Broken Silences

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The text for this book is Cambria

Summary: During what should be the end of the Great War, Cavan Anstruther finds himself starting life as an adult trying to run from his father's legacy - the Anstruther Heresy. Cavan’s father dared to question the supremacy of humanity on the planet. His father's subsequent self-imposed exile has left Cavan all but orphaned for ten years.
For Bryana and the spark of inspiration,
Carrie and Shelly for the patience of examination,
and most importantly to
Gina with an unwavering belief in my creation.
Chapter 1  My father’s son

All young men wish to change their circumstances by excelling past what they know and the places they have been confined to all their lives - no one more than myself. I had thought if I changed my life it would place me outside the stigma my father had created before I was born seventeen years ago. If only thoughts and wishes were the same as the truth.

I grew up not knowing my father terribly well. Most of my memories with him happened prior to my eighth birthday. In the last ten years, no one in the world has seen nor heard from him. It may sound like exaggeration, but the world as a whole has been searching for my father for a decade.

Three years ago, September of 1915 on the Monday before my fifteenth birthday, my father resurfaced in my life. He made contact with me despite the stupendous risk to himself considering the worldwide turmoil for which he was responsible. I say contact, but nothing was even close to correspondence. I simply received a package and a card. It wasn’t, truthfully, intended for me. The package was addressed to my guardian, Professor Clerc.

I was living with my godparents, Professor Clerc and his wife Dr. Clerc; the dearest friends of my father from his time teaching at Adams University in Cambridge. They were entrusted with my custody after my father disappeared.
I was coming home that dreadful afternoon from school after a particularly torturous day of being ridiculed, shunned and generally abused. Besides what the instructors did, my classmates also bullied me on a regular basis. My godfather spoke with the headmaster at school several times on this matter, but it did nothing to change the opinions of the faculty, staff and students.

Hermius T. Anstruther, Fa.D. is still my father. Nothing can change the fact that fate has given me the distinct place in history as the only son of the most infamous scientist in the history of the North American Empire. It wouldn’t be quite as bad if he had discovered radio waves like Tesla, or light bulb filaments like Edison.

No, Dr. Anstruther made the world question the human superiority on this planet. In this age of thought and rebirth of science so many great thinkers have given humanity more to believe in and more conviction of humans inalienable right to be the premier species on the globe. There I go speaking like my father.

As I remember it, almost three years ago on that fateful day, the package day, there was a boy on the stoop of our flat. His face was ruddy and healthy with a stick propped on the stair next to him. I imagine he had been playing ball with it at some point that day. The boy seemed impatient. He was staring down at his feet twiddling and skipping while he sat holding a five dollar bill in his left hand. He glanced back
and forth from the stick as if he wished only to go on playing the game he had started before being interrupted to sit on my stoop. The bill was jutting its blue-green face from underneath a brown paper package wrapped in far too much twine for its size.

“Professor Clerc?” the lad asked hopeful before he looked up and realized I was just a few years older than him.

I replied warily with a twinge of suspicion, “No, but can I help you?”

“This package is for him. I got this fin here to sit on these steps almost all day waiting for him ‘cause the guy who gave me the package told me I could only give it to Professor Clerc, and he’d know if I did or not. Which was awful creepy but I did like he asked me. I’m still here waiting for him,” rambled the boy.

“Did the man give his name when he gave you the package?” My curiosity was getting the better of me. Professor Clerc was so boring and uninteresting. Who would give him such a mysterious package? Who, also, would take the time and trouble to message so oddly a university history professor?

“Nope,” he answered abruptly.

“A card perhaps?” I queried further.

“Oh, yeah, he did and told me to give that to him, even though I can’t read one side of it, ‘cause it’s just a bunch of lines,” he finished this last sentence by putting out his hand and showing me the card. The card must have visibly
disturbed me, because the boy backed off slightly at my reaction. I had seen that writing before, years ago.

“I'll give Professor Clerc the package for you, if you want. He’s my guardian. I live here.” I said abruptly. I was eager to get that note and compare it to a book I keep in the Clerc’s study.

“I don’t know. That guy who gave me the package was pretty serious and very scary.”

I spoke with renewed confidence and tried to persuade the boy to give me the brown paper clad mystery parcel.

“I promise, I’ll deliver it. Unless you want to wait here for the next two hours until Professor Clerc gets home.”

“Two hours?!” the boy sounded exasperated. “I’ve been here all day. My buddies are playing an’ I’m here all day.”

