

Detective Mathison detested coming here.

Skellig Alley, or "Scumbag Alley" as the guys in the Salvation City Police Department liked to call it, was not the most pleasant place to be, for this was the home of the half dead and the forgotten. A putrid stench of excrement and vomit ranked the air, in which no matter where you turned, filled up your nostrils and pushed down your throat.

Whispers, quiet utterings and incoherent babblings in an alien language were picked up in fox's hearing. Pairs of glazed suspicious eyes hidden in shadow followed the grizzled vulpine detective as he exited his parked black Sedan.

A cold paranoia struck him. Even though his SCPD badge was hidden from view, deep inside he knew that Skellig's residents were aware of what he was, a cop.

The seeds of distrust between Skellig and the authorities were sown five years ago. Two rookies eager for a quick promotion attempted an unauthorised drug raid in one of the north-western apartments. A long battle of a shootout followed and in the midst of the chaos, one of the rookies shot an innocent bystander, an innocent ten year old girl. Her death brought shock-waves throughout the city.

The frenzied circus, that was the journalistic media, blamed the SCPD for being incompetent and reckless, whilst at the same time, slurred the people of Skellig Alley as society's lepers and the cancer of the city. Tensions ran hot but it was after the rookies' disciplinary hearing that everything exploded. A one year suspension with full pay was nothing more but a slap on the wrist. That was the day Skellig's faith in the SCPD diminished into non-existence.

Rioting, looting and murder spilt out in the surrounding areas. Robert Thompson, a father of two, was dragged out of his car and bludgeoned half to death with a baseball bat, leaving him with severe brain damage for the rest of life. Kevin Wu, a hard working shopkeeper, was killed by a gunshot in the throat as he defended his shop from armed robbers. Leanne Taylor, a nineteen year old hairdresser intern was dumped and stripped naked in a car park with barbed wire knotted around her throat. Bruises were found around the groin and buttocks in her post-mortem. The daily lists of Skellig's crimes became longer, uglier and bloodier.

The rampage went on for six days after the hearing, until the rookie who shot the girl, out of self-guilt or martyrdom, hung himself in his home's basement. Seemingly satisfied with the rookie's death, the outward violence dimmed and finally stopped. However, inside their territory, Skellig Alley was a different matter.

Anyone that wasn't one of them was considered an outsider, an enemy that couldn't be trusted and if one crossed into their territory was in danger of being assaulted and maimed. The Mayor deemed that Skellig was a hazard and prohibited all government and maintenance works within the Alley. This had led an already poor area of the city to steep into decline, turning it into a demoralised filthy trodden cesspit.

Hallow
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"Damn you Tom," the detective cursed, "Couldn't you have picked a better place than this?" Matthison walked to the grim lit entrance. The apartment was a worn, crumbling monolith of twelve floors high. Windows, half broken and stained, were shuttered off by rotted nailed blocks of wood, hindering curious bystanders to peer at the depraved lunacy within.

The fox reached the beaten graffiti stained door. Anxiety swelled and stabbed his gut in his like a blazing hot knife. "Here goes," he muttered to himself, grabbing the rusty handle and pulled the door open. Taking a long sigh, he stepped inside, knowing full well that level of danger he was in had jumped one hundred fold.