

A New Contemporary Resurrection

Chapter 1

Don't ever ask how I ended up in this strange life situation. Ok, it's fairly explainable, with good reason, I swear. I see that I can't avoid it now, so well, here it is.

Why, do you ask, are you able to own a Douglas DC-7C, and several cars, and still live in a shabby, run-down urban apartment that's the textbook example of a modern-day slum? Not to mention the successful retired founder/owner of an incredibly profitable stationery company, and owns several restaurants, and delis in the city, two houses rented out to tenants, and two auto service stations in said city as well? Well, my dear, the answer is simple. And it is something that runs deep.

You see, one of my childhood dreams was to escape this grim city that I was raised in. And I always remembered my childhood dream. They say nature has the effect of calming nerves, and they're not wrong. I've spent spare time on nature walks, and, hell, it's worked for me. But I'm still stuck to this damn city, chained by the uncertainty of where I really want to go. That's why I keep to the apartment that I hate, to remind/encourage me to flee the city that, forget got tired of, never enjoyed in the first place. As for the Douglas DC-7, it's a more warming story: on one of my outings, I drove past a boneyard. Old aircraft lined the boneyard, to no one's surprise, but I stopped in my tracks (if you can stop in your tracks in a moving car) spotting a Douglas DC-7. I went into the boneyard to ask for more.

Pulling in, I asked the general manager about all the information on the plane.

"It's a Douglas DC-7C. Flown a bit, then converted to freighter. It's scheduled to be broken up day after tomorrow on Wednesday" he said

"Can I still buy it?" I asked

"Well, sure" he replied curtly

I bought it off, and a few good months later, flew it to the city municipal airport, where I rented a hangar, then temporarily modified because the DC-7 was a project plane. I was going to use the hangar to modify the freighter back into a passenger aircraft, including re-fitting windows into the fuselage. I also uprated the cooling system since the primary issue with the aircraft's Wright R3350-988TC18EA1-2 Duplex-Cyclone engines (the DC-7 used Wright Duplex-Cyclone engines, the same engines used on their rival's aircraft the Lockheed Constellation, essentially sharing engine families because Pratt & Whitney, the manufacturer of the DC-6's Twin Wasp engines, did not offer anything larger than the Twin Wasps except for the Wasp Major, which was proven to be heavily unreliable via the so-said Wasp Major's application in the Boeing 377 Stratocruiser) were the fact that they were known to overheat, thanks to the demand for power surpassing all else in those planes, hence I uprated the cooling system so the engines wouldn't easily overheat. The conversion was a success, and I took

it out for a test flight. After it was registered, I would take it out on recreational flights, not unlike a Cessna, but the plane is far bigger and needs a flight engineer.

What, I was a certified pilot, and flight engineer, and I'm not doing flying for a career, so those skills would be quite wasted otherwise. I can guarantee it's for recreational flying because firstly, there is no hired flying crew. If it was a private jet type aircraft (called so because it's a piston propeller aircraft), I would certainly hire other people to fly it for me, wouldn't I? and secondly, the cabin was arranged in a commercial airline configuration, complete with overhead cabins. Mind you, it's for historical reasons, although why wouldn't I arrange it differently if it was for executive transport? The cars were also bought, but obviously buying cars is more commonplace than buying a plane. As for the cars, I had 4: a 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air, a 1969 Mercury Cyclone Spoiler II Dan Gurney Special, a Datsun Fairlady Z (280 ZX here in the U.S), and the one I was currently using, a 1970 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona.

And here I was again, restless, on a late afternoon-evening, wanting to leave the city for more rural lands. And so I got up, got to my car, and drove off to the airport. It was not when I took off, not even when I approached cruising altitude, but until I was some hundred miles west did I not realise I was flying to nowhere. What in the actual fuck was I thinking? I was getting tired, and felt I needed to stretch, and remembering that I was in a remote place, that there were no airports nearby, I said, fuck it, I'm gonna land on anywhere with the width for a DC-7, and length for take-off. I throttled back the engine slightly to save on fuel, in case there were no suitable landing spots, and so thus I would have to turn back in that case.