“Are you sure it’s worth just a fin then?” I asked realizing I was getting his thought process started. Then I jingled a few dimes in my hand as an offering.

“You know, you’re right.” He paused, “You promise you’ll give him the package?” I shook my head as he cautiously handed the box with the note and looked around to make sure no one watched him give it to me rather than Clerc.

I looked at the card as the boy snatched the coins from my hand and ran off to play as the day grew slightly darker in the autumn twilight of September.
Father made it a point to teach me things at an early age about places and people most any parent had never even heard of. When I was five, he had written me a note in Futhark, the ancient written language of Nordic tribes. Only my father would write in Futhark knowing how it stifled me the first time he used it.

We would pass messages and letters to each other in this or some other dead written script for fun. I tucked the package beneath my arm and with the note still in hand, hurried to the study.

I was out of practice with Futhark and needed my reference guide. The giant tome of language that I took from the shelf in the study was my fifth birthday gift. An odd gift for a five year old, but my childhood was odd in the first place.

The book was marked at the section on Futhark with a note I received from my father on my fifth birthday. Tattered on the edge and yellowed where it had lain outside, I struggled to remember what it read. My father was a great riddler. He always had a great deal of fun developing quirky thought problems for people on special occasions.

As I retranslated the letters on the older note, I remembered the whole phrase before I finished:

The search for knowledge must never end.
Thirteen autumns will pass before the flame of truth lights your way.
Moving to the new note, the handwriting was the same, but there were new symbols. It was definitely another piece of the riddle begun ten years before. I began the translation and noticed writing on the back of the paper. I suppose I had been too caught up with the fascination of my father’s letter to notice that on the reverse of the note was a letter in Father’s unmistakable scrawl.

*Clerc, this is for Cavan when the time comes.*

No signature, but still no doubt who had written it. I longed to run outside and see him. I wished to scream at him for leaving me, to beg to go with him wherever it was he was hiding. This was all fantasy. The boy who had the parcel and note was long gone, who knew how long he had been sitting there. This could be the end of a long chain of messengers that led to the eventual delivery of this secretive box.

Those were the thoughts that kept me in the study. I was tempted to leap out of my skin with joy-filled panic at the thought that my father was near or even coming back for me. Everyone in my life had at this point thought him dead. I knew that translating this note was now my only key to finding Father, if in fact he was still alive.

Sitting at the large desk by the window and grabbing one of the fountain pens from it’s stand, I began translating
letter by letter, dividing it into words, then phrases, then sentences.

Either by choice or by fate, the son will follow the path of his father.
You must go out into the world to find your truth.
These few truths I found on my path may guide you on yours.
Only you can choose whether to trust in fate.
May this flame light your way to me at journey’s end.

I lost control over my hand and the pen as I finished the last four words. Ink spattered out of the tip as I pressed it too forcefully into the page placing dancing dollops on Professor Clerc’s new marble blotter. I hadn’t been paying attention to my surroundings as I looked up and saw the professor standing only a few feet from me and a now very ink laden desk.

“Cavan? What on earth are you doing? And what’s that you’re writing?” came the stout voice more with concern than chiding. He looked fatherly, plump in the middle with a hairline on constant retreat for the last decade. Though he and Dr. Clerc had no children of their own, they treated me mostly as their own. His manner toward me was always of sage counsel and mentor while avoiding getting too close. I
never knew if it was out of respect to my father or his discomfort with children below the age of eighteen.

“Cavan. Are you alright?” was the continued query.

“Yes, yes, I'm fine, thank you. I just, I was, you see I...” continuing to stammer my response, I hid the Futhark note in my pocket before the professor got a further look at it. I continued to improvise, “...I was just looking at this book Father had given me years ago. I always loved his riddles.” I lied.

“He always did have a way with puzzles of all sorts, your father. I would surmise that is the reason for his obsession with what he often called ‘our little evolutionary puzzle’. ” My guardian answered trying desperately not to reveal too much. Every year it was this way always about the time of my birthday, the Professor would become edgy. Well, edgier than normal. His mannerism toward me changed and the tension in the flat rose tremendously. I imagined at the time it had something to do with the package that now lay, still unseen by the Professor, at my feet next to the desk.

How to get it to my room? At fifteen I did tend to be clever, but a parcel wasn’t easy to hide for a boy in autumn school uniform. My jacket was too far away to grab, so lying was my only recourse. It was the one thing I abhorred in the world, lying. In this situation, I felt I had no choice.

