Legend (Legend #1)

Legend is the electrifying first installment in Marie Lu's bestselling dystopian trilogy, set in a war-torn future where the United States has fractured into two warring nations: the oppressive Republic and the rebellious Colonies. The story unfolds through the dual perspectives of two unforgettable protagonists:

- **June Iparis**, a 15-year-old military prodigy from the Republic's elite, groomed for success and loyalty to the regime.
- **Day**, the Republic's most wanted criminal, a street-smart rebel fighting to save his family from poverty and persecution.

When June's brother is murdered, she's tasked with hunting down Day—but as their paths collide, they uncover dark government secrets that force them to question everything they believe in. Packed with high-stakes action, political intrigue, and a slow-burn enemies-to-lovers romance, *Legend* redefines YA dystopian fiction with its morally complex world and unforgettable characters.

Chapter 1: Part One: Day 1

The chapter opens with the protagonist, Day, reflecting on his status as the Republic's most wanted criminal. Despite being alive, he allows his mother to believe he's dead for her safety. His Wanted poster frequently appears on Los Angeles' JumboTrons, showcasing exaggerated crimes and varying descriptions of his appearance, highlighting the Republic's ignorance about him. Day takes pride in his anonymity, which undermines the government's authority and fuels their desperation to capture him. The propaganda-filled cityscape contrasts sharply with his hidden existence,

emphasizing the oppressive regime he resists.

Day observes his family's neighborhood from a derelict apartment, accompanied by Tess, his younger companion. The sector is ravaged by plague, and soldiers conduct invasive inspections, marking infected homes with red Xs. Day's anxiety grows as he watches them approach his family's house, fearing they'll be flagged. Tess urges him to leave the city temporarily, but he refuses, determined to ensure his family's safety. Their dialogue reveals Day's stubborn loyalty and Tess's protective concern, underscoring the tension between survival and familial duty.

A chilling scene unfolds as soldiers execute a plague victim, showcasing the Republic's brutal efficiency. Day admires their advanced weaponry but acknowledges the risk of using traceable guns, relying instead on makeshift weapons. The encounter reinforces the ever-present danger of their world. Meanwhile, Tess attempts to distract Day by asking about the gifts he's brought for his family, including goggles for his brother John. These stolen supplies represent Day's desperate efforts to provide for his loved ones despite his outlaw status.

The chapter closes with Day's bittersweet reflection on his inability to reunite with his family openly. His gifts—practical items like food and shoes—symbolize his enduring connection to them, even as he remains a ghost in their lives. The looming inspection of his family's home heightens the suspense, leaving readers anxious about their fate. Day's resilience and Tess's unwavering support paint a poignant picture of survival and sacrifice in a dystopian world.

Chapter 2: Part One: June 1

The chapter opens with June Iparis, a fifteen-year-old prodigy at Drake University, sitting in the dean secretary's office after being pulled from drill class for scaling a nineteen-story building during lunch. The incident has drawn attention from her older classmates, reinforcing her reputation as the Republic's favored but troublesome genius. June observes the office's details with her sharp intellect, noting the dean secretary's injured wrist and the muted news headlines about military conflicts. Her casual remark about the injury comes off as taunting, escalating tensions with Ms. Whitaker, who reprimands her for arrogance and warns that her behavior won't be tolerated in her future military career.

June defiantly reflects on her exceptional achievements, including her perfect Trial score and early admission to Drake, justifying her actions as self-improvement for the Republic's war effort. She compares her climbing skills to Day, a notorious criminal, questioning how the military can defeat enemies like him without pushing limits. Her confidence borders on arrogance, but it's rooted in her belief that her abilities serve a greater purpose. The confrontation with Ms. Whitaker highlights June's isolation—respected but not truly connected to her peers, who gossip about her exploits rather than engage with her.

