

PERFECTOPIA

By León Hernández

PERFECTOPIA

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To everyone who fights for Liberty anywhere in the World

Thanks

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"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Declaration of Independence of the United States of America,
Philadelphia, July 4, 1776

"A really efficient totalitarian state would be one in which the all-powerful executive of political bosses and their army of managers control a population of slaves who do not have to be coerced, because they love their servitude. To make them love it is the task assigned, in present-day totalitarian states, to ministries of propaganda, newspaper editors and schoolteachers."

Foreword to Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World", 1932

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CHAPTER ONE

The Beginning of the End

The World

Wednesday, July 6th, 2016

Informing you since 1989

Fear for turmoil during Thursday's planned demonstrations

Tomorrow, July 7th, demonstrations will take place in the world's main cities against Europe and U.S. policies that are being applied to ward off the economic crisis, being blamed by the organizing parties as the cause of the increased poverty level among the population; London, Paris, Berlin, New York and Madrid as many others expect these demonstrations with relative ease; such acts of protest are likely to be massively supported due to the population's widespread dissatisfaction regarding the latest economic events and the measures imposed by these governments.

The demonstration in Madrid, having been authorized by the Central Government Representation Department, has been called for by the Occupy Madrid Social Platform and several other anti-Establishment groups. According to their

representatives, they expect more than one million attendants from all over the country. Their goal, having being unsuccessful years ago, is to attain "the immediate resignation of the Government and the dissolution of Parliament," as well as "the convening of new elections" in order to put an end to "conservative" policies of the current government that, as per the organizers, "are provoking the death of hundreds of people because of starvation and suicide." Said policies will become more severe, as indicated by the organizers, if the new emergency budgets planned by the Government are finally approved in tomorrow's vote. One of the demonstration's goals is to hamper such endorsement. Although they have detached from violence in all their press releases and even if they have reassured the public that they will make every effort to

avoid any incidents, radical groups have promised to avenge the death of a young far-leftist supporter at the hands of the police during the riots on May 15th.

According to police sources, they have informed them that they will do everything in their power to discourage any behaviors that may degenerate into violence. However, the Central Government Representation Department has made it clear that they won't allow "the heart of the democratic system" to be attacked. "If the protest is conducted in a peaceful manner and the security perimeter

set around Congress is respected, there won't be any reason for incidents", commented the Government Delegate. "We will not tolerate violent conduct and the Security Forces response will be proportionate and bold."

Although the Government displays serenity, official sources have confirmed there is increasing fear that the demonstration may spur riots throughout the city, violence and even victims as this may adversely affect their image, already quite deteriorated, ahead of the March 2017 elections.

“Samuel, wash the breakfast dishes!”

“Mom, I’ll wash them tonight. Silvia and the guys are waiting for me and I can’t be late because of some dishes!”

“And why don’t you look for a job instead of looking for trouble with your friends?”

“Mom, it’s always the same! I’ve been looking for a job for the last three months and nothing! None! All my friends are out of work and they are more experienced than I am. How do you want me to find a job?”

“Meeting your friends to organize a demonstration, that’s how you won’t find one.” said his mother, mumbling while she turned her back on him.

“What do you want me to do?” Sam cried out angrily. “You want me to behave as if nothing has happened? As if the world weren’t going to the dogs because of those politicians and bankers? That we keep on having shitty jobs and earning shitty wages while those rich capitalist business people amass fortunes and laugh in our faces? And what about them taking away public healthcare and your pension? At least I am trying to fix things up and I don’t remain silent like you do while they hammer us.”

“Your father and I work to keep the family going,” said his mother with a weary voice.

“And I fight for our future,” added Sam. He slammed the door behind him.

Sam’s mother turned toward the table and slowly picked up the breakfast dishes, leaving them in the sink. Then, she sat at the table and remained silent. The morning light coming through the kitchen’s small window illuminated her face. It was a hot July day in the capital city. She was exhausted although it still was quite early. She laid her hands on the table and closed her eyes.

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Irene, Sam's mother, didn't know what to make of her son. She understood his attitude and behavior though. Sam was strong, intelligent, fearless, and he only seemed to do well to others. "Sam is a good young man," her proud mother declared. But she didn't agree with the way he channeled his fury and his energy. She was old-schooled and thought that problems had to be solved through hard work. Despite all that, she felt unable to reproach her son for his stance. She felt deeply sorry for not having provided for a better future so she couldn't complain if he was looking for it.

She and Pedro, her husband, had moved from the south of the country to the big city more than 30 years ago. On arrival, they set up a small hardware store in one of the commuter towns on the southwest of the capital city. Irene dedicated herself to home chores and helped her husband with the shop; business was slow to come and they couldn't hire anybody else. They weren't poor and there was always food at the table. They managed to rent the shop and to pay off their mortgage on the flat over it. That was the place where Sam became interested in the construction industry.

Sam had just turned 22. He was tall and slender but well-built. He had brown hair that covered half of his forehead in stark contrast with his gray-eyed deep look. His eyes actually matched his white skin and radiant smile. Although he was good-looking, his introversion made him unsuccessful among girls, until he met Silvia, his girlfriend.

He'd finished his career in architecture in record time. Ever since he was a boy, he loved building things, spending long hours playing with Lego games in the back of his parents' hardware store. His mother always told her neighbors how fond her son was building great edifices, from the age of six.

Sam, like most youngsters, he was unable to find a job. The crisis that afflicted Europe, and specifically Spain, had been particularly destructive for the construction sector. In spite of those dark skies already existing over the world of architecture, back when he started

his studies in 2012 and towed since 2008 because of the real estate bubble bursting, he didn't capitulate on his vocation.

“Things will improve when this is all over. It can't keep on going like this for many years,” he used to tell his parents when they showed their concern over his career choice. On top of that, architecture wasn't inexpensive at all even in a public university, and sales at the hardware store had been very low due to the economic recession. So, his parents decided to remortgage their home in order to pay for his studies and not to vanquish his illusions.

Sam thanked the effort made by his parents, studying hard and passing all his subjects in due time. On graduation day, his parents were so proud for what their son had achieved. Irene couldn't avoid crying when Sam was given his diploma by the Rector of the Polytechnic University of Madrid. He had done it. Now the time had come to take on the world.

However, by mid 2016, the situation in Europe was bleak, not allowing being under many illusions. After a slight improvement at the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014, the governments from countries like Spain, having taken quite a punishment, made every effort to sell it as “the end” of the crisis. However nothing could be further from the truth: the European economy had sunk once again into a deep and dark hole, much worse than before: this time, the German economic motor, that had kept the whole continent afloat between 2009 and 2013, collapsed like the rest of the other countries. It actually dragged them down further.

The European countries managed to survive the crisis during prior years without implementing far-reaching reforms on their stagnating economic structures. Despite having raised taxes sharply (the worst of the crisis was in fact supported by citizens who kept their jobs) and having realized budget cuts on those issues most important for the people (education, healthcare, unemployment benefits and pensions, being the nucleus of the well-known European Welfare System

suffered the worst), public debt kept on mounting out of control. Unemployment unbearable rates by the end of 2013, decreased so feebly as to not alleviate damaged public finances. Even then, it seemed the crisis was over and there was certain optimism within the general population.