Attempting to remain nonchalant, I picked up the parcel along with my schoolbooks and began to exit the room praying Clerc would not notice.
“Cavan? What’s that parcel?” He queried with a tone of suspicion. Here came the second lie within minutes.

“Oh, this? It’s a portion of a project I was working on at school. A sculpture, sir. Would you like to see it?” The last bit came out as a gamble that Clerc would have no interest in my teenage artwork.

“No. No, that’s alright. It looks as though it must be fragile with all that wrapping. Be careful with it. Why don’t you run along now as I have some work to do here. Don’t worry about the language text or the ink; I’ll put it back for you and clean up from that unreliable pen of mine.” He sounded relieved which only spurned my curiosity further.

The stairs flew by me as I took them two at a time with balusters flashing in a blur next to my legs as I tore down the hall to my room. I only slowed for a second to pass by the fairy cage. Dr. Clerc had long kept fairies as pets. With my thoughts still on my father I slowed down and looked closely at the two fairies behind the bars. Father always did have a problem with this sort of thing. I remember him saying the same thing every time he passed a pet shop or proper lady’s garden.

“How odd I find that humans keep fairies in cages. If only they knew what they were doing.” He would then abruptly change the subject to the weather or some other mundane piece of conversation.
I realize it was his specialty in science, to study fairies, but he almost sounded like a madman at times when faced with how people treated these insects. I’d grown up all my early years being taught to appreciate the wonder of this world by a man with a very different perspective on the common everyday. Father often pointed out the wondrous things in the simplest places.

I found that this thought slowed me when I watched the fairies in Dr. Clerc’s cage flitter from petal to petal on the silk flowers they had been given to mimic being outside year-round. The little things seemed to speak with each other in twits and clicks almost as a language. Like looking at little winged apes, the two females played, ate and slept in this terrarium all day long. What harm could possibly come of retaining insects in a safe place?

Perhaps it is because they look so human and Father spent so much time studying them that he felt a connection. I remember placing the thought out of my head and continuing on my way to the sanctuary of my room. It’s odd, but I can’t recall that there was much to my room. There was a bed, a desk, stool, and a lamp. The real power of the place lie in two things - my electric Victrola I had received as a thirteenth birthday gift and my drawings strewn about my desk.

After tossing my books to the floor and the parcel and note upon my desk, I walked to my Victrola and placed my favorite record on it – Gustav Mahler’s Seventh Symphony played by the Royal Orchestra. This piece always resonated
with me when I needed to think. The music began as power surged through the machine and spun the disk along with my thoughts. Mahler’s notes played on my brain as I picked up the box and note.

What did Father mean by *May this flame light your way to me at journey’s end?* What journey? Was it life? Did he hope to see me in heaven? Not that he believed in it. Conversely, neither did I. The items in the box must be the clue to solve this riddle of his planned for ten years at least. Taking out the pocketknife I always carried, I cut the twine and ripped open the paper. The sight was as astonishing as it was puzzling.

It was a box, wooden and carved by hand out of an exotic wood I had never seen with the finest detail that only a master craftsman could have created. The markings were foreign and new to me. Even with all my father’s forcing me to study ancient language, the only thing I could make out was that it might be tribal. There was a mix of symbols and letters, like an amalgamation of Germanic tribal writing mixed with Egyptian hieroglyphics.

My fingers perused the marks as thoroughly as my eyes. I drank in this object with all my senses. It smelled almost of fresh wood, but looked ancient in nature. Not that it was battered and buried, but the markings were so strikingly alien to this world that I felt transported to somewhere else
by the mere presence of the thing which rattled as if it contained something.

"The Puzzle Box"

The reverse side of the note is the only piece of this puzzle that kept me from toying with the box until it opened and revealed its contents.

_Clerc, this is for Cavan when the time comes._
What time? What did the Professor know about my father that he was keeping from me? As I mentioned before, I hate lying. That stands for lies of omission as well. How long had they kept this from me? Almost as if on cue, Professor Clerc knocked at my bedroom door.

“Cavan?” He asked while I stumbled to hide the box and note.

“Yes, sir?” I answered hoping there was no reason for him to come into my room.