The arrival of June's brother, Captain Metias Iparis, shifts the dynamic. Metias, dressed in full military regalia, is visibly angry but maintains a polite demeanor with Ms. Whitaker. He apologizes for June's behavior, acknowledging her repeated infractions, including leaving campus and attracting helicopters during her stunt. June's sharp retort about their deceased parents underscores her complex relationship with authority and her brother's role as her guardian. The tension between them is palpable, yet Metias's presence commands respect, silencing the curious students outside.

As Metias escorts June away, her classmates buzz with excitement, asking about her climb. June reveals she reached fourteen floors, further solidifying her legendary status. The chapter closes with June and Metias passing the drill class, where students train for military assignments. June’s detachment from her peers is evident—she’s a spectacle, not a friend. The scene underscores her precociousness and the isolating weight of her genius, set against the backdrop of a militarized society preparing for war.



Chapter 3: Part One: Day 2

The chapter opens with a flashback to the narrator's childhood, revealing a traumatic incident where his father was brutally beaten by police during a routine inspection. At seven years old, the narrator retaliated by setting fire to the police headquarters using a gasoline-coated ice ball launched from a slingshot, an act that went unpunished. This early defiance hints at his rebellious nature and sets the stage for his later actions. The narrator reflects on his mother’s hopes for his success, contrasting them with his current notoriety, suggesting a life far removed from her aspirations.

The scene shifts to the present, where the narrator, disguised and bloodied, lurks near Los Angeles Central Hospital. His meticulous preparation—black-dyed hair, pig’s blood, and hidden knives—underscores his determination to infiltrate the heavily guarded building. His target is the windowless third-floor laboratory, a place he knows from a past visit tied to his failed "Trial," a mysterious event that nearly cost him his life. The hospital’s luxury and military presence highlight the stark divide between the elite and the impoverished, a recurring theme in the narrator’s world.

As he observes the hospital’s security, the narrator notes the arrival of Captain Metias, a commanding officer overseeing the perimeter. The narrator’s plan hinges on blending in as an injured patient, and he successfully manipulates the hospital staff by feigning distress. Despite being searched, his hidden knives go undetected, allowing him to gain entry. His internal monologue reveals resentment toward the privileged, who receive preferential treatment, further emphasizing the societal inequality that fuels his defiance.

Inside the hospital, the narrator navigates the sterile, overcrowded waiting room, noting the soldiers’ positions and biding his time. After a calculated wait, he stages a stumble to distract the guards, using his feigned injury to secure directions to the restroom. His performance is convincing, and the soldiers’ disdain for him works in his

favor. The chapter ends with the narrator poised to advance his mission, his sharp observations and strategic thinking underscoring his resourcefulness in a hostile environment.



Chapter 4: Part One: June 2

The chapter opens with a nostalgic flashback where June, the narrator, recalls a childhood memory of her brother Metias missing his military induction ceremony to care for her while she was sick. Despite her protests, Metias stays by her side, showcasing their close bond. The scene highlights the oppressive atmosphere of the Republic, with loudspeakers blaring propaganda and Metias's unwavering loyalty to the regime. Their tender sibling dynamic is underscored by playful banter and June's admiration for her brother, who reassures her he will never leave her.

Years later, the narrative shifts to the present, where June, now a disciplined trainee, is abruptly informed by Thomas, a fellow soldier, that Metias has been killed. The news leaves June numb, her world collapsing into silence as she mechanically follows Thomas to a waiting jeep. Her internal monologue repeats the thought that Metias should have taken her with him, reflecting her grief and disbelief. The description of the dystopian city—power outages, propaganda screens, and militarized streets—paints a grim backdrop to her personal tragedy.

As they drive through the darkened city, June observes the stark contrasts of their society: impoverished workers, vigilant soldiers, and the ever-present threat of rebel attacks. The journey to the hospital tower, where Metias's body lies, is marked by tension and unease. June's sharp analytical skills surface when she deduces that the killer escaped, noting details like the broken window and lack of ambulances. Her detachment contrasts with Thomas's hesitant concern, emphasizing her struggle to process the loss.