I spotted a nice, long runway, although it looked a bit worn, I was confident I could safely use it. My radar data indicated that I was a good distance from home, but I still had enough fuel to return. I touched down, noticing a shape disappear beside me, and slowed to a halt, turning around 360 degrees so I can go straight up during departure take-off. Radio indicated there was no ATC here. I taxied to the aircraft parking spot. I then opened the door to realise there was no stairway. I quietly muttered to myself, "dammit", but I really wanted to go outside. I unironically muttered to myself "I never regretted this ever", and decided to wing it (aviation pun unironically unintended), and jumped out (careful to slide downwards from the door as slowly as I can so that I landed on my feet, and then tumbled forward some), landing on dirt, and deciding that I'll figure out how to board the plane later. Brushing dirt off until all of it came off, I quietly massaged the spots on my arm so they won't bruise, which occurs when blood pools under your skin.

I walked in the direction the shadow disappeared to, curious to who (definitely a who) it was that moved. Jogging in the direction, I saw a shape in the distance, and ran faster towards it. I caught up and saw that it was a girl, my age, and running like she was terrified to death about something.

"Hey, wait" I said

She kept running. I continued, until she seemed to stop, and faced me, arms crossed, apparently trying to scowl, and glare at me, but adorably blushing too much in embarrassment.

"Hey. Why'd you run?" I said

She tried to speak, but was too overwhelmed by blushing to talk.

“Huh?” I prompted

She spoke quietly, but I was able to hear her almost whisperingly mutter “you entered an empty spot that I always retreat to”

While I was talking, my mind said, she looks familiar. And by now, my mind clicked. It was Kiersten Davison, my childhood crush. She returned the feelings, so the crush was mutual. We left a long time ago, and I was heartbroken thinking I’ll never see her again. And my heart started to soar.

“Kiersten?” I said

She seemed to snap out of her attempted show of anger, and said, “huh?”

“Kiersten, it’s me, Sun DaLuo. You know, Levi Sun? You were comfortable calling me either name?” I said

Her eyes widened. “Hey... chubbo (personal nickname used to refer to my chubby face, which I still have to some degree, making me look prepubescent)!!”

“Yuh-huh” I said

We threw ourselves at each other, and met with a long overdue hug. We embraced for some time, and released very reluctantly. We sat down in the dirt.

“What you doing here?” I asked

“Long story. But I know you love long stories” she replied

I chuckled. “I do” I said

I got up. “But where do you live? Now at least” I said

“Small town. Dunno how I ended up with this unlikely outcome, especially after you hear the story” she replied

“Huh” I said curtly

She began to tell me her story. “Around 5 years ago,” she said, “I was hitchhiking, and just wandering the country. I was going random places, because I got desperate for work, so I figured a trek around the country will inevitably get me a new job. Well one day, I met a guy named Lewis Clements. He drove this old car. It was very weak, but intact. We went down this highway exit that was worn, and I almost worried it’ll fall apart, but we made it. I decided I’ll stay in this town, because I like it”.

“Did you find work here?” I asked, believing firmly that not finding any work will eventually make her leave

“Of course. I occasionally sweep for the general store, but not always. It’s virtually a ghost town. Now, I like small towns so much that ghost towns excite me, but no outside money is seriously deteriorating this town. It’s falling apart” she said

“Take me to town, then” I said

“Ok, but I don’t talk much, to them at least – I keep to myself there...” she said

“Hey, no worries! It’s more fulfilling to do the introducing yourself!” I said

“You know, you were the only shy kid back in school” she said

“I know. How else did we become close? Remember how one day back in Kindergarten during recess we ended up in the same corner-” I said

“- and we shrunk away from each other, and then saw the timidity in each other’s eyes, then for some reason huddled closer because we seemed to be magnetically attracted to the sheer shyness emanating from our eyes? And then we kept huddling together every day, and then we talked a bit, and then talked more, then we hung out together? Yeah, those were the good old days” she said, finishing my sentence

“Yeah. It’s too good to see you again. I thought I’ll never see you again; my heart broke when you left” I said

“Same back to you. And I also felt the same way when I left you” she said

“Oh cool, thanks. Take me to town, now” I said

“Ok” she said

We got up, brushed off the little dirt that was on us (we had carefully sat down, so contact with the ground was minimal, driving the chance of stuck-on dirt to a minimum), and set off. I followed Kiersten until we reached a town, which we can safely say was the town Kiersten was talking about.