“It will be time for dinner shortly; please do your schoolwork beforehand as you have your lessons tonight.” I had forgotten about my piano lessons. Damn. I hated learning piano nearly as much as I hated the half dozen other instruments I was forced to try. Thankfully that year by Christmas, the piano teacher would give up. The Clercs would finally realize I am not a musician.

“Thank you, sir. I will get my work done.” As I said this, I had no intention of getting my schoolwork done. I took the box and note from the temporary hiding place I had put them in and continued my investigation. The box had no discernable lid or end seam. It had appeared to be carved from a single block. It couldn’t have been because something was inside. I could see it through the only hole in it, which was located at the center.

When the dinner bell rang, I placed the box in its hiding place once more and went dutifully downstairs. For
the next two weeks, I searched the object with every means I knew. Magnifiers revealed no cracks or seams. Researching the language did no good as it did not appear in any of the books in the study. I even went so far as to make rubbings of the exterior with conte crayon and paper. Taking these rubbings to the library on Adams University campus, I still had no luck. My interest in the box waned, and it began to collect dust in the corner of the hidden horn compartment of my Victrola.

Every so often throughout the next three years, I would take it out, look it over and place it back in its hiding place. Like my father, it was another mystery I thought would never be solved. It was left to wait for me to care again about solving that mystery.

The wait would be long.
Chapter 2

Acceptance

Nearly three years after I had intercepted Professor Clerc’s package, the mail was again of utmost importance. I was waiting to hear from colleges concerning acceptance. Adams University was an assured possibility as my guardians both taught there. I did not want to be at the oldest school in the North American Empire for the rest of my life. I had grown up in its shadow now for seventeen years. The fact still remained that I was Cavan P. Anstruther, son of Hermius T. Anstruther, Fa.D. It would be presumed I would follow in his footsteps, which at this point would not be good.

For two months I had checked the mail every afternoon since I had sent off my applications. Waiting for my chance to escape, I received it. It was an acceptance to the Rhode Island School of Design. The sight must have looked foolish as I danced up and down the stairs yelling and cheering. Thankfully for the neighbors, being March, the windows were still closed. No one was home with the exceptions of myself, the dog, and the fairies in the cage. Even the servants had gone for the afternoon. I had not a soul to share this joy.

The telephone was never leapt for faster.

“Operator, please connect me to Cambridge 44408. Thank you.” It rang for an eternity. I knew he must be home, he was always home just after school since he lived on
campus. My only friend at Cambridge Latin Academy, Jules Dermsford, had to know this as soon as possible. He was the son of our mathematics professor, Dr. Thomas Dermsford. I suppose that is what made the two of us good friends from an early age, both outcasts by our fathers.

It’s not that Dr. Dermsford was a bad teacher or particularly awful to his students, but his subject matter was advanced mathematics. The material alone was mind-numbing but what was worse was the droning nature that the Dr. used. One could easily feel as if a trance were being set on you when listening to a lecture.

The line on the other end picked up, and it was Dr. Dermsford.

“Hello, this is Dr. Thomas Dermsford.” came the dry and dull voice.

“Good afternoon, Doctor, is Jules at home? This is Cavan Anstruther.” Dr. Dermsford was, as I said a nice man, but believed in a high level of formality within his home and classroom.

“Yes, he is in his room attending to his studies. Allow me a moment to fetch him so he may speak with you.” It was almost like listening to pre-scripted responses whenever he would speak. As the need to proclaim my good fortune churned in my stomach and my head started to sicken me, Jules came on the line.
“Jules! Jules! I was accepted! I’m a RISD student!” burst out of my lips and through the wires to Jules’ ear across town.

“Fantastic! Now you can paint yourself silly! Not that you don’t already. So what does this mean? When do you leave? This is great, I’ll be right there.” The litany of questions Jules had rolling in his head began to spew forth. This was not unlike him. Very often in our years of palling around, I’d have to break his tangents into smaller bits so I could understand him.

“Slow down.” I said laughing. “I’m leaving in September. What do you mean you’ll be right there?”

He laughed and said as if he had completely forgotten, which he had, “I got my acceptance to Brown two days ago. I’m going to Providence, too!” This was the best news of all. Not only would I be leaving behind Cambridge, I was bringing with me the person I trusted most in the world.

We talked for at least two hours making plans for a flat together and how we would get there, etc. My life was about to change for the better, and I would move beyond my father’s legacy.