The chapter closes with June's arrival at the hospital, surrounded by military personnel and chaos. Her focus on the crime scene details—such as the height of the jump and the failed pursuit—hints at her determination to uncover the truth. The emotional weight of Metias's death lingers, setting the stage for June's impending quest for

justice in a world where loyalty and survival are constantly at odds.



Chapter 5: Part One: Day 3

The chapter opens with the protagonist, Day, experiencing a vivid dream of his childhood home. He recalls his younger brother Eden drawing on the floor, while he and John attempt to fix a broken radio—a relic from their father. Their mother, injured from scavenging, struggles to prepare dinner. The dream turns ominous as Eden's drawings shift to depict soldiers invading their home, jolting Day awake. He finds himself in an unfamiliar bedroom, injured and disoriented, with Tess tending to his wounds. The dream and reality blur, highlighting the tension between past nostalgia and present danger.

Day's physical pain mirrors his emotional turmoil as he grapples with the aftermath of a failed mission to secure medicine for his family. Tess informs him that some supplies reached his mother, but Eden has fallen ill with the plague. Despite the setback, Day clings to hope, relieved that the medicine bought them time. Tess reassures him, emphasizing their resilience and the possibility of future opportunities. The exchange underscores their deep bond and shared determination to protect Day's family in a world ravaged by disease and oppression.

Their refuge is revealed to be the home of a stranger, a grieving father who lost his son to the plague. The man's hesitant kindness reflects the pervasive sorrow of their society, yet his fear of authorities forces him to limit their stay. Tess tends to Day's injuries, revealing cracked ribs but no breaks, while Day laments losing his weapons. The interaction with the stranger underscores the precariousness of their existence, where trust is scarce and survival depends on fleeting alliances.

The chapter closes with Tess returning silver bullets she salvaged, a small but meaningful gesture that reaffirms their partnership. Day reflects on their history, acknowledging how Tess has grown from a helpless orphan into his indispensable ally. Their quiet camaraderie contrasts with the chaos outside, offering a moment of

respite. The chapter masterfully intertwines personal loss, physical pain, and fleeting hope, painting a poignant picture of resilience in a dystopian world.



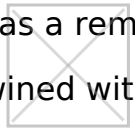
Chapter 6: Part One: June 3

The chapter opens with June reflecting on the unexpected kindness of Commander Jameson, who assists in arranging her brother Metias's funeral—an unusual gesture for a soldier's superior. The funeral is held in an opulent setting, adorned with white lilacs and Republic symbols, where mourners, including June, dress in pristine white to honor the dead. June's elaborate gown and makeup symbolize her grief and love for Metias, while the tradition of wearing white traces back to volcanic ash covering the deceased, a poignant detail Metias once shared with her. The scene underscores the Republic's rigid customs and June's personal sorrow amidst the formalities.

As June navigates the funeral, she interacts with guests, including Metias's colleagues, professors, and even distant classmates from Drake University. Their condolences feel hollow to her, but she responds with practiced grace, masking her pain. The presence of her classmates surprises her, as she had struggled to form connections due to her youth and demanding academic load. June's internal monologue reveals her isolation and the performative nature of the event, where her outward composure contrasts with her inner turmoil. Her attire, though admired by others, is solely for Metias, emphasizing her deep personal loss.

The narrative shifts to June's encounter with Thomas, a fellow soldier who offers awkward but genuine support. Their brief exchange highlights Thomas's care for her, though neither can fully articulate their emotions. The funeral proceedings drag on, with June seated near the altar, her attention divided between the Republic's symbols and Metias's coffin. The arrival of Chian, a former mentor to Metias, disrupts her composure. Chian's overly familiar demeanor and insincere praise for Metias unsettle June, especially when he reminisces about mentoring him—a period Metias had despised and abruptly ended.