But things got rough when Germany started incurring job losses. Labor and economic reforms made by the governing coalition born after the 2013 elections, and the increase in electricity prices as a consequence of leaving nuclear power, destroyed the economic tissue and the excellent employment figures, having increased gradually up to 14% by the end of 2015, a figure never seen before. Despite the high profits achieved by way of heavy taxes from previous years, its public debt had increased.

But the strength of the German economy had maintained financial markets at peace, having its bonds as a safe haven as opposed to the disaster in the southern European countries. When it destroyed employment there was generalized alarm among markets. Not only its debt level had neared 100% of GDP by the end of 2015; having been exposed to the neighboring countries who also had to be financially rescued, Germany was being pulled down and this resulted in doubts about the *Bundestag's* ability to pay off the debt. Therefore its cost for financing started increasing. Besides Germany had officially gone into recession by the fourth quarter of 2015.

The plummeting of the German economy hauled with it the rest of the continent, from north to south and from east to west. Once again money was leaving, not between neighbors, but off the continent altogether. From Finland to Spain, from Ireland to Italy, economies sank, jobs were lost and companies were shutting down. This time was continent-wide different from the 2009-2012 period. If the Euro had assisted Germany in keeping the rest of Europe afloat during the first years of the crisis, now that same currency made the German giant drag everyone behind it. Even non-Eurozone nations, like the U.K. and Sweden, also suffered from the same symptoms. Accumulated public debt was unaffordable.

Again, governments reacted foolishly, implementing old formulas that, as they thought, had saved them five years before. There were further tax increases, not having ever decreased during the former phase of the crisis; they sold more debt and attacked citizen services furthermore. The European Central Bank commenced applying emergency measures violating its own guidelines; it issued money in order to buy debt from member countries. Inflation swelled to levels that hadn't been seen in Europe for decades.

This provoked a likely disgruntlement among the population that watched how the weight of the crisis fell upon them while governments, political leaders and civil servants kept their status quo intact. The protests and riots spread all over Europe during the first half of 2016. Popular movements resulted in the appearance of neo-Nazis and Fascist parties in Greece and Hungary, then Eastern Europe, Austria and France, where immigrants and homosexuals were murdered. In Western Europe though the left-wing grassroots movements that were the inheritors of Occupy Wall Street, awakened much more belligerent from a two-year sleep.

In Spain as well, where protests from the end of 2013 seemed to have been forgotten, but restarted in the main cities. Their motto was basically the same but through a wider scope: the wealthy, the banks, the 'exploiting' companies, Neo-liberalism and Capitalism hand in hand with inept and crooked politicians all being blamed for their misfortune. This time the message reached a broader sector of the population because since the middle of 2015 the crisis affected many more.

Protests were turning more multitudinous and violent. During the first half of 2016, five people lost their lives in Spain alone due to violence; two of them were law enforcement officers. That had promoted resentment not only among demonstrators but a brutal repression from the police whose officers feared being ambushed during the riots.

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Until July, when the protest movements were coordinated worldwide, demonstrations were convened in almost every European capital city. In Madrid the protest would be launched at once from different locations to gather round the Parliament, where its members would be meeting in order to debate and approve ‘emergency’ budgets to counter the grave economic situation. Attendance to protests had been increasing for several months and that Thursday’s was expected to be the mother of them all. The government had become bothered and responded by discrediting the demonstration through a campaign through the media akin to them. Nevertheless, stress had reached the highest level and not even their own militants trusted them anymore. The threats of social unrest, and the possibility of a civil war, that had been trumpeted through their media speakers didn’t scare the general population any longer; the people were simply worn-out of an unremitting crisis that had lasted more than seven years.

Sam was the last one to arrive. Everyone else was already there, most were sitting on the floor in a circular shape. Some remained standing, Silvia, Sam’s girlfriend, being one of them. Sam waved at Silvia and sat at the back of the room in the last row. Inside this building, where the meeting was taking place, the heat was suffocating; that abandoned building located in downtown had turned into their headquarters. Madrid’s summer weather was merciless. There were extra warming issues due to a 3-month long drought, and because it wasn’t raining, air pollution levels were quite high.

“Well we are all here, we can start,” Silvia said to her audience but looking at Sam, who lowered his head.

Silvia had been one of Sam’s classmates at the Faculty, although she hadn’t graduated yet. From a young age, she stood out due to her strong personality and her leadership abilities. As a matter of fact, on her own merit, she had become one of the demonstration organizing leaders at the national level. That was a reason why she had visited the police station many times. However, she rejected violence and one of

her great achievements as a protest promoter had been to maintain – or at least try to – demonstrations peaceful. But this issue had become quite complicated because of tension accumulated all over the country, and the counting of actual victims.

There was Sam, sitting somewhere in the multitude, looking proudly at his girlfriend; she was average, tall and slender and her long blond hair reached down to her shoulders. Her character and her convictions compensated her lack of corpulence. Her hazel eyes were intense and captivating. Silvia thought, as well as Sam and the rest of attendants, that the political and economic situation of the country could only worsen if the same people were always in charge; that was why she felt compelled to do something about it, as if an inner voice was screaming at her ‘to save the world’.

“Everything is set for tomorrow. Departure time will be at 5 p.m. We will arrive from the west. The rest of the organizers will guide demonstrators from the north, south and east. We plan to reach downtown at around 7 p.m. and then reorganize everybody to surround Parliament, blocking them from leaving the building.”

A hand rose amidst lots of people:

“Yes, Laura?”

“How long should we remain there?”

“As long as it takes,” replied Silvia. “Parliament members are expected to leave around 8 p.m. after voting for the budgets, but of course it will depend how long they debate them, and we think that would be quite intense. Our plan is not to let them leave. Jorge’s negotiating team,” she pointed at a young man on her right, “has already written a document which will be delivered to them. We are counting on the leftist parliamentarians who will try to persuade the government to take our petitions into account.”

“What if the police charge against us as they have done many times before to make way for their official vehicles?” asked Sam.

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“As you know our motto is “NO VIOLENCE.” Have your camcorders and smartphones ready to record everything. The Central Government Representation Office has promised that the police won’t charge if there are no provocations, to avoid what has happened before. Even so, if they do charge against us without any provocation, we must all sit on the ground and exercise passive resistance. If the police charge against inoffensive people sitting on the ground, there will be enough audiovisual evidence to topple the government...and that’s another way we can win. More than one million people are expected to attend. There are not enough police forces in the whole country to stop us all. Besides, we won’t give them any reasons to. Is this clear? If radicals show up we will do as always: to encircle them so as to isolate them, so that the police could differentiate them from peaceful demonstrators. That’s the message we must send out to demonstrators as they join us. This is also printed on our pamphlets. We must strive to keep it peaceful.

Sam nodded with satisfaction hearing his girlfriend’s answer. He didn’t have such leadership skills but was proud of her. “You are going to save the world all by yourself” Sam used to whisper to her ear during intimate moments.

“If there are no more questions, now we will divide into different groups to deliver the material and organization matters for tomorrow,” said Jorge, concluding the meeting.

The group of about 50 people stood up and waddled in an orderly fashion toward different halls to continue with preparations. Silvia walked up to Sam and kissed him.

“I thought you’d never come,” said Silvia.