“This is it?” I asked

She nodded quietly

The town was indeed falling apart. The road was beyond worn, cracked, with chunks of asphalt missing in some places, the concrete sidewalk worn down to the reinforcing stones that were normally set in the middle. I pulled out the Sony Xperia XZ1 phone that I used for a good while now, and saw that there was no service. I sighed, acknowledging that it was part of a deteriorating town.

She pulled me into a small building. “This is the general store I was talking to you about, where I worked” she said

A tall guy at the counter peered at Kiersten, and said “hey. I don’t recall telling you there’s work, Kiersten”

“I know. You didn’t. I’m just introducing my friend around here, boss” she replied

He peered at me, and said in surprise, “Oh, I see! How’d you get him?”

“Dropped by. Flew in by the old airfield a few distances from here. Lucky he’s an old friend” she said

“Oh, that airfield? Why would he land there?” he said

“I got spontaneous, and decided to land before I flew past the coast onto the sea” I said

“Oh ok. The airfield’s close to the sea, so, yeah, I can see you landing here” the lean grey fox replied

“Welp, nice to see you. Sun DaLuo, or Levi Sun” I said

“Kelton Royston” he replied, shaking my hand

We continued onwards to a small diner. I could tell that this place was where she will be too shy to talk in there, so I said, “wait”. We paused, and I floofed her.

“So good to holding my favourite Caracal after all these years” I said

“Same with holding my most favourite Black-Backed Jackal, well, most favourite Jackal all around” she said, floofing me back.

We continued to the diner/bar. Entering it, I was greeted by 4 people, and someone at the counter. The looked at Kiersten, then at me.

“Well, look who the quiet one dragged in” said the guy behind the counter. “Who are you?”

“A friend of Kiersten” I replied. “What about you?”

“John Hyde” that serval replied. “You?”

“Sun DaLuo, or Levi Sun” I replied curtly

The four went up and introduced themselves

“Saul Michaels” said the first guy. I scrutinized the stately-looking physique of that Maned Wolf, and shook his hand

“Hadassah Watson” said the second one. She was a pretty nice-looking Lynx, I’m just saying

“Hephzibah Lawrence” said the third one. I gave that rather plainly-dressed Corsac Fox a firm hug. I love hugs

“Zebedee Tyler” said the fourth one. “Yuh-huh” I said back rather curtly to that Snow Leopard

“So,” said John, “how’d you get into a one-horse town like this?” he said

“Landed by the coastal airfield a bit ways from here” I replied

“Oh wow. Complete chance, and accident you stumbled upon here, then” he said

I curtly nodded in reply

We continued onwards to the town’s library. Kiersten introduced me to the librarian, Carson Sharpe. “Nice to see a fresh face in town. Hope to see you around here” he said.

“Not exactly a place that will see me often, but I’ll drop by whenever I need something” I said bluntly to the sprucely-looking Blanford’s Fox

We continued onwards to an old house. “That’s Lewis Clements’s house. Remember? He’s the guy who is the reason why I know this town exists”

We approached the house, and Kiersten knocked. A sharp-dressed man opened the door. “Ah Kiersten, good to see you again”

“You too Lewis. I’m introducing my friend” she said

Lewis looked at me, scrutinising every inch of the Black-Backed Jackal that is me. “Huh. How’d you find this town?” he asked

“Accident. Landed on the airfield a bit of ways from here” I replied

“Well, glad to see you. I am eager to see you more around this town. Forgive me for sounding like an old grump, considering my age, but I’m cynical of newcomers, notwithstanding the fact that we don’t see much newcomers here” he said

“Actually, I’m living in the city for now. Might seriously move to here full-time” I said

“Oh” he said curtly

The Leopard let us in, and I settled on the couch. “So, mister-”

“Oh no, no need to be so formal. ‘Lewis’ will do” he said

“Ok Lewis, then” I said, “I faintly remembering Kiersten (Lewis raised his eyebrows in surprise to the display of such attention to small details, but Kiersten, of course, didn’t) saying that your car is weak. I’d like to see the car” I said

He shrugged in response. "Sure. Garage this way" he said

He opened a door that led to his garage. Upon opening, it was indeed a sorry sight. The car was missing a headlight, and heavily rusted, almost removing all trace that the car was maroon in colour; the cloth top was alright, but I felt it could use some sprucing up, as the car's front, and cloth top on both sides were missing emblems, but as Kiersten mentioned that the car was weak, I knew the car's problems were past skin-deep.

