As smoke plumed from the chimneys around, the red in his hair shone like a dying ember, the last in the blaze. Why Jasper was on top of the resistance building, he did not know. Personal desire, morality and just plain curiosity were good guesses. He felt the shadows shift behind him.

“Amore!” Jasper barked. “Evening Detective.” Jason Amore replied smugly. His grin spread across red cheeks, unleashing creases ad dimples into the night. His body was like his soul, built by the past and growing in the broken future. “I assume you’re here to help?”

“YOU called ME here, Jason, YOU tell ME why?” The biting voice tore the smile from Jason’s face. Jasper’s tendency to break a man’s mood was a knife sharpened often and used even more so.

“Well, J” he paused, waiting for Jasper to flinch at the letter; he wasn’t given the satisfaction “Alice said she needed you” This, however, Jasper did flinch at. The cold night’s teeth felt sharper than before and suddenly the concrete roof looked a comfortable place to lie down. Jasper was hit, once again, with the realisation that of all the buildings around him, he was the most decrepit.

“No” Jasper managed to choke as he watched the wasteland before him. The moonlight was burning a hole through the roof of the government building and before his eyes, the flames began to rise again and they spread through the city as they had before. Jasper could only think of one thing. ‘Sure, fire can burn, but a memory could destroy a man.’

“Jasper, she needs you.” Jason’s voice didn’t sound so smooth when mixed with such high levels of jealousy “She… she always has. And you know that! But still you leave her.”

“It’s about time the tables were turned” Jasper retaliated. The pain in Jason’s face showed, but that was understandable, remembering Before hurt Jasper too.

“You’re lucky she didn’t hear that. You have no idea how she feels about Before. You…”

“Yeah, Me. Somehow everything bad that happens is caused by Me, yet you and your little ‘army’ still look to me for the answers. I wonder whether you people have any intellect of your own.”

“We, my little ‘army’ and I, were smart enough to contact you” Jason Amore was a master of combat but he was the God of smugness.

“We are done here.” Jasper stated, brushing the sarcasm from the conversation.

“But you can’t just leave” desperation screamed through Jason’s low mutter. “But watch me.” Jasper stepped backwards off the roof and disappeared into the night.

As Jasper drove through the debris-scattered city in God’s gift to humanity (his Rolls Royce Silver Shadow), memories of God’s gift to man seemed to drift from the shattered windows
of the surrounding wrecks. Auburn hair seemed to wave before him as chestnut eyes latched onto his. White specks flew through the air to form a young woman’s pale skin, her skin. As the hood of the car ripped through the memory, Jasper felt a tear in his chest. He knew she wasn’t real but it still killed him to watch her just disappear. He had seen so many ghosts he had become one.

Unlike Before, he spent his time wandering aimlessly. A nothingness among the wreck of his past. Jasper didn’t have purpose any more, like so much else, it had been lost in the oblivion which had ended Before and begun this ‘existence’, if that’s what it could be called.

The tyres screeched as they clung to the road in hopes of stopping the colossal mass of metal and machinery above it. Jasper looked in the mirror to ensure he looked normal. Silver irises surrounded by sunken black holes, milky white skin clinging to cheekbones, thick blood red hair pouring from his scalp. No, not normal, but the best he'd looked in a while.

He was the only Detective left and the only officer living among the wreckage. Everyone else lived in the Utopian London, the one that liked to pretend this place didn’t exist, the one that made this wasteland but, like Stereotypical Gods do, won’t acknowledge their creations. Jasper knew these thoughts were useless but to him, rebellion was rebellion. The clock said 4:12 when his eyes shut.

* 

The opening of Hozier’s ‘Sedated’ rang through the house. Jasper grabbed for his phone. The display read ‘Angela Sinne’. He pressed the answer button.

“Morning” Jasper grunted.

“Christ, Sunshine, you’re happy this morning” she retorted.

“Not today, Ange” Jasper said, half begging, half apologising.

“Sorry but you need to hurry here now”

“Where is here, and what’s the hurry?” Jasper sat up, alert and tense.

“The Yard, and Resistance movements.”

“Great, I look forward to sorting this out”

“Bye”

“Yeah, bye”

The Yard was the no man’s land between new and old. Also, it’s the resting place of the old Scotland Yard. Angela Sinne looked the way she always did. Black leather jacket over an old band tee (today’s band was Blink-182) with black jeans and red converse. Her blonde hair was tied in a blonde ponytail which always seemed to bring out her teal eyes.

“Okay, what’s happened?” Jasper asked, the tension gripped his voice.

“Jason made contact last night, said you went to see him and just disappeared.” Worrying was a skill she had and it showed in her voice.

“Yes, and?”

“That's it.”
“What do you mean?”

“That’s it, when I heard you disappeared I was worried and I just had to see you.”

“Ange, you’re my work partner not my wife”

“I care about you, you’re the only one I have left to care about.” This sentence stunned Jasper, he already knew what he had just been told but the innocence in her voice stopped him momentarily. The animation exited his voice and he ended the conversation as he slid back into his car.

“Don’t care for me, it’s like hugging a grenade.”