This brings events to more recent history. I was packed and ready to move myself, and my art - which is the truest extension of myself - away from Cambridge and those who recognized me. It was three weeks before my eighteenth birthday.
Professor Clerc constantly searched the outside of the house with his eyes waiting for something. His stare was almost a panic and when he asked the servants if any packages arrived *not* by post, they looked puzzled. I bring this up only because as I was packing I looked inside my Victrola and saw covered in dust the mysterious box my father had sent three years ago. Against my better judgment, I packed the box and note with my things. Professor Clerc would surely be upset if he found the item in my possession as it was obvious to me he was waiting for it to arrive.

As the movers arrived and placed my furniture into the carriage, I checked the house for last remnants of myself. Finding that I had everything in order, I wished Dr. Clerc a very fond farewell. She cried the tears of a mother seeing her youngest fly from the nest. I was not her son, but after nearly ten years of raising me she was my only real mother figure. I began to well up with her. This did nothing to stem the flow of tears into her handkerchief. Professor Clerc attempted quieting her, to no avail. He kissed her goodbye, and we both got into his Pierce-Arrow Touring Car, joining our passengers Dr. Dermsford and Jules. The trip and my future lay ahead.

The hilly streets of Providence greeted us hours later as we crept up the steep inclines and cobblestones toward Prospect Street. Both schools were situated on this hill and the flat Jules and I would share was on Benefit Street only a fraction of a kilometer away from either campus.
Instead of a flat we were greeted with a mansion. The home was an austere structure with tremendous architecture. It stood two stories tall with fine trim and brickwork surrounding the high windows.

“A Fresh Start”

I simply sat in awe at the amount of light that must be in the rooms during the day. It was an artist’s paradise. It had formerly belonged to Lord and Lady Huntington.
Although I wished to remove myself from all attachment to my father, the chance to live in such a remarkable home so close to school with no rent was not easy to pass by. Lord Huntington had died fifteen years ago, and Lady Huntington moved back to their large home in Boston Proper after his death. The house in Providence was left to my father, although he never lived in it.

Once he was presumed dead, or at the very least, missing indefinitely, I inherited the house (under the management of Professor Clerc). The story of Father’s attachment to Lord Huntington, one of the greatest inventors of the last century, goes back to Father’s childhood. There was very little of my father’s history he told me, but this much I knew; he and Lord Huntington were as close as father and son.

Lord Huntington was the most influential person in Father’s pursuit and study of science. Lord Huntington, despite his status and his extreme intellect did not, as one might suppose, sit in his Newport mansion or Boston Proper townhouse and twiddle his thumbs, asking servants to fetch him things. He had a firm belief in technology and teaching of science. For ten months of the year, he could be found at this address I was moving into on Benefit Street.

Lord Huntington was quite the character, though I had not managed to meet him. He was a jovial soul whose easy manner and wit made you forget that he was nobility.
He was an austere looking gentleman, refined and stout. What little hair he had left was snowy white and traced his head as a cloud around a mountain.

Father would say one of Huntington’s frequent quips was, “It is the cloud that keeps all of my dreams afloat. When it ceases to be there, I suppose I will stop thinking up all my gadgets and toys.”

You see, in addition to being a teacher at one of the province’s premier preparatory schools, Lord Huntington was as I said a great inventor. He had secured over 300 patents from the royal ministry of science including several products that were for everyday use such as, my personal favorite, the Brewston (a combination coffee grinder and brewer for the small kitchen). He designed it to accommodate his office at the school.

At Bishop Tripp Preparatory School for Young Men in Providence, Huntington’s chief duty was science teacher - specifically, physics and chemistry. The school had asked him on three separate occasions to be Headmaster, and each time he refused with exactly the same answer.

“Why would I voluntarily leave the encouragement and honing of young minds to instead contemplate how to run a small city full of adolescent and pubescent young men?” This is where he met my father.

Having had Huntington as a teacher in the upper school of Bishop Tripp, Father found he had ability with contemplating and following through with complex scientific
hypothesis. This did not go unnoticed to Lord Huntington. He made it his duty to encourage Young Hermius Anstruther in the ways of science.

Although Father was more concerned with the life sciences, Huntington persuaded him that all of his talents must be pursued. Art became a mandatory curriculum for my father as he showed a penchant for all forms of expression. This led to him aiding Lord Huntington in the drawing of several inventions for the patent office. My father drew almost all of the inventions Huntington submitted in his third and fourth year at Bishop Tripp.