“You know that early rising is not my thing, I am a nocturnal soul,” he replied while smiling. “Besides, my mother is in ‘panicky’ mode because of tomorrow so we argued.”

“She is concerned and that’s normal, you shouldn’t be so tough on her.”

“I know, but she keeps treating me like a child, and I am no longer one. I know how to take care of myself,” Sam exclaimed outraged.

“But you are a boy,” said Silvia smiling while hugging him.

Sam drew a smile, grabbed Silvia by the waist and whispered into her ear: “Are you sure?” and then he kissed her.

It’s a busy day at the Central Government Representative’s office. The lady delegate was meeting with the Director of National Police and the Chief Commissioner. They were finalizing plan details to try to contain the protest, something quite hard to accomplish. In spite of the infiltrated apocalyptic messages broadcast through the media in order to scare away citizens thinking of attending, turnover was expected to be massive. Police officers had been sent from all over the country to Madrid to join in Operation Shield, to be initiated early next morning. The phone rang and she picked it up:

“Government Representative... Hello mister Prime Minister, yes, I wanted to talk to you. Yes, I am meeting with the head of the National Police and we are discussing about tomorrow’s plan. According to the latest police reports, and as I advised before, it won’t be a good show at all. I know you don’t want to yield to the organizers blackmail but I still believe that you should suspend tomorrow’s summit. If there isn’t anybody inside Parliament, demonstrators will get tired and go back to... yes mister Prime Minister, of course we are prepared to contain them. No doubt! We will try for officers not to intervene so as to avoid at any cost any damage to your image ahead of next year’s elections... please take into account that they will have to react should there be any violence,” now taking a deep breath. “Sir, I cannot ask the police for that. Not only must they look after Parliament but also after themselves... very well mister Prime Minister, I’ll tell them. Yes sir, don’t worry, everything is under control. Best regards.”

The Government delegate hung up the phone slowly:

“He doesn’t want to suspend tomorrow’s summit. If emergency budgets don’t get approved it could lead to the country being on the brink of bankruptcy...it will force Europe’s intervention and lose control. That would be a death sentence ahead of the elections, and at this time, polls are not encouraging.”

“This is madness! The situation is critical!” the Chief Commissioner burst out. “My officers must risk their lives so he won’t risk elections!”

“I understand, but right now he only thinks about his elections.”

“If there is a massacre, that will be worse for his image, he won’t get any votes!”

“He doesn’t want a massacre to occur. He says... we have to do everything possible not to intervene, and in such a case, use the least violent methods, tear gas, water cannons and so on. If tomorrow’s protest dissolves peacefully and budgets are approved, his image will be strengthened. It’s politics.”

“It’s politics that may cost lives if something goes wrong,” interrupted the Director of the National Police.

“Nothing should go wrong,” said the Government delegate. “We’ve learned from past mistakes and we know how to act.”

“It’s politics,” the Chief Commissioner chuckled ironically. “Does politics mean keeping away from reality? Even if my men use non-violent means to disband protesters or if there aren’t any violent ones among them, how does he intend we disperse more than a million people? The moment we attempt it, there may be a human avalanche and there will be a massacre!”

“Those are our orders,” said the Government delegate. “Oh, by the way, he’s also asked officers not to respond to provocations and to defend themselves non-violently if they are attacked. Would you please inform your men?”

The Chief Commissioner stood up and, visibly irritated, shouted:

“Under no circumstances am I telling my men not to defend themselves! Never!”

“That’s an order... from the Prime Minister’s office,” she replied without showing much conviction over her words.”

“That’s not an order! It’s a request to commit suicide!” the Chief Commissioner paused and tried to calm down. “I will pass on this message to my men but cannot guarantee they will abide. Good day Missis Delegate.”

“Good day.”

The Chief Commissioner left the meeting without the traditional salutation, evidently irate.

“May God have mercy on us!” said the National Police Director, leaving the office as well.

The Delegate buried her head between her hands.

It was the morning of Thursday, July 7th and Sam got out of bed in a state of euphoria: the great day had come. The future of a whole country depends on whatever would or would not happen today, he had been looking forward to being a part of that. Unlike any other day, he got up early, organized his room, took a shower and got dressed, made breakfast and he even washed the dishes before his mother said a word. He had to meet with Silvia at 10 o’clock to set everything up, and this time, he couldn’t arrive late. It was going to be a long day, full of excitement.

Irene didn’t seem cheerful. When Sam was readying himself to leave, she called to him from the kitchen.

“Samuel, would you come in for a moment?”

“Mom, I cannot be late, they are all waiting for me,” said Sam calmly but impatiently.

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“Samuel, I have to ask you for one thing. I beg you to pay attention to me,” Irene’s voice turned grave. Sam did notice and approached his mother silently.

“What’s the problem, Mom?”

“Sam, I ask you not join the protest today please,” Irene paused while she observed Sam’s facial expression changing. “You could go now and help your friends, but I’d like for you to be home by the time the protest starts. I have a bad feeling about...”

“Mom, how can you ask me for that!” interrupted Sam, furious. “You know I can’t ditch them now, Silvia and the rest! I would become a coward! And just because you have a feeling!”

“Samuel, please...”

Sam tried to get a hold of himself:

“Mom, I can’t believe you’re asking me for this, this is incredible. You know all the effort I’ve put on all those protests and today, the main event, you want me to abandon?”

Sam waited for his mother’s reply. There wasn’t one so he turned around to head for the door.

“Samuel...” his mother moved forward and put her hands on his temples. Sam saw the shine of her tear-filled eyes. “I am worried about you. The newscasts say there will be a lot of violence. I am afraid something will happen to you and if something happened to you, I couldn’t bear...”

“Mom,” interrupted Sam with a conciliating tone, “you know I’ve always been very careful and keep away from riots, especially from the police. I’ve been to many protests and demonstrations and always came back without a scratch. Nothing is going to happen to me. You know that.”

His mother looked at him in the eyes and gave up:

“All right. But please be careful. You are fast. If there are problems run and don’t wait for anybody. Come back home tonight. I’ll wait for you awake,” then she kissed his forehead.

“It’s ok mom, I’ll keep you posted. There will be many people so I don’t think I’ll be able to call you but I’ll text you, I promise. I’ll be careful.”

He put his mother’s hands away and left. Irene remained standing, seeing him leaving. When the door closed, her heart froze.

Sam arrived at the headquarters early, which surprised everyone:

“Wow, I thought I’d have to wait for you today too!” Silvia laughed ironically.

“Well, as you can see, I am still able to surprise you!” winking an eye and kissing her.

“How’s your mother?” asked Silvia.

“As always, I ought to be careful, that it’d be better not to come, blah blah blah...but she is fine, I think...”

Silvia smiled and took him by the hand to brought him over to the table where there was a city map. Silvia proceeded with another eight or nine young people round the table:

“Ok, today we only ought to set up and paint our banners before we rendezvous at the starting point. We should be there,” she signaled a subway station west of the city on the map, “at 3 o’clock, two hours before start, and then we can direct demonstrators and give out the material, and the most important thing is to instruct them on how to act in case the police charge, or if there is anyone violent among us. We will eat as soon as we finish setting everything up. Some members of the Communist Youth have brought us some sandwiches their party have paid for. Come on, let’s get to work!”