Chian’s condescending remarks and inappropriate physical contact provoke June’s silent rage, though she maintains a polite facade. His mention of Metias’s reassignment and June’s perfect Trial score feels manipulative, hinting at underlying tensions. The chapter climaxes as Chian reveals June’s upcoming mission to track Metias’s killer, a task framed as an honor but one that feels like a cruel twist. Thomas’s subtle reassurance under the table offers June momentary solace, but Chian’s presence lingers as a reminder of the Republic’s cold bureaucracy and the personal vendettas intertwined with her grief.



Chapter 7: Part One: Day 4

The chapter follows the protagonist as they navigate the oppressive and dystopian streets of the Republic of America, disguised among factory workers to avoid detection. Despite their healing wounds, they move through crowded sectors, observing the daily life of vendors, workers, and soldiers enforcing quarantine zones. The atmosphere is tense, with loudspeakers broadcasting propaganda and mandatory pledges to the Elector Primo. The protagonist’s internal resistance is subtle, as they mumble parts of the pledge and reflect on the pre-war era, hinting at a deeper discontent with the regime.

Seeking information, the protagonist enters a rundown Chinese-themed bar, where they encounter a bartender with a sharp wit and visible scars. The bar is a hub of illicit activity, including gambling and Skiz fights. The protagonist engages in light flirtation with the bartender while subtly probing for details about a mysterious man claiming to offer plague cures. The bartender reveals that this man seeks a specific person to meet at midnight at the "ten-second place," a cryptic reference only the protagonist seems to recognize.

The mention of the "ten-second place" triggers the protagonist’s memory of a past heist, where they bragged about breaking into a bank vault in ten seconds. This connection confirms their suspicion that the government is setting a trap, using the promise of plague meds as bait. The protagonist maintains a casual demeanor but internally strategizes, realizing the stakes are high. The bartender’s skepticism about the man’s sanity mirrors the protagonist’s own wariness, yet they recognize the urgency of the situation.

As the chapter concludes, the protagonist leaves the bar, resolved to outmaneuver the government’s trap. They redirect their path toward the financial district, hinting at another daring plan. The tension builds as the protagonist prepares for a midnight

confrontation, blending calculated risk with their trademark audacity. The chapter underscores themes of survival, resistance, and the blurred lines between ally and adversary in a fractured society.



Chapter 8: Part One: June 4

The chapter opens with June, the protagonist, preparing for a covert mission in Batalla Sector. Dressed in a gender-concealing, black-market dealer disguise complete with a mask, infrared goggles, and a hidden gun, she reflects on her late brother Metias's disapproval of her solo missions. Her objective is to lure Day, a notorious criminal, into revealing himself by offering plague medicine. The mission is personal—her brother was killed by Day, and she is determined to gather clues about his identity. Despite knowing Day likely won't show his face, June hopes for even a small lead to narrow her search.

June's meticulous planning is highlighted as she recounts the timeline leading up to the mission. After gaining clearance to investigate Day, she orchestrated a city-wide rumor about plague cures to draw him out. The mission is also a test from her superior, Commander Jameson, who doubts Day will appear. June navigates the militarized streets of Batalla, avoiding detection by street police and soldiers, many of whom remind her of her brother. The atmosphere is tense, with JumboTrons broadcasting Day's updated profile and tanks patrolling the area, underscoring the oppressive regime June serves.

Arriving at the Arcadia bank alleyway, June waits in the shadows, analyzing Day's past crimes and his likely methods for the bank robbery. She notes his agility and recklessness, deducing he's still recovering from injuries. At midnight, she senses his presence—a faint click and breath through rewired speakers confirm he's nearby. June plays her part, displaying the vial of medicine and setting a two-minute deadline. Her calm demeanor masks her rising hatred for Day, the voice she believes was the last her brother heard.

The chapter climaxes as Day finally responds through the distorted speakers, revealing clues about his background—a Southern Californian accent and use of "cousin," a local

term. June’s analytical mind immediately processes these details, but her personal vendetta simmers beneath the surface. The exchange is tense and calculated, with June maintaining her composed facade despite her inner turmoil. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, leaving the reader eager to see how their confrontation will unfold.