In repayment of that, and since the Huntington’s own son had died tragically at a very young age, Lord Huntington willed this property to my father. So here I was to begin my new life away from the confinement of my past and the legacy of Dr. Anstruther’s pursuit of truth in the house of the man that taught him to pursue that truth. How ironic.
Chapter 3  Of Kings and Queens

“The great literature of the day is best studied by artists.” Jules remarked over lunch two weeks after classes began. “Or at least that is what my professor said yesterday. I tend to believe him. For instance, take Emerson. I am no slouch in my studies, but quotes like this baffle me: *Intellect annuls fate, so far as a man thinks, he is free.*” He flashed the book open to me so quickly I barely had time to look at it.

“Say that again, I didn’t catch it.” I stated.

“*Intellect annuls fate, so far as a man thinks, he is free.* What on earth does that mean? I can’t make heads nor tails of this philosophy and literature. Modern thought perplexes me. Give me numbers and hard facts about the universe, something I can define. This rambling on about life and fate and thought means nothing to me.” Jules continued just as I went to speak, “and to what thought does he refer. Give me a specific type. Should I think of science, philosophy or of the conquest of women if I am to avoid fate. Maybe I need to be an artist, create my own impression of what life is rather than try to define it this way. What do you think, Cavan?”

Flabbergasted that I had a chance to speak, I replied, “I doubt Emerson was thinking that hard about it. I believe he simply meant men who think in any way past the mundane have the ability to move past fate’s control, most especially what society expects of them. I for one hope that that’s true.”
Jules looked at me as if I had just defined and defied the universe all at once.

“What the hell does that mean?” It was the shortest sentence I ever heard him pronounce.

“It means I don’t wish to be subjected to what the world thinks is my fate. I am not like my father at all, and I will not become him despite the musings of society on the matter. I am going to follow my own path despite fate.” I continued to eat my lunch as Jules paused briefly and continued with a diatribe on another matter.

“I didn’t mean you, I meant what the hell does the headline on that paper of yours mean?” he clarified.

**EMPIRE TO JOIN WAR IN DEFENSE OF ANSTRUTHER HERESY**

The headline on the paper I was reading that day was why I always felt self-conscious about being an Anstruther. Fate seemed to work into the weavings of my life no matter where I fled. My father’s legacy – the Anstruther Heresy. For eighteen years it had been the most argued about scientific theory in the world, trumping Darwin for morally problematic discoveries.
There was both resentment and pride for my father every time I walked out into the wider world. I thought that all eyes were on me. It's paranoid, I know, but with justification. His life was far from quiet and reserved. From a very young age, Father was known worldwide. It was almost as if this force we call Fate was playing with him like a puppeteer having a good laugh at what the puppet was doing even though the control was in the hands of the one laughing.

Father was raised as any good Rhode Island mill rat - around machines. He was left at six years old with his grandmother, Ida Anstruther, a mill manager in Slaterstown, which was coincidentally about six kilometers from where I was now living.
His parents had left for a better life in the West with the intention of sending for my father after they had made their fortune by settling the area of the Americas that the then newly coronate Queen Isabella had deemed, “Too vast and wild for any but the most intrepid of souls to settle.” to any successful such soul lands that he or she claimed were rewarded as the sole property of their family for as long as the family had a line of inheritance. This sparked many amateur explorers such as my grandparents, the Anstruthers, to leave home in search of land and wealth.

When Father was young he preferred the outdoors and the life that nature provided away from gears, water, steam and industry which he considered dirty and useless. He had imagined himself out west in the wild with his parents. His grandmother kept him safe from the workings of factory life as much as she could.

He never ran a shuttle beneath a loom as many of the youngsters his own age who did frequently got caught in the mechanisms. As can be imagined, the results of this were gruesome for the machine and the child, which is why Ida kept her only grandson away from those inner workings. Father was just fine sitting in Ida’s office with his books and drawings. When he was eight, my father’s parents finally sent word to his grandmother that he was to join them on a farm in the newly established Isabella Province in the town they helped build known as Liberty. For four years Father lived there in the wild, playing from dawn to dusk. When he
became strong enough, he worked with his parents in the fields. This was where he had always wished to be.

That fall, a band of marauders from the next settlement was terrorizing the area: burning crops, killing livestock, destroying homes and causing general havoc. The Anstruthers were not people to put up with such things. The history of these events is well recorded, but not from the perspective Father had told to me.

His parents organized a force within Liberty against the encroaching settlers and were met with a heavily armed and deadly force. Being twelve and not listening to his parents, who told him to stay home, my father had followed them to the site of battle. The Anstruthers and twenty other settlers prepared for a fight.

They were overwhelmed within the first hour by forty men on horseback who shot them down in cold blood to take their land. My father, at age twelve, sat in the tall grasses and daylilies surrounded and shrouded by the flowers and fairies that always intrigued him. Shots rang out, rapidly at first, mixing with wild screams. The gunfire then slowed as there were few left to kill.

Father poked his head out from his hiding place to see my grandfather running with Father's mother in his arms. There was so much blood, my father wasn't sure whether it was my grandfather or grandmother who was bleeding. In the most tragic of circumstances, my grandfather spotted his son and began to call to him to run. The last
memory of his parents my father had was his face being spattered with their blood as a final shot passed through my grandfather's back, out his belly and stopped in the body of my grandmother.

Mr. and Mrs. Ignacio F. Anstruther, parents of Hermius T. Anstruther, died in an embrace on the field of Liberty before their son's twelve-year-old eyes. It was July 4, 1876. The Liberty Massacre was the worst civil dispute anyone had seen in the Empire's brief history. I was to later find out that it was the single most significant event in my father's life.

When word finally reached Queen Isabella two months later, she sent a battalion of 100 men to seek out and arrest the perpetrators of such a crime. Only ten were ever found. These men were hanged in the squares of each city they had come from and were left to rot on the ropes for three days. The children left behind, those that survived the ensuing atrocity: *The Deaths of the Cherubim*, were brought to their respective next of kin.

*The Deaths of the Cherubim* was the name given by the newspapers to the story of what happened when the marauders finished off the last of the adults. They took Father to the town with them, and the raiding of the homes and farm buildings began. Children were routed from every home and assembled in the town square. All children too small to work were left to starve outside the limits of the settlement.
When Her Majesty’s battalion arrived, the remains of seventeen children between the ages of six months and seven years old were found outside the settlement limits, the older children clutching the bones of the babies.

The Queen awarded each surviving child $2,000.00 a year until the age of twenty-one and demanded that the guardians of those children be responsible for “a proper North American upbringing in the manner Her Majesty expected.” To set the proper example, the Queen took in two boys whose entire families were slaughtered. Unable to bare an heir of her own, James and Andrew became next in line to the throne.

Most of the remaining sixteen children were tended to as the Queen had ordered. Father was one of them. Ida took him in again, and being a manager, taught Young Hermius about the proper way to look after an income. She also made sure that his education was taken care of and sent him to Bishop Tripp for upper school as soon as he was of age. It was there that the relationship with Lord Huntington began as I’ve mentioned.

So fate placed him in the public eye once again with his involvement in Huntington’s inventions. To have so young an artist producing such exquisite work for the patent office certainly gained attention. It wasn’t long before the discovered some of my father’s work and published it citing him as a teenage prodigy. All of this never got the best of my father’s sense of humility and purpose. He continued on his
way with the pursuit of science, using the monies from the royal bank given him for his suffering as a child to pay his tuition at Brown University’s School of Biology specializing in Fairy zoology.

The problem was not with who my father was or where he came from as much as what he was - curious. Darwin was curious and set to work on a theory that blew apart the mind of all who dared to read it. But Darwin was wise enough to never mention fairies in his *Origin of the Species*. Darwin knew better than to broach the subject of fairy evolution since it is such an improbable occurrence that two species - we and they - look so similar but are obviously so different. My father concentrated on this, studied it and even went so far as to attempt to define the reasoning behind it. This pursuit led to a litany of circumstances that have both convoluted and direct ways to the state of the world today.

We are now in the midst of this “Great War” because of him. Well, it isn’t as though Father was the one to get the Empire involved in it directly, but knowing the king from their shared suffering at the hands of murderers when they were young did place many to question the King’s motives. Small things from one’s past can cause scandal if you are unfortunate enough to be in the public eye. Large things whether they are good or bad cause questions, which are often worse than scandals. I read the article attached to the headline that had gotten Jules’ attention.
King James II had declared war on Germany as he put it, “To defend the truth as revealed by one of the North American Empire’s most respected minds.” He continued with his most infamous quotation to date, “The truth shall always be defended by an Empire founded upon men searching for truth, equality and justice in this world.”

What happens when the world doesn’t want to hear the truth? What’s worse is when the world doesn’t want to believe the truth.