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Most banners already came imprinted with chosen mottos for the protest: “Criminal Capitalism”, “No to Neo-liberalism – Yes to Social Rights”, “Out with corrupt bankers and politicians”, and so forth. There was a huge canvas on which Sam had to paint their motto with several different colors. Sam was a talented artist and after one hour of hard work, the banner looked like artwork: “Government Resignation. Out with Neo-liberal Budgets”; many drawings made reference to Parliament, banks and bankers, and a caricature of a foot kicking a Prime Minister.

After some hours of preparation, they ate the sandwiches and drank some soft drinks. They marched on with all their material toward the meeting point. When Sam considered everything they had to carry on a scorching summer day, he exclaimed:

“How much I’d love to have a car right now!”

Owing to some his friends’ gesture of outrage, Silvia intervened:

“No sweetie, it’s gonna be public transportation.”

“I was kidding, ok?” said Sam, raising his arms as if surrendering.

Traveling wasn’t easy. Fortunately, there weren’t many people in the subway at that time, but it’d been several months without air conditioning due to cuts declared by the regional government, so the heat was unbearable. When they reached their destination, Sam’s t-shirt was drenched in sweat. He didn’t complain though.

The sun scorched the city. July’s high temperatures were going to make matters worse. Sam put down the main banner under a tree and sat to smoke under its shade to rest a bit. Silvia sat on a box full of pamphlets, next to him; she took his cigarette.

“We should have programmed this global event for April, who came up with the idea of doing it in July?” protested Sam.

“You gotta take into account that, in the rest of Europe, April’s weather does not permit any successful protests,” she replied giving him a wink and handing over a bottle of cool water. Sam drank it up at once.

“All right. I am going to text my mother that I won’t die beaten by the police, but dehydrated.”

Silvia laughed and smoked. Sam observed thoughtfully the rest of his friends who were organizing boxes and delivering pamphlets to the first arriving attendants.

“Do you think there may be trouble today?” he asked Silvia.

She thought for a second, inhaled twice and said:

“Of course, it isn’t gonna be a pretty day. But the government doesn’t want any violent scenes flooding the media. Elections are coming up next year. They cannot afford it. It’ll be alright.”

Silvia put out his cigarette and kissed Sam’s cheek. She stood up and started giving instructions to a new incoming group of people.

Sam lighted up another cigarette and kept smoking there, sitting and observing. “How did we get to this?” He asked himself. In the end, he wasn’t a man of action. He only wanted to live and have a good time with his friends. He’d grown up in an apparently relatively undemanding environment. It was beautiful to live in a country where most services supplied by the State basically meant zero cost for the citizen. Even so, like many young men of his age, he couldn’t stand injustice and social inequality. He felt a particular aversion toward the wealthy and disliked snobbish kids who had everything without the effort to achieve anything by themselves. He was quite fond of homeless people and, as far as he could, he always handed money to them. He couldn’t understand how could there be such people who had everything, and many who had nothing. Sam believed that the wealth of the world was in the hands of 1%, the rich and the affluent, while the other 99% hardly survived or starved to death. This is why as soon as the governments started cutting back on services for the

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citizens, Sam took a hard stand; he couldn't remain quiet at the same time as the richer got richer, having their money in tax havens, and the poor became poorer.

Sam had had enough and decided to himself he would not take a step back; no more cutbacks, no more eviction-motivated suicides. This is how he became quite active in 2010, barely at age 16. He'd met Silvia in college where they radicalized. They wanted to fight against that amorphous and undefined enemy called Capitalism, as to bring about a fairer and better world to live in; such an enemy seemed to starve millions of people around the planet to death; such an enemy allowed companies to contaminate rivers and seas, built over natural settings and cut down the planet's forests. That enemy sold medications at exorbitant prices to Third World countries where people died, not being able to afford them. That enemy was wiping out small neighborhood stores in favor of major 7 day per-week shopping malls, where employees were exploited on a daily basis. It was quite clear to him: The enemy had to be terminated.

Around 4 p.m., several thousand people had concentrated in the park where the demonstration was to start from the west side. Sam and Silvia's friends had no time to kill. They were handing over pamphlets and giving out instructions over megaphones. Several police vehicles remained vigilant from the other side of the street. Three police officers approached and one of them asked:

"Who is in charge here?"

"That's me, officer," answered Silvia, stepping forward.

"Come with us for a moment," requested the police officer.

Sam grabbed her arm for her not to go, but Silvia looked at him and said "Don't worry, it's all right." Silvia approached the police units. Sam watched from a distance how her girlfriend spoke with four cops. It seemed to be a calm conversation and after several minutes, Silvia came back.

“They wanted to find out if we were aware of the rules in order to follow the demonstration, not to abandon the trail agreed with the Central Government delegate, and stuff... routine, basically. I’ve told them not to worry because we will try for everything to take place with serenity, but that also depended on them. They’ve told me they are not interested in having problems.”

“Well, we are the ones who are not interested in having problems, they are armed and we are not,” commented Sam with skepticism.

“But we are more,” said Silvia with a wink of her eye.

By the time the protest started, it was impossible to see where it ended. In fact, citizens had decided to turn up en masse. Entire families with children, seniors, youngsters, most of them were carrying picket signs and some banners. The organizers, and Silvia being at the head, gave out instructions through megaphones and then the entire mass of people started marching through one of the main avenues of the city, toward Parliament. The police already had redirected traffic. Sam walked next to Silvia; he was amazed at the popular response.

“We will achieve it this time,” Sam said to Silvia, taking her by the hand and smiling. Silvia replied with a silent smile.

As the demonstration advanced more people joined in. The organizers then asked for the people to join them at the end. Sam uploaded photos through Twitter and Facebook and kept Silvia informed on how things were in different areas. There were reports of petty isolated incidents between the police and some demonstrators.

At the half-way stage, Sam saw several young people dressed in black and handkerchiefs on their necks, loaded rucksacks and picket signs with hostile messages such as “Death to the Fascist Government”, “A Good Capitalist is a Dead Capitalist.” Sam warned Silvia:

“Those guys are carrying handkerchiefs on their necks and it’s terribly hot. They are to cover their faces. They are going to provoke a riot.”

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Silvia looked at them and started walking toward them. Sam stopped her:

“What are you doing? Let ‘Hulk’ and the security team take care of this.”

‘Hulk’, the security coordinator, was a 6’6” tall (and 3’ wide) former nightclub bouncer. He and 6 ‘Rottweilers’, as his team members were called, made sure nobody exceeded the limits during the protest.

“Take it easy, they are not going to punch a young woman in front of everyone,” said Silvia.

“I am coming with you,” said Sam.

They both approached the group of adolescents dressed in black. Silvia spoke to the group:

“Hello, excuse me. I have to ask you to leave the protest. Your slogans have nothing to do with ours.”

One of them, the tallest, a slender young man bearing a Mohawk-style haircut answered:

“What’s up? The street is yours or what?”

“No, but you are not welcome to this protest,” replied Silvia.

All of a sudden, about twenty surrounding demonstrators became aware of what was happening and started shouting “Out! Out! We don’t want violence, out!” The leader gestured to the rest as he turned around and said:

“Ok, we’re off. But I’ll see you around... lil’ bitch.”