Chapter 9: Part One: Day 5

The chapter opens with the narrator, Day, and Tess hiding under a pier by a lake in their sector, sharing bread and cheese. Despite Day's lack of appetite, they eat to conserve resources for plague medicine. The setting is described as both beautiful and grim, with the ruins of flooded buildings and the distant lights of downtown Los Angeles contrasting with the ominous presence of the Trial stadium. Tess tries to reassure Day that they still have time to find medicine, but Day remains skeptical, knowing the urgency of their situation.

Day reflects on his family, particularly his younger brother Eden, who is gravely ill with the plague. A visit to his mother’s house reveals Eden’s worsening condition, marked by weight loss and weakness. John, another family member, warns Day to avoid reckless actions, though Day feels responsible for saving Eden. The Trial, a brutal selection process for children, looms over Eden’s future, and Day morbidly considers whether the plague might be a kinder fate than the Trial’s horrors, which include potential deportation to labor camps.

The conversation shifts to Tess, who listens sympathetically as Day recounts Eden’s history of illness. Tess, who has no family of her own, shares her own experience of being sick when Day first met her. This prompts Day to reflect on their first encounter: he found Tess scavenging in an alley, terrified and alone. Despite her initial fear, Day helped clean her injuries and offered food, and she eventually chose to stay with him. Their bond began with this act of kindness, highlighting Day’s protective nature and Tess’s resilience.

The chapter concludes with a flashback to Day’s first night with Tess, where she remained wary but stayed by his side. Her presence the next morning marked the beginning of their partnership. The narrative underscores themes of survival, loyalty, and the harsh realities of their world, where illness and systemic oppression shape

their lives. Day’s determination to save Eden and his growing bond with Tess drive the emotional core of the chapter, blending hope with despair.



Chapter 10: Part One: June 5

The chapter opens with a tense exchange between the protagonist and Thomas, her brother's successor, as they observe Commander Jameson interrogating a captured spy from the Colonies. The protagonist insists on going undercover alone, arguing she'll appear less suspicious, while Thomas reluctantly agrees. The scene highlights the brutal methods of the Republic's interrogation, with the spy hanging upside down and enduring physical torture. The protagonist's disdain for the Colonies is evident, as she dismisses their propaganda and views their spies as cowards. Her internal monologue reveals her grief over her brother Metias's death, adding a personal layer to her hardened demeanor.

The interrogation intensifies as Commander Jameson and Thomas employ violent tactics to extract information from the spy, Emerson Graham. The protagonist analyzes the spy's attire, noting the flaws that betrayed him, and watches as Thomas shifts from his usual kindness to a ruthless enforcer. The spy defiantly condemns the Republic, claiming it will collapse, but his words only provoke more violence. The protagonist forces herself to witness the brutality, though the spy's resemblance to her brother unsettles her. The scene underscores the Republic's merciless approach to dissent and the protagonist's struggle to reconcile her emotions with her duty.

After the interrogation, Thomas escorts the protagonist home, offering reassurance and a kiss on the cheek. Despite his concern, she remains determined to proceed with her mission. Alone in her apartment, she reflects on her grief, surrounded by mementos of Metias—photos, journals, and keepsakes. Her dog, Ollie, senses the absence, mirroring her sorrow. The protagonist searches through her brother's belongings, hinting at an unresolved mystery he wanted to share with her. This quiet moment contrasts sharply with the earlier violence, emphasizing her vulnerability beneath her stoic exterior.

The chapter blends action and introspection, revealing the protagonist’s internal conflict between loyalty to the Republic and personal loss. The interrogation scene showcases the regime’s brutality, while the protagonist’s interactions with Thomas and her solitary mourning humanize her. The juxtaposition of violence and tenderness underscores the oppressive world she navigates, setting the stage for her undercover mission and the deeper secrets surrounding Metias’s death.