"It's a 1995 Lincoln Town Car" I observed. "I'll try, and fix it for you when I can" I said

"Well, thanks, kid" replied Lewis. "I used to be the town's taxi, and limo, and still am, but a fix would really help things out, if you can fix it"

I noticed the cynicism was, at the end of the sentence, removed, and sounded placed in there by force. Well, I'm glad I was warming up to the geezer.

We headed to Town Hall, where she introduced me to the mayor, George Johnson.

"Ah, pleased to see a new face" he said

"Sun DaLuo, or Levi Sun" I said

"George Johnson" he replied, taking my hand

"Glad to see everyone so nice to me in town" I said pleasingly pointedly at that shrewd-looking Cougar

"I'm glad everyone's a neighbour, including new faces" he said in a pleased tone

"I can see that" I said curtly

"Say, how'd you find this town?" he asked

"I randomly landed on the nearest airfield, which happened to be this one" I explained

"Oh. That one's originally projected to be an airfield for all aircraft, maybe even a small airport, but that all vaporised, and it's now that" he said

"I wonder how I'm gonna board my plane. I need a stairway, though" I mused

"Oh, well, in the nearby hangar, there is a set of stairways. Use the one that's right for you" he said

"Wow, gee, thanks!!" I exclaimed gratefully

"No problem" he replied

“Yeah” I replied

“Enjoying this town?” he asked

“Yep. I enjoy it really much” I said

“Glad to hear that” he replied

“See you soon” I said

“You too. You too” he said

Walking onto the deteriorated road after leaving, I turned to Kiersten while walking, and asked, “Where do you live?”

“Oh, behind the general store, in a backyard shed” she said

If I was drinking water at that time, I surely would’ve spat it out. “What??” I exclaimed

“Oh come on, do you think that the general store’s just for work?” she said

“Living behind the general store, for the last 4-5 years?” I asked incredulously

“Yep” she replied curtly

“Surely Kelton would accommodate in his residence?” I said

“He did, but I declined. I’m not fond of the shed, no, not at all, but at least it’s all to me. Roommates are so damn overrated” she said

I agreed with her positioned. I always hard-lined “no roommates” philosophy whenever I chose residence. I always loved alone. The joys of solitude.

I recalled a decrepit old house a good distance from the airfield, and said, “why not renovate the worn house by the airfield, and live in it?”

She chuckled. “Too much hassle. Renovation’s not really my forte, so, yeah” she said

We walked back to the airfield. “I’m not coming back for the next 4 days” I said

“Why not?” she said

“I succinctly recall a heavy fog while reading radar yesterday about the whole United States. This part of Oregon, discovered by matching my radar, and other recorded navigational data of my flight path, to mapped locations (airports, airfields, towns, etc), will have heavy fog for some days or so, according to fog description. Did I know I would find you here? Absolutely not, but I did read every advisory for regions across this country about inclement weather, and yours says heavy fog. Now, this airfield has no PAPI (Precision Approach Path Indicator) lights either, and even if it did,

it's useless in heavy fog, and no fucking ILS (Instrument Landing Systems), so I can't perform a blind landing, unless I REALLY want to risk crashing... so, yeah" I said

"Oh" she said in realisation

"I'll be back as soon as I can, ok? I'll do my best" I swore

"Ok. I know" she replied

We embraced each other, and squashed our lips together. All we had to do was just suck in air, and it would be the dictionary definition of kissing.

But we didn't. Just smushed our lips together, rubbing them said lips into each other.

I went, and wheeled a stairway to my DC-7. After boarding it, I kicked the stairway away to distance it from the plane so it won't scratch up the aircraft when I reversed it (since piston propellers had no reverse thrusters like jet engines, the landing gear had built-in reversing systems). I taxied to the runway, took off, and flew back to the city.

END OF CHAPTER 1