“What did you say!?” Sam jumped up.

The young man in black smirked:

“So what? The lil’ bitch is your girlfriend?”

Sam had the intention of punching him, and the possible target, waiting for it:

“You son of a bitch!”

Silvia and others subdued Sam. “Sam, leave it!” said Silvia, trying to calm him down. The youngsters turned around and left.

“I swear I’ll crack his head open if I see him again...” Sam mumbled while they were going back to the head of the protest.

“Everything is all right and they are gone,” Silvia comforted him, took his hand and kissed him.

The demonstration went along as planned. Toward the end, there were problems when some people threw stones at the windows of banks and big multinational companies; they were arrested by the police and the protest kept going as usual. According to images broadcast by TV helicopters, there were four human tides, of approximately three to four hundred thousand people each, walking downtown. It had been a complete success. Reports from Paris, London and Berlin were alike: this was a triumph for the organizers.

Digital networks were booming with activity. There was barely any access to the internet due to such a massive amount of people.

“I am trying to text my mother and nothing, no chance,” complained Sam.

“This is like New Year’s Eve at Puerta del Sol,” laughed Silvia, reminding herself of a celebration quite similar to Times Square Ball Drop in New York City.

Around 7 p.m. all four lines were closing in to Parliament. They had been instructed so each head of each line would block all immediate street access to Parliament, while the rest of people would have to close in from adjacent areas.

“The parliamentarians will have to leave the building by helicopter!” Carlos, one of Sam’s friends, laughed enthusiastically.

By 7:30 p.m., more than one million people had surrounded Parliament successfully. There was no way in or out. The head

banners situated in front of the security perimeter limit set by full-gearied riot police equipped with all sorts of equipment such as water tanks and rubber-ball loaded shotguns; that was a way to avoid anybody from jumping over the barricades.

“Now we wait. If they want to leave, they’ll have to talk to us and to hear our demands,” said Jorge, the legal team coordinator, being one of the leaders who had been in contact with left-wing members of Parliament inside. “They’ve got my cell phone. They can call whenever they wish.”

“I’m sure they will. They weren’t expecting a popular reaction like this. They will have to listen to us. This time is a Yes!” sentenced Silvia.

“We’ve made it!” exclaimed Sam euphorically.

“No, not yet,” said Silvia with a smile, “but we are so close.”

The next two hours went on in a relative state of composure, and from the other side of the line as well. The cries of protest alternated with the messages from the organizers megaphones. A beautiful summer night was closing in, at least alleviating a bit of the scorching heat protesters had suffered through hours before.

“Here, you must be hungry,” said Sam to Silvia handing over to her a baguette sandwich wrapped in aluminum foil.

“Thanks,” answered Silvia, “I’d forgotten to eat, there’s so much in my mind.”

About 11 p.m. tiredness was visible in many of the protesters, but only very few had left. From the other side of the barricades there was barely any activity. Many demonstrators were shouting “Will you ever come out?”

Inside the building, MPs were not in a rush to finish their session. There was much entertainment in debating:

“Mister Prime Minister, listen to the people’s voice, listen to them! They have come here to tell you to leave! We hereby summon you to convene early general elections immediately! Our country cannot stand this situation any longer. These budgets are the straw that broke the camel’s back! You must welcome them here and now mister Prime Minister,” shouted at once a left-wing MP while the Prime Minister occupied the speakers’ rostrum.

“We are a strong and serious country,” answered the Prime Minister with serenity, “with robust democratic structures through which we will emerge out of the crisis as well as the rest of the European countries. I fully trust this, and my government will not be submitted to blackmail from those who hope to demolish the democratic edifice we have all built.”

The last four hours of debate had been a hotchpotch between catastrophic proclamations from the opposition parties and a virtual withdrawal from reality from the government. It seemed there wasn’t going to be any changes in the next hours, unless there was a change in debate.

“A coffee please,” an MP asked the waiter in the Parliament’s café.

“Yes, this is going to be a long night,” said another MP from a different party sitting next to him. “The government has instructed we should remain inside the building until the protesters have been safely removed. They are not willing to take any risks.”

“Well, I do hope they get tired soon. We don’t get paid for these overtime hours,” answered the first MP while sipping his coffee.

“Yeah well, they will end up leaving because they’ll have to get up early to go to work... Ah wait, they are unemployed!” commented the second one. They both laughed.

Outside Parliament, there were no signs of the demonstration getting dispersed. Most people were sitting on the ground, chatting peacefully

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while others chanted in protest. Silvia leaned her head on Sam's shoulder while he looked at the stars. It was a beautiful summer night sky. Looking up, she remembered how he'd spent summer nights in the past, when everything went well, on the neighborhood park, having a chat and more than a drink with her friends till sunrise. Also, taking a walk with Sam. She wanted to be able to do it all over again, get back to normal life. She only wanted tranquility although she was at the center of every single protest. For that reason, she had to fight and win this war...and make it quick.

A shooting star seemed to cross the night sky. However, it was too big. Silvia stood up at once, looked back and her heart froze. Those youngsters dressed in black she had encountered earlier and had obliged to leave the protest, were there again. Their faces were covered by handkerchiefs and balaclavas; the tallest one looked at her in the eye and winked. Sam noticed her horror gesture and asked worried: "What's going on?"

Silvia turned toward the security barricades and saw terror begin. A Molotov cocktail impacted the barricade, reaching several police officers and severally burning them. A precipitation of incendiary bombs started falling from numerous points within the protest, getting to some police vehicles. Fires spread fast around the perimeter set by law enforcement agencies.

While some police officers attempted to suffocate the flames burning their colleagues bodies, others proceeded to get away through the exits left throughout the barricades. The police started shooting tear gas and rubber bullets at random in order to disperse the crowd. The protesters who had found themselves closest to the police barricades had already run away.

A stampede of thousands of people from the front lines caught those sitting at the back by surprise. Many barely had any time to stand up when they were crushed by a human tide. Hundreds were trampled upon by those running. On the first lines, where it all had started, there was no visibility due to the tear gas. Gunshots of rubber bullets

were heard from everywhere. Sam and Silvia didn't have time to react as they were dragged by helpless people.

“Silvia! Give me your hand! Hurry up!” Sam shouted trying to reach his girlfriend while the stampede was taking her away.

“Sam! Sam!” screamed Silvia blinded by tear gas.

One of the police cars that had been reached by fire exploded and the barricade blew to pieces. The rest of the wire fence hit some police officers and protesters. There was absolute chaos. Sam wiggled his way out of the multitude and tried to locate Silvia. He found her on the floor, kneeling. She was covering her face and was unable to breathe.

“Silvia, come on, let's go! Give me your hand and let's get out of here!” The young man grabbed her and started running away from the fires along with other protesters. A rubber bullet reached Sam's leg and he fell to the ground. Silvia, who had let go of his hand, was being dragged again.

“Sam! Sam!” she shouted in desperation, trying to make her way toward Sam who was lying on the ground, writhing in pain.

“Go! Go! Run!” her boyfriend screamed at her.