Chapter 11: Part One: Day 6

The chapter opens with the narrator, hiding atop a warehouse, observing a Skiz fight—an underground betting event where participants wager on brutal, no-rules brawls. The narrator's companion, Tess, mingles with the crowd to place their bets while the narrator stays hidden to avoid police detection. The rules are simple: bet on the fighter you believe will win, but the narrator's notoriety forces them to remain cautious. Tess, small and quick, handles the transactions, though the narrator watches protectively, ready to intervene if trouble arises. Their current bet is on Kaede, a dominant fighter who has already won one match and exudes confidence.

Kaede's next opponent appears hesitant, and the narrator dismisses her as no match. The fight ends swiftly, with Kaede brutally defeating the girl, earning the narrator and Tess a profit. The victory brings them closer to their goal—earning enough money for a vial of a mysterious "cure." Kaede, reveling in her win, challenges the crowd for another opponent. Tess, eager to watch, draws unwanted attention by pushing forward, and a gambler shoves her into the ring. The narrator tenses, ready to intervene, but a stranger steps in, diverting Kaede's attention and saving Tess from danger.

The new challenger, a girl with a calculated demeanor, initially refuses to fight, surprising the crowd. Her confidence and poise intrigue the narrator, who notes her athletic build and sharp eyes. Despite her reluctance, she eventually agrees to face Kaede, and Tess places another bet on Kaede, following the narrator's signal. However, the moment the girl takes her stance, the narrator realizes their mistake—she moves with precision and lethal intent, unlike Kaede's brute force. The narrator senses an impending upset, hinting at a shift in the fight's dynamics.

The chapter builds tension through the narrator's protective vigilance over Tess and their high-stakes gambling. Kaede's dominance is challenged by the mysterious girl,

whose skill suggests she may defy expectations. The narrator’s internal conflict—gratitude for Tess’s safety versus the risk to their money—adds depth to their pragmatic yet loyal character. The scene sets the stage for an unexpected showdown, leaving the reader anticipating the outcome of this clash between brute strength and strategic finesse.



Chapter 12: Part One: June 6

The chapter opens with the protagonist, an undercover operative, reluctantly participating in an illegal street fight known as Skiz. Initially hesitant, she joins the brawl hoping to gather information about a fugitive named Day from the local crowd. Her confidence wavers when she realizes the danger of the situation, especially after provoking a fight with a skilled opponent named Kaede. The protagonist's internal conflict is clear: she must balance her training with the need to maintain her disguise as a street beggar, all while avoiding suspicion from the violent onlookers.

The fight with Kaede escalates as the protagonist carefully observes her opponent's movements, using strategy to counter her attacks. Despite her restraint, Kaede's unexpected use of a hidden knife injures her, igniting her anger. The protagonist retaliates decisively, breaking Kaede's arm and exposing her weapon. This moment reveals Kaede's possible connection to Day, adding a layer of intrigue. The crowd's reaction is frenzied, with money exchanging hands and chants demanding the protagonist's next move. The tension peaks as she attempts to leave, only to be pursued by enraged gamblers.

Her escape is thwarted by her injury, and she is dragged back by the mob. Disoriented and bleeding, she nearly calls for backup but resists to protect her cover. In a moment of vulnerability, she hallucinates her deceased brother, Metias, highlighting her isolation and trauma. Suddenly, a dust bomb disrupts the chaos, creating an opportunity for rescue. A mysterious boy with striking blue eyes appears, offering her a way out. His timely intervention marks a turning point, leaving the protagonist's fate uncertain but hopeful.

The chapter concludes with the protagonist and the boy fleeing into the shadows, their connection hinting at future developments. The encounter underscores the protagonist's resilience and the unpredictable nature of her mission. The boy's identity

remains unknown, but his appearance suggests he may play a significant role in her journey. The chapter masterfully blends action, suspense, and emotional depth, setting the stage for further exploration of the protagonist’s world and her pursuit of Day.



Chapter 13: Part One: Day 7

The chapter opens with the narrator, a street-savvy young man, reluctantly aiding an unnamed girl after she disrupts a Skiz fight, costing him a bet worth a thousand Notes—money he needed for a cure. Despite his frustration, he helps her due to Tess, his younger sister figure, who insists on aiding the wounded girl. They take shelter in a dilapidated library by Lake’s edge, where the narrator remains wary of potential retaliation from gamblers. The girl, though grateful, remains guarded, and Tess’s friendly overtures hint at underlying tension with the newcomer.

As night approaches, the group settles in the ruined library. The narrator questions the girl’s motives for saving Tess during the fight, to which she responds with cautious humor. Tess lightens the mood by teasing the narrator about his fondness for "cute girls," but the underlying unease persists. The girl reveals she learned to fight by observing cadets near Batalla, though her origins lie in the distant Tanagashi sector. Her resilience and mysterious demeanor intrigue the narrator, who finds himself unexpectedly drawn to her.

The narrator’s growing fascination with the girl becomes apparent as he admires her beauty and defiant spirit, though he tries to dismiss his feelings. Their conversation reveals her nomadic lifestyle and scavenging habits, contrasting with his rooted concerns about the plague-ridden Lake sector. Despite her injuries, she remains composed, even teasing him about his protective nature. The narrator’s internal conflict—balancing suspicion and attraction—adds depth to their dynamic.

As the girl drifts into an uneasy sleep, the narrator prepares to visit his plague-stricken family, leaving Tess to watch over her. The chapter ends with him venturing into the quiet, dangerous streets, hinting at unresolved threats—both from the plague patrols and the mysterious mark on his family’s door. The girl’s presence has disrupted his routine, leaving him with unanswered questions and a lingering sense of intrigue.

Chapter 14: Part One: June 7

The chapter opens with the protagonist, June, waking up disoriented in an abandoned building by the ocean, recalling she was stabbed during a Skiz fight. She notices Tess, who bandaged her wound, and the boy who saved her, observing him from a distance. The boy mentions their lack of food due to losing the Skiz bet, subtly blaming June. She compares his voice to Day's, a figure of interest, but remains uncertain. Despite her injury, June insists on going to the water's edge alone, where she reflects on her brother Metias, pushing the memory aside to focus on her mission.

June activates her communication device and contacts Thomas, her handler, who expresses frustration over her prolonged silence. She downplays her knife wound and mentions the boy and Tess, hinting at their potential connection to Day. Thomas warns her to maintain contact, threatening to send soldiers if she goes offline again. June feels irritated by his lack of trust and Commander Jameson's disinterest in her mission. She resolves to observe the boy more closely, suspecting he might hold valuable information.

As June follows the boy through the Alta sector, she meticulously notes his physical traits and behaviors. She observes his slight limp, a possible arm injury, and his asymmetrical eyes, speculating about their origins. His familiarity with the area and dexterity suggest a seasoned survivor. June's attention to detail underscores her training and determination to uncover his identity, even as she grapples with her own pain and the emotional weight of her past.

The chapter highlights June's resilience and strategic mindset as she balances her physical recovery with her mission. Her interactions with Tess and the boy reveal a cautious alliance, while her communication with Thomas reflects the tension between duty and autonomy. The boy's mysterious demeanor and skills keep June—and the reader—questioning his true identity and connection to Day, setting the stage for

further investigation and conflict.



Chapter 15: Part One: Day 8

The narrator reflects on their near-kiss with a girl the previous night, acknowledging the dangers of forming attachments in their harsh street life. They recognize that falling for someone is a vulnerability, akin to having family in a quarantined zone or caring for a street orphan. Despite this, the narrator is drawn to the girl's unique qualities—her sharp observational skills, intelligence, and unbroken spirit. Unlike others hardened by street life, she retains an innocence that sets her apart, making her both intriguing and admirable.

Throughout the day, the narrator and the girl focus on survival, scavenging for money and resources. They pickpