately he hopped down from his vantage point to find a new one before other Seekers honed in on his location.

The strange man was a loner. He hadn't felt that he was part of the world in quite a long time. He was not tall for a man, five feet ten inches. He had a stature though that was unbending. His long hair was tied back in a ponytail. He normally wore some type of black leather pants, biker boots, fingerless leather gloves, and a

black, short sleeve leather jacket which was always open to display the saying on his shirt, "Live Free or Die." It was that phrase that led people to believe he may have come from New Hampshire, but no one knew. He could have adopted the former state's quote because it was especially applicable to the times at hand. The most distinctive feature of this stranger was the markings on and around his right eye. On the eyelid was a tattoo of a "7." Surrounding the eye was a fierce looking scorpion tattoo, the body just below the eye and the tail wrapping around the socket.

The stranger had been referred to as "the man in black" by many or as the scorpion man, but his true name was Vincent Black. It wasn't his name that was important though, it was what he stood for. Many said that he could not be killed, that they had witnessed him being shot and immediately rising unscathed by the wound. Others conjectured that he was stronger than ten men and had the dexterity of a cat. Still others reported that he sensed trouble before it happened. There were even extreme stories of him firing lightning bolts from his hands, summoning massive storms, and even turning his own body to solid metal.

Vincent had his occasional chuckle at some of the rumors he had heard about himself. In a time where chaos reigned, people were looking for a prophet. It was true that Vincent was not like most other people. He thought it was funny that reports varied from being a bit extraordinary to a real live Superman.

Standing behind a large concrete boulder, Vincent knew there was trouble on the other side. Two Seekers had seen where he had gone and decided to follow. He strapped his rifle to his back and pulled two 9mm Beretta pistols from their holsters on his hips. He had them loaded with armor piercing rounds prior to his arrival in the ruins of Hartford. Now was a matter of perfect timing. He did not want them to see him coming. The reports about his danger sense were accurate. Vincent possessed a type of sixth sense; he could pick up immediate danger to himself and from where it was coming. This was an extremely useful talent in the post Flash Storm world.

Vincent waited until the exact right moment, when the tingling in the back of his head stopped. He could see that the bright beams of light coming from the Seekers' shoulder lights were no longer pointed in his immediate direction. Another accurate re-

port was his speed and dexterity; he moved like a cat. He charged his way around the large section of bridge with his guns pointed outward. Before either Seeker could even acknowledge him, he put a bullet through their heads, dropping them to the ground. He felt the tingle again. It was coming from his right. He immediately spotted a third Seeker that was attempting to tackle him, and allowed the Grand Army soldier to grab his right arm. At that moment, he threw his enemy as if he was a rag doll, head first into another large section of bridge. He heard the sound of the dark warrior's neck breaking from the intense impact.

Knowing it would be dangerous to remain in one spot for more than a few moments, he went on the move again, holstering his pistols and climbing sections of collapsed bridge like a primate in the rain forest. He had a nagging feeling that there was a satellite watching this site, so from the higher ground he immediately drew his rifle again and used the scope to look around. The Seekers were making their way toward him, even disengaging rebels to do so. The rebels had no idea that he was there, nor did they have any idea why the Dark Ones were losing interest in them. Vincent quickly assessed the situation and saw several places where he could still remain above ground level. With an impressive jump, he took two well placed shots putting a bullet through the chest of one Seeker and the throat of another, dropping them. While still holding his rifle and with minimal effort, he made a twenty foot leap to the top of another large chunk of bridge. Soaring through the air, he twisted to avoid enemy fire. The Seekers did not fire out of emotion. Each shot was calculated and any normal man would have been cut down by the barrage. Vincent had enough time to take out two more Seekers before making the leap to a section of collapsed office building.

Just like the Dark Ones, each shot he took was calculated. He was one man with a limited amount of ammunition. He did not wish to run out, not that he was defenseless. He was sure that the Seekers were regular humans, not some kind of enhanced super soldiers. They moved like regular humans, which worked well to his advantage. Utilizing his rifle sight again, he took aim on two more of his dark enemies. The first one received a shot to the chest. Before Vincent could make the second shot, the section of concrete that his foot was on began to crumble, so his shot only

hit the target in the leg. There were no screams of pain. Vincent regained his footing and jumped to another section of collapsed building. It was fortunate that there was so much debris; the Seekers had to remain on foot or bring in air support, which they lacked. The ruins also provided many great hiding spots.

Vincent took aim once again, he still had plenty of rounds in this magazine and he wasn't even remotely tired. In actuality, he was just getting warmed up. This time though, he noticed that there were three Seekers pinning a group of rebels. He fired his first shot, shattering the spinal column of one of the Dark Ones. The other two mechanically still fired on the rebels, one of them received a gaping hole in the chest and dropped to the ground. Vincent fired his second shot, splattering the brains of the second Seeker on some debris. His third shot rang out and penetrated the jugular of the third one, causing blood to spray everywhere. A tingle in the back of his head told him to jump, which he did, right before a grenade made its way to where he had been. He quickly arrived at the spot where the rebel group was. There were three left. One appeared to be in his late forties or early fifties. He was clean shaven, which was unusual post Flash Storm. He had a full head of gray hair, a chiseled face, and looked as though he may have played football or been involved in some heavy type of work at one point. Next to him was a young girl, probably pre-teen. She had a scar on her right cheek that appeared to have originated from a deep cut. The last standing rebel was roughly Vincent's height, and was rail thin. He had a mustache that was purposeful; the rest of his face hadn't seen a razor in a few days. His hair was spiked and Vincent wasn't sure if it was from lack of hygiene or intentional.

"You, you're that scorpion guy. The man in black," the older gentleman point blankly stated.

Vincent looked him directly in the eyes, "Yeah, that's me. Name's Vincent. Guess the Seekers found out Hartford's inhabited again." He got a tingle in the back of his head and immediately turned and fired his rifle, sending a bullet through the heart of a Seeker. He then spun back around.

"How...how the hell did you know he was coming," asked the tall, skinny rebel.

"Not sure. I just get a tingle in the back of my head, it kind

of points me in the direction and I react. You guys have a withdrawal plan?" asked Vincent.

"Withdrawal? Ha. That's funny. This is where we withdrew to. Every time we got into it with the Seekers, we got demolished. Our people, they're tough. They've been through a lot over the past few months, but these Seekers. They just seem to suck the morale and courage right outta people. Doesn't seem to affect you though," the older rebel stated.

"Yeah, great to be immune. Listen, we've got to get you all out of here. Any way to call to the others," Vincent inquired.

"Been using these short band radios, but we haven't gotten any responses," answered the older man.

Vincent looked around. His danger sense wasn't creeping up on him at the moment. "We've got to get into the sewers. We can move around down there, where the satellites won't see us."

"SATs? I thought those were gone," said the skinny man.

"No, Zodiac controls them now. All of 'em. Great huh? He cut off world communication to all of us, and had a readymade system for his own use. I think I saw an exposed sewer cover over this way," Vincent responded.

"What about everybody else?" asked the young one.

"They're dead or captured by now, the amount of firing has dropped significantly and I can see the shoulder lights from those cretins," the skinny man pointed out.

"Well Vincent, I have a thousand questions but I guess they can wait. If you can get us out of here, I'll be eternally grateful," the old man stated.

"Then follow me, I never liked Hartford much anyway," Vincent replied.

They made their way to the exposed sewer cover. Vincent reached down and lifted the cover as if it was made of aluminum foil. "You made that look easy," the skinny man said.

"Just get the hell in there," Vincent snapped. The three rebels wasted no time in descending into the tunnels. Vincent followed but before he descended, he tossed a grenade to the base of a section of collapsed rubble. He quickly dropped into the sewer, recovering the hole. A moment later, a loud boom rang out and the four could hear debris falling. The tunnels actually shook.

"What did you do that for?" asked the older man.

"If they're watching us from SATs, they'll know where to go. I don't want to make it easy on them. I just hope we're not trapped down here," Vincent answered.

"That's um...that's great. We might be stuck? Wow, this turned out to be a really great day," the skinny man said.

"We're alive, aren't we? Let's take one thing at a time. Where are we headed?" asked the older man.

"Dunno. Out of here sounds good to me, how about you?" Vincent asked in return.

The older man and the skinny man looked at each other. The older one spoke up, "You don't have a plan?"

"Nope. Do you? I wasn't expecting to run into you. I just wanted to get out of there before they raze the place with the Apocalypse Dozer," responded Vincent as he began walking, the others immediately followed.

"What's an Apocalypse Dozer?" inquired the skinny man.

"It looks like an oversized wheat reaper but it tears up buildings and trees instead of wheat," the older man said. "I've never seen it but do you think they'd seriously send it here."

"Yup," Vincent answered.

"Why?" asked the skinny man.

"So they can make sure that they get me," Vincent replied.

"You? What's so special about you?" the skinny man had a puzzled look on his face. "I mean other than the fact that you're obviously some kind of super soldier or something."

"Don't know. They seem hell bent on finding me though," Vincent responded.

"So why did you come to Hartford anyway?" asked the older man.

"I was actually just passing by when I saw that the place was under siege. I'm always looking for a good reason to waste some Grand Army goons," Vincent answered.

The young one was noticing the horrid stench of death in the sewers. They obviously hadn't been flushed out since the Flash Storm happened. She also noticed that there were cracks and weak spots, most likely caused by the collapse of the tall buildings above. "I don't like it down here."

"No one does squirt," responded the skinny man. "So Vincent, I guess we've been rude and haven't introduced ourselves

to the man who saved our lives. I'm Josh Tyler. This guy here is Chris Talbot. The talkative one over here is Andromeda Page."

Vincent didn't respond.

"Hey, did you hear me?" Josh was clearly annoyed.

"Shhh," Vincent responded, putting the index finger of his right hand to his lip, his eyes looking up. "You hear that?"

"Hear what," asked Josh.

Suddenly, there was a rumbling. It felt as if the earth itself was shaking. "What the hell is that, an earthquake?" asked Talbot.

"If only we were that lucky. It's the Apocalypse Dozer," Vincent stated. "We need to hurry."

He immediately started into a jog, the other three following along. The rumble was getting closer. Loud crashes began echoing through the tunnels. Andromeda, Talbot, and Josh were all struggling to keep up with Vincent who was moving at a snail's pace in his opinion. "Hey man, what's the story with this Apocalypse Dozer?" Josh asked.

"Let's just say it's something you don't want to wait around for," answered Vincent. "I know it's tough, but keep moving."

They hurried through the tunnels until they noticed Vincent slowing down. Talbot spoke up, "Why are we stopping?"

"They don't know where we are. Hear that? The rumbling is getting further away," Vincent said.

"Man, you have some good hearing, or maybe mine just sucks now that I've gotten older," Talbot stated.

"I have good hearing, not extraordinary, but good," Vincent responded.

"Yeah, well, you do everything else extraordinary, just what the hell are you?" asked Josh.

"Long story, I'm what happens when the government screws with things that it shouldn't," answered Vincent.

Josh let out a sigh, "Dammit, look up ahead."

"Blocked, it must have collapsed, we've gotta turn around," Talbot stated.

"No, we go back, we're gonna be crushed by that oversized garbage disposal," Vincent pointed out as he kept walking.

"Maybe we can meet up with the others," Josh said as they approached the collapsed tunnel.

"If there was anyone left alive after the Seekers raided, they're

dead now. We aren't going back," Vincent told them.

Talbot, Andromeda, and Josh just looked at each other. After a moment, Talbot spoke up, "What the hell is that supposed to mean? You haven't given us any answers!"

"Look guys, let's get out of here alive, then I'll answer your questions as best I can," Vincent tried to ease up on them realizing that the whole world being turned upside down happened only a few months ago.

"That's all well and good but we still have to get through this tunnel and there are some large chunks of concrete here," Josh pointed out.

Vincent didn't say a word. He simply walked over to the first large chunk of rubble, reached and found a good grip with both of his hands, then hoisted the chunk out of the way as if it was a pebble. He continued to move the debris until he cleared a path. The whole time, his three companions just stared at him. "Instead of gawking, you should follow me through this path; it's open on the other side. Looks like the sewer didn't completely collapse."

Vincent began making his way through the small opening. Unable to say anything out of total awe, Andromeda, Talbot, and Josh followed him. They once again broke out into a jog for a couple of minutes, until they reached a ladder leading to the surface. "Up here, the dozer is still pretty far out and the Seekers should be with it," Vincent stated as he headed up the ladder.

Josh raised his eyebrows, "What do we do once we get up there?"

"I've got a pretty sweet ride waiting for us. Can't believe I actually left this thing unattended in Hartford. A few months ago, there's no way in hell I would have done that." Vincent cracked a smile and moved the sewer cover, then hurried the rest of the way to the surface.

"He's crazy," Josh said to Andromeda, who did not respond, but headed up the ladder behind Vincent. Talbot simply put his hand on Josh's shoulder for a moment then joined them. Josh followed. When he got all the way to the top, he saw Talbot and Andromeda staring in the direction behind him. He turned to look and the sight he witnessed was such that he could not even comment.

"Th...that's gotta be the Apocalypse Dozer?" Talbot managed

to say. "I could have gone the rest of my life without seeing it."

"Yeah, I think that's the general consensus of anyone who's actually seen it and lived to tell about it," Vincent stated.

The four looked to see something that was a perversion of an old wheat reaper. It was massive, either black or navy blue, had spotlights on it, but no obvious place for a pilot. It was difficult to judge the size from where they were, but it towered over everything; its chopping mechanism in the front was almost as big as the rest of it. They watched as it continued to roll through Hartford, grinding up everything that remained in its path. It appeared unstoppable. Though it was quite a distance away, they could see that there were various weaponry systems on it, including chain guns and missile launchers.

"Come on, before a SAT gets overhead and figures out we're here. They're probably grinding everything up hoping to exterminate any rebels that might be hiding," Vincent pointed out.

"Okay, but how...is that your car?" Josh's jaw almost dropped.

"Yup. Nice, isn't it," said Vincent, pointing to the black Mustang GT convertible. "Get in, I'll speed us out of here."

Josh and Andromeda got into the back seat, and Talbot rode shotgun. Vincent got into the driver's seat. The convertible top was up; after all, October nights in New England usually didn't lend themselves to being convertible or motorcycle friendly. Vincent immediately started the car and hit the gas to get out of what was left of the once capital city of Connecticut.

"Where are we going?" asked Josh.

"Away from here," responded Vincent. "Why? Do you know a good place where we can lay low?"

"Lay low? Man, we gotta join up with the rebellion," Josh exclaimed.

"What rebellion kid? Everyone who stands up to the Seekers gets captured or killed," Talbot pointed out. "We just need to focus on staying alive."

"Man after my own heart," Vincent stated.

"So what's your story Vincent? I mean, if we're just driving, maybe you can give us some more details on these things that you seem to know so much about. And hell, while you're at it, reveal that 'S' on your chest," Josh inquired.

"Josh, shut the hell up," Talbot scolded.

"Nah, don't worry about it Talbot. What do you want to know?" asked Vincent.

"What's up with those tattoos on your eye? The scorpion and the number 7 on your eyelid?" Josh eagerly asked.

"They're the result of the government playing around with things they shouldn't," Vincent responded.

Josh shifted in his seat, "I thought *you* were the result of the government playing with things they shouldn't."

Vincent shot him a look through the rear view mirror, "I am. Look, I got 'selected' for a little experiment. Me and six others. The first six were failures. I wasn't."

Josh's right leg began to shake, "What happened to them?"

Vincent looked in his rear view mirror to see the eager Josh awaiting his answer. "They died."

"Oh...sorry. I guess I should've figured that one out for myself. What the hell was it?" Josh continued his inquiry but was cut off by Vincent holding up his hand.

"Do me a favor. Near your feet is a grenade launcher. Hand it to me," Vincent calmly requested.

"That's what this thing is? What do you need it for?" asked Josh.

"Just do it, now," Vincent said with a calmness that was almost frightening.

"Okay, okay, here ya go, geeze," Josh handed Vincent the weapon just in time to see something pop up from the trees on the side of the highway. It appeared to be some type of sleek helicopter but it had no blades on it and made no discernible noise over the sound of the Mustang's motor. It could have easily been mistaken for some type of UFO. "Jesus, what the hell is that!?"

Vincent didn't answer. He immediately swerved as a hail of gunfire rang out and struck the spot where they would have been if he hadn't pulled an evasive maneuver. He then quickly swerved in the other direction and successfully dodged another hail of gunfire. "Hang on," Vincent warned.

"How the hell are you doing that? It's like you know where they're gonna shoot before they do," Josh cried out.

"That's because I do," Vincent calmly stated. He slammed on the brakes and spun the sports car around. Quickly pushing a

button while the wheels weren't moving, the convertible top began to retract. The helicopter-like vehicle passed overhead but quickly looped and turned around to face them.

"Oh shit, oh shit, oh shit," Josh babbled.

"Talbot, take the wheel," Vincent directed as he stood up, one foot on the center console and one on the back seat. He was facing the rear of the vehicle. Talbot quickly obeyed, moved to the driver's seat and peeled out. The tires let out a loud squeal and a cloud of smoke, but Vincent never lost his balance.

The strange looking aircraft was approaching quickly. With the grenade launcher in hand, he pointed it upward, in the direction of the helicopter. "Are you crazy? You'll never hit something like that with a grenade launcher," Talbot warned.

"Oh ye of little faith," Vincent answered. "Josh, point your pistol at them when they begin to get close and start unloading."

"WH...WHAT!?" was all Josh could respond with.

"Listen up, if you want to live, you'll point your damn pistol at that thing and start firing!" Vincent yelled. Andromeda was crouching on the floor to keep the bitter wind from freezing her to death.

"I can't hit that! I'm just a regular guy, I'm not cut out for this fighting shit," Josh panicked.

"Josh, that's the Seekers sucking away your morale. It's an illusion. Tune it out of your head," Vincent said. He looked at the poor young man who only a few months prior was probably a big time nerd who spent most of his time in his room or basement where everyone went with their computer issues.

Josh let out a few loud, forced deep breaths then popped up and yelled at the top of his lungs, "Aaaahhhh! Die you Seeker bastards!" He started firing on the helicopter-like pursuer. Interestingly enough, the bullets were hitting it though they were just bouncing off the bulletproof exterior. The diversion was all Vincent needed. The hail of gunfire caused the pilots to come in closer to the car before firing. They didn't get the chance; Vincent pointed the grenade launcher and fired. The explosion rocked the front of the vehicle. It remained intact but the pilot lost control and it went down on the middle of the highway. It bounced and rolled for several hundred feet before grinding to a halt.

Vincent dropped down into the passenger seat and said, "Go

back to the wreckage. I want to check something out.”

“Alright,” Talbot responded and turned the car around. After a few moments, they were directly next to the wreckage. When the car stopped, Talbot re-engaged the convertible top and turned on the heat, as driving fast with the top down in October made him feel as if his bone marrow had frozen. Vincent got out and hurried over to the wreckage, which had flames and smoke pouring out of it, but no explosion. Josh couldn’t control his curiosity and got out behind him.

“Hey, what are you doing?” asked Josh.

“I’m curious about something,” responded Vincent.

“Isn’t this going to explode?” Josh was being cautious as he stood behind Vincent and peered around.

“Don’t know. Maybe. The good news is I’ll sense it before it does. Besides, there’s only a little bit of fire, nothing to worry about,” Vincent stated. He climbed onto the wreckage which was on its side. He grabbed onto the hatch and with a huff, he tore the door off.

“Holy shit man, you’re like the Hulk or something,” Josh exclaimed as he stood there gawking.

Vincent didn’t turn around, he just answered, “Hardly, the Hulk is green and pissed off all the damn time.” Looking inside, he saw the subject of his curiosity. There were two Seekers inside; one was impaled by a piece of the wreckage and most likely dead. The other was unconscious but still alive. He unclipped the safety belt, pulled the enigmatic soldier of Zodiac from the wreckage and slung it over his shoulder.

“Are you shitting me? You just nabbed a Seeker,” Josh almost fell over from the concept of this.

With the Seeker slung over his shoulder, he jumped off of the wreckage and landed in front of the fidgety rebel. “Yeah, that’s the idea. I have some rope in the trunk, do me a favor and grab it so I can tie up this bastard.”

Josh hurried back to the car. “What the hell are you guys doing? We’ve gotta get out of here...Did Vincent just nab a Seeker?” Talbot was wild.

“Yeah. He’s gonna tie him up and take him with us,” Josh responded as he fiddled around with the stuff in the trunk. He didn’t pay much attention to all of the things inside, but noticed

that there were some weapons and rations.

Waiving his hands in the air Talbot said, "Why the hell would he do that?"

"When he gets over here, you can ask him," Josh answered as he found the rope, grabbed it, then shut the trunk. Vincent had set the Seeker down on the road a few feet away at this point and Josh brought the rope over to him.

"What do you hope to accomplish with this?" inquired a confused Josh.

"Know thy enemy," was the only response Vincent gave. He looked over the fallen soldier. Not a square inch of skin showed. The face plate of the helmet was plain. It appeared to have one-way transparency and completely hid the face of whomever or whatever was below it. He tied up the soldier and brought him to the car, throwing him in the back seat, busting one of the shoulder lights that wasn't broken from the crash. "Josh, keep an eye on our guest. I don't believe the fear aura functions if the Seeker is unconscious."

Josh and Vincent got in and Talbot said, "Alright, we need a destination. Of course, we're pointed right back at Hartford."

"Hey, we could join up with the rebels at Southern," Josh suggested.

"Hartford is destroyed, we'd have to take back roads to get to I-91 and hope that nothing else gets in our way," Talbot pointed out.

"Wait, Southern? As in Southern Connecticut State University? They're on a college campus?" Vincent asked seeming agitated.

"That's what I heard. Not a bad idea huh? Set up those dorms as barracks," Josh said with a smile on his face.

"Stupid. So damn stupid. We need to get there before that dozer does," Vincent warned.

"Why do you say that?" asked Josh.

"First, Southern is above ground, which means the SATs can spot the collective activity. Second, that dozer just turned and is heading in that direction. It'll flatten all of New Haven and turn anyone there into hamburger. We've gotta get them out of there!" Vincent exclaimed.

"How about we dump the Seeker," Talbot vigorously sug-

gested.

“No, I want to know what makes these guys tick. I’ve got some suspicions. In the meantime, let’s get to New Haven before that giant shopping center does,” Vincent stated.