When Silvia got to Sam, a group of riot police officers was nearby clubbing everything that moved. Confusion and anxiety among the officers were evident, so they didn't distinguish between peaceful and violent protesters. Sam tried to stand up as he was clubbed on his back. Once again, he fell to the ground, raised his head and tried to reach Silvia's arm; he was only able to feel a tremendous pain to his head, as he was clubbed by another police officer already on top of him.

“Leave him alone! Sam!”

The last thing Sam could hear was Silvia's heartrending cry.

CHAPTER TWO

The Great Chaos

The Country

Global News

Friday, July 8th, 2016

MASSACRE

More than one hundred people died and thousands were injured as the result of grave disturbances which occurred yesterday outside the Parliament building. Circumstances took place as a still unidentified group of violent protesters threw several Molotov cocktails against the security perimeter set by the police protecting the building. Upon the attack, police responded with tear gas then violently charging indiscriminately against the protesters. Disorder provoked a one-million people stampede out of the surrounding areas.

There are at present 126 deceased; 24 of them are minors including six children. Most victims died by asphyxia after being crushed by the mass of people running for cover from fire and the police. There are thousands of injured being tended throughout city

hospitals at this time. There are numerous seriously injured for which the death count could rise within the next few hours. Two police officers suffered third degree burns and are now in critical condition; another police officer was clubbed to death by a group of violent protesters.

The Government has decreed a three-day official mourning period following this tragedy and has expressed consternation because of the balance of victims. "We are appalled due to this tragedy. The Government will utilize every possible means to help victims and the surviving families. We will go much further to make sure those responsible stand trial. The citizens can trust their government" said the Prime Minister.

Nevertheless, many of the protesters blame the violent police

charge and the government for the massacre. "They didn't give us enough time to get up and leave the area. I was sitting, and all of a sudden, a bunch of people ran me over", says a survivor from one of the hospitals. On the other hand, the police support their agents actions: "We were being attacked and we had to respond. We couldn't do anything else. The officers proceeded in a professional manner", declared the Chief Commissioner from the

hospital where two officers are being tended. However, there seem to be contradictions because some of the deceased had died as a result of police brutality.

The police are asking for help to bring those responsible to justice. There hasn't been a positive ID from CCTV systems from the surrounding areas, because the assailants had their faces covered.

It was Silvia who called Irene to inform her of the bad news. Sam's parents had consistently been trying to contact their son since the media started reporting about the disturbances. Sam never answered. Silvia's phone call confirmed their worst nightmare. Irene sank to the floor amidst screams and tears while Sam's father, trying to gather up his courage, comforted Silvia, who cried from the other side of the landline.

There is nothing worse in this world than a mother's loss of her son. It is a grief-stricken pain from which one cannot stand upright again. When Pedro hung up the phone he hugged Irene. Both remained on the floor, for a long time, crying, before heading toward the hospital.

From that day hence, things got worse throughout Europe. During that Thursday night, on July 6th, news of the tragedy in Madrid fed violence in the rest of the protests. While there was a victim count in Madrid, thousands of cars were being torched in Paris and London; some buildings were set on fire in Berlin. In Rome, the *Carabinieri* had to remove the protest away from the Quirinale Palace, where there were victims as well. The weekend after that, there were protests and disturbances in the main cities of Europe.

On Monday, July 11th, every European stock market opened in the red zone. In Madrid, the market index lost 3% in the first two hours. Money was running away from mortally wounded Europe, and not only from the stock markets. Major banks buzzed alarm signals on Friday, July 29th, because billions of Euros have rushed out toward Switzerland and Asia.

Governments hoped that during the summer season, in August 2016, things would calm down and that everything would get back on track, so they went on vacation. Every night during that 'Summer of Damnation', as it was later deemed, there were attacks and incidents. The air of the main cities of Europe became unbreathable due to arson and violence from radical groups.

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When politicians came back from vacation in September, the economic situation was a Dantesque spectacle. Thousands of Europeans had lost their jobs during the summer and hundreds of companies closed down. The labor unions contributed to worsen the situation by organizing strikes in all countries giving them a coup de grâce.

On Thursday, September 15th, a general strike was set in motion in Spain as well as in France, basically paralyzing both countries. In Germany, where general strikes had always been forbidden, the strike achieved the shutting down of train stations and airports completely.

The cost of financing public debt had soared to the point of bankruptcy in the heavily indebted European countries. Governments were incapable of controlling the situation and ended up fueling the fire that each night razed the streets. The European Central Bank couldn't keep buying public debt without raising the inflation; this is why, with the support of the European Commission – that decided to actively intervene to solve the crisis – decreed on a package of extraordinary measures to take effect on Saturday, October 1st. They intended to stop capital outflow so governments could be allowed to breathe and settle the situation down.

Every bank transfer over 10,000 Euros toward a non-European Union bank had been forbidden; daily cash withdrawals were limited to 300 Euros per day and a 15% fee applied to every savings account. This last decision was made for the purpose of paying off public debt because of a major international investors escaping. In other words, a freezing of financial assets was decreed EU wide, nationalizing private savings. At the same time, the rich and wealthy were accused of irresponsibility and lack of solidarity for taking their money out of European banks in such a delicate situation. The enemy's trick called 'financial markets' – that years before had served as a wild card for governments to exonerate their blame – was utilized again.

On the other hand, ignoring the civil conflicts that had occurred in Venezuela and Argentina the previous year which had the same

origin, the business people were seen as guilty for an artificial increase in prices, affecting inflation. The European governments as well as Brussels were in need of scapegoats in order to hide their disastrous management. The rich and the business people were most accessible to carry out such task. The European press, in shambles due to their profit loss from advertising, was dependent on public institutions and public funding; it acted as a speaker of all those accusations in such a reckless manner as to not take a long time to regret their actions.

The entry into force of the freezing of financial assets alleviated, for some time, public finance, but the streets were burning and there was panic among investors. Bank costumers stormed offices claiming their money. Many branch offices stopped opening for business when the first aggressions occurred; as an example, a bank manager died in Linz, Austria, on October 18th, when his office was set on fire by several citizens demonstrating outside.

For a country like Germany, which was unaccustomed to credit because people used mainly cash, this freezing of assets resulted in social unrest. Disturbances – up to that point, arson, robberies and clashes with the *Polizei* – transformed into looting. First, it happened on the big chains, and right after that, smaller retailers. Hundreds of establishments burned each night. When cash money became scarce, looting extended to the whole of the continent.

But not only businesses had been attacked. The accusations of irresponsibility and lack of solidarity from the media in regards to the rich and wealthy, provoked robberies and forced entries inside the most affluent areas of the big cities. On Saturday night, November 26th, after a protest in downtown Madrid, some houses in the luxurious district of El Viso were attacked. Two of the houses were reduced to ashes.

On December 5th, at night, several groups of youngsters moved into the affluent area of Belgravia, in central London. Jonathan Myers, from an underprivileged area known as Newham, finished work at 2

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a.m. from one of the city's gas stations. He came face to face with one of the roaming bands while he was on his way to catch a night bus to get back home. He was assumed to be the son of one of the rich men from the surroundings. Jonathan explained to them that he didn't live there and that he was coming from work. Someone shouted "Get him!" and they started chasing after him. Jonathan was quite fit as he ran very fast. He was only able to hide by climbing over a fence from one of the mansions and hid until he saw them passing and they were gone. It was a bad idea though. Dominique, the mansion owner, had purchased a hunting shotgun to protect his family; he'd heard the shouting from the nearby street that awakened him suddenly. He took the gun, and seeing Jonathan hiding, shot at him thinking he was an assailant. The shotgun pellets ripped his chest open and he fell lifeless.

The internet was fuming with the news: "A well-off man kills underprivileged kid." Even if Jonathan's death was a mistake, it didn't matter. It was the spark that blew everything up. Jonathan Myers was London's Rodney King in 2016.

The viruses known as wrath and hate propagated all over Europe, and the lower classes – asphyxiated by the economy and the winter's chill – went out and a game pinned 'Rich hunting' became quite popular. The most affluent districts were razed to the ground and many families died in the blazes; many others hurried because they didn't want to become victims of the infuriated youngsters or the extremist bands. Just the fact of having a car or dressing casually were motivations to be deemed 'a rich', and being targeted. Numerous churches were also burned down. The police were no longer able to contain the situation where pillage and murder were served every day. If northern Africa had had its 'Arab Spring' back in 2011, Europe was heading toward its 'Black Winter'.

That month of December distinguished itself by generalized unrest and workers strikes on top of a deeper economic situation. Hunger

and illness were permitted to be present. With the aim of containing the state of affairs, as a desperate initiative, the European Commission asked countries to make use of their own armed forces to repress violence, in a flagrant violation of uncountable treaties and the advanced national Constitutions of its members. Governments were reluctant to roll tanks out in times of peace; it was considered a definitive message for the rest of the world, that Europe was out of control. But this time it really was. The European armies rolled out onto the streets in Western Europe in numbers never seen since War World II, against their own hate-filled citizens.

The ruling class, accused of having decreed martial law in an covert manner, dedicated themselves to playing down the measure. They argued armies were just going to assist fire fighters and control the situation ahead of the Christmas season. That wasn't true. Military personnel patrolled the streets and established security checkpoints on well-off districts still left. They even set up barricades around every single government building. It was not enough to appease millions of angered people, who kept protesting every night. One of the worst Christmas seasons ever came to reality.

With the army on the streets, many families were separated during this season due to increasing arrests. The disadvantaged populations became enraged and pointed the finger at governments for using their armies to protect the rich while they starve to death. Then, the accusations irresponsibly made by European governments against people of financial resources turned to have a boomerang effect.

In the cold afternoon of January 6th, 2017, an unauthorized protest was organized in Paris, in front of the Elysium Palace, the French President's office. Upon such a massive call, the Army and the *Gendarmerie* surrounded the building to impede demonstrators from entering.

It wasn't even 5 p.m. when thousands of French citizens advanced through *Les Champs Elysées* avenue, destroying everything in their

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path. By 6 p.m. tens of thousands stood against the barricades, chanting protest songs against the army and the government. The military emitted messages by huge P.A. systems, asking people to return to their homes. The contrary took hold as more and more people joined in on one of the most castigated European cities of the last two years.

Demonstrators turned a blind eye to warnings. Step by step, they were closing in more and more. Some of the attendants set off fireworks among the protesters and a tumult pushed against the military perimeter. Young soldiers mistook the detonations for gunshots, and seeing the human avalanche coming up on them, they opened fire. When officers were able to order the ceasing of the fire, it was too late. At least 20 bloody bodies laid on the ground.

This was the catalyst that ended European patience. To be murdered by their own military was simply intolerable. The next day, citizens started targeting politicians from every level. The night of January 7th, the beautiful *Beylarmont* building, headquarters to the European Commission, was torched. Fire illuminated the Belgian city through rolling blackouts that started being routine. The same thing happened to the European Central Bank in Frankfurt and other government buildings in Eastern Europe. Athens, also one of the worst case scenarios, was overcome during the second week of January 2017. Finally, governments came to understand they had lost their grip on the situation, if they ever had one.

Owing to security reasons, governments from around the world asked their citizens to leave Europe straight away, recalling their embassies and consulate staff. Because of the scarcity of electricity and the damage to land-based telecommunications, journalists and citizens made use of satellites to access the internet, being able to report and get informed about what was happening.

After what occurred in France, desertions started to happen. First, it happened within the French Army, then the rest. The military were

not willing to murder their own people so as to defend the governing class. When the soldiers were deserting left, right and center, the media tried to hide it so as to avoid a pull effect though it was impossible to control. The armies started losing soldiers and the remaining were reluctant to obey orders from politicians, so more and more government building were unprotected, being destroyed just hours later. Europe was heading toward 'The Great Chaos'.

The Oval Office, The White House, Washington D.C., February 8th, 2017.

“Mister President, the situation in Europe is alarming. The governments are about to lose control and the protests have spread over every single city. Official facilities are being attacked. The CIA reports that some members of the French Government have sought asylum in Morocco and Algeria. It is quite likely the same will happen with the rest of them.”

This was Nancy Graham, Secretary of State, during an urgent National Security Council meeting.

“Mister President, we must use our military in Europe to help those governments. Their security forces are suffering massive desertions. We cannot risk the entire European continent being left in chaos.”

U.S. Joint Chief of Staff Chairman General George Rauch, was a prudent man. He had been forged in many conflicts in which the United States had been involved for a good part of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. He knew what and when to do things. He was convinced of what the best course of action was, though his way clashed with the recently elected U.S. President.

“What do you intend? That we should send our troops against European citizens?” said the President calmly while he thoughtfully glanced at the Secretary of State's report set on his table.”

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“European governments are our allies. We are obliged to defend them, mister President,” replied General Rauch.

“Allow me to contradict you, General. The governments are not our allies, but the countries including their citizens. I will never send American troops against European citizens. Ever.” said convincingly the President.

“But Sir, are you going to leave Europe to its own luck?” replied the General, now becoming annoyed.

“General,” added the President with a conciliating tone in stark contrast with General Rauch acrimony, “Europe will become what the European people want it to be.”

“Mister President! This is madness! A suicide! The European continent is heading toward a civil conflict of incalculable consequences!” the General finally shouted.

“General Rauch, if you cannot get a hold of yourself, it’d be better you leave this room right now,” said the President, still in a state of calm.

The General remained standing watching over the President as he understood there was nothing he could do.

“With your permission, Sir,” the General left the Oval Office while mumbling: “He is going to destroy this country! He and himself!”

The confrontation between General and the President had been comparable to two trains at full speed.

Henry Roberts had been sworn in as President on January 20th that year. The last years of the Obama administration had been disastrous and had made the country reach the edge of the abyss several times. The failure of Obamacare as well as a soaring public debt led Democrats to lose the 2016 elections in an appalling way. Being different from Europeans who had been voting over and over for the same politicians who had caused their ruin, Americans knew how to react before things got too far. But former President Obama wasn’t

the only one to blame for the catastrophic result for Democrats. Roberts played out an important role on it.

Henry Roberts was the candidate for the Republican Party but didn't count with sufficient support from within; he had won the Republican nomination over the rest of the candidates thanks to grassroots support, who were not willing to suffer from the failure of 2012, with the nomination of Mitt Romney. He was the least neo-Con within the GOP. The party apparatus didn't pay much attention to his victory. They thought that, upon winning the elections and being sworn, they could control him and lead him toward more Conservative policy-making. They never counted Roberts as being a principled man, nor did they ever think he could fight off and defeat the whole establishment in Washington D.C.

Roberts won the elections on November 8th, 2016 thanks to an electoral program loaded with renovating promises: to balance public accounts by reducing the asphyxiating federal bureaucracy; the reduction of taxes; the revaluation of powers granted to the Transportation Security Administration, the NSA, the Federal Reserve and the IRS all of them shocked by scandals in recent years. Also, the derogation of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, known as FATCA, and the legal obligation for American citizens to pay taxes wherever they resided. Some of the more revolutionary measures to rescue the public purse were to end the war against drugs by a series of controlled legalization and to recall all American bases from abroad. This last one was part of his non-interventionist profile and no doubt it was something where he won more enemies than friends in Washington. Nonetheless, it was seen with hope by many around the world. The United States of America was renouncing its Imperialist approach, being praised in every corner of the planet. Roberts supporters called him 'the new Reagan' while his detractors considered he would end up as Kennedy. Owing to these measures he would stop the U.S. economy from deterioration and to placate the rebellious separatism of Texas; his country was now ready to attract investment so part of the money running from Europe ended up in

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American banks. There was an optimism flying in the air; there were no more protests as in Europe although they had started since the first half of 2016.

“At least we should make sure British and French nuclear weapons won’t fall into the wrong hands,” said, reconciling, the Secretary of Defense.

Roberts meditated for a few seconds and rushed out to say:

“Ok. Get Moscow on the phone.”

The Great Chaos started about sunrise, on February 20th, 2017. The Italian Government in spite of the emergency measures dictated by the European Commission since October, declared itself bankrupt and as being incapable to fulfill its financial obligations. Italy went into receivership. It was the first falling domino piece. Panic broke out among the international markets and over-exposition of public debt between different countries did the rest. Greece and Spain went bankrupt that same week. On February 28th, France was unable to pay the civil service payroll. Domino pieces were tumbling one after another. Major banks in Germany and Great Britain went bankrupt as well as a result of France and Southern Europe, thus breaking down the German and the British governments. On March 1st, 2017 half the European civil service stopped getting paid.

The sheer consequences were immediate. Most civil servants abandoned their positions. The Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies bled out after the desertions that had started in January. Hospitals were unattended and only a few volunteers stayed with the sick and the injured laying in the hallways.

The streets ended up on fire. The night of March 10th, 2017 Rome revived its ancient history by being completely torched to ashes. On the Eve of Saint Joseph’s Day, March 19th, a gang using masks of Guy Fawkes attacked the House of Parliament with explosives after a protest on Trafalgar Square. There was an absolute sense of jubilation

among them by watching the collapse of Big Ben. Similar attacks took place all over Europe: Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, Copenhagen, Madrid...no city was safe.

Politicians and MPs, being unable to hold the situation, decided to become exiles. The European Commission and all its members, those directly responsible, were the first to run. Then, national governments fell one by one. Politicians gathered their families, sacked what they could out of public funds and central banks and flew away toward the U.S., Latin America, Africa or Asia. The Royal Houses did the same. All royalty members left their countries for fear of being persecuted. All except one.

At Buckingham Palace, Queen Elizabeth II of England refused to leave.

“Your Majesty, the helicopter awaits on the roof terrace” the Royal Secretary rushed in.

The Queen remained standing, unwavering looking out of her office front window, watching protesters just outside the palace.

“I shall not leave my people. If the British people want me dead, so be it...”

Her husband, Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, had died one year before. His death had been quite hard for the Queen, who felt alone in the palace. She lived bitterly through the pains of the British economy and the poverty of her people during the last year; she stoically knew her time had come. The time to face the inevitable had arrived.

“Mother! What are you saying?” Prince Charles had arrived to try to convince his mother she should join the rest of the family already in the United States. But Elizabeth II would not yield.

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“I will not go, Charles. Do not waste your time. You must go and reunite with Camilla, William and Harry. I will stay here,” answered the Queen without taking her eyes from the window.

“Mother, this is suicide! You must come with us at once!” shouted Charles impatiently.

“Charles, I order you to leave,” said his mother with a hardened facial gesture.

The Royal Secretary gestured to Prince Charles to leave the room. Once outside, he said:

“Your Highness, go in peace. The Royal Guard and I will guard the palace. A group of loyal servants and I will stay to protect her. If necessary, we will gladly give our lives for her.”

Prince Charles gave up. He entered his mother's office and kissed her goodbye, then headed up toward the roof terrace.

When the London protesters saw the helicopter flying away while the silhouette of the Queen was visible from her office window, they understood what had transpired.

”The Queen has stayed! The Queen stays with her people!” shouted protesters. Then, little by little, they left bound for government facilities, Downing Street and Whitehall.

Buckingham Palace was the only official building that remained untouched in London.

With the European countries being abandoned by their governing class, without security forces and every food supply cut short, crime scenes, violence and looting were the daily bread.

There was not one shop or mall standing in the big cities that hadn't been burned or looted. Food was scarce. Hunger and violence forced people to leave for the countryside, while many other attempted to leave their home countries. Since the end of March, thousands of

refugees reached Switzerland coming from Italy, France and Germany.

On Good Friday, April 14th, 2017 the Swiss government shut its borders fearing basic social services would succumb as it had happened in other European countries. Thousands of military personnel were posted on the borders to block the entry of refugees. To avoid their access by train, soldiers blew up the Swiss entrance to the Simplon Tunnel, near the town of Brig. Thousands trying to enter by train found themselves trapped in the tunnel; there was a crash inside between two trains and hundreds of Italians died by smoke inhalation along a 12-mile trail.

Europe was at its worst since World War II. Famine and disease affected the weakest, the children and the elderly. The bodies of the deceased were left on the streets because there was no way to bury them, and this contributed to spread illness. Fires lighted the night skies of the cities where there was no electricity. Humanitarian aid was dropped from airplanes from the United States and some countries from Latin America and Asia. Widespread violence blocked any access to runways which meant any ideas of landing would just have been suicidal.

On April 26th, a 4 year-old girl named Marijke played in front of her house, located on the other side of the Herengracht Canal, in a middle class district of Amsterdam. A group of radicals was crossing that street, destroying things and scaring the few people left in the city. Marijke saw them as she remained quiet at the edge of the canal. She held her favorite doll between her hands. One of gang members drew a revolver and, without any apparent reason, put a bullet through her forehead. The impact on Marijke's young head pushed her whole body into the canal. Her doll fell to the ground.

The horrendous images were recorded by a young video amateur, from one of the houses looking over the canal. He then uploaded it

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onto the internet through his father's satellite connection, who was a journalist.

In less than 6 hours, the video had gone round the world. The horror of watching the cold-blooded murder of a little girl, whose body fell into the canal, was broadcast by the remaining European Continental media, which were still functioning, freezing the heart of an entire continent. Europeans then understood that this had gone too far.

That night there were no disturbances, something that hadn't happen for one entire year. People didn't leave their houses. The only lights were from those buildings that had still been burning.

The same way a virus called hatred disseminated throughout the continent for the death of an innocent, Jonathan Myers, the death of another innocent, little Marijke, eradicated it.

The Great Chaos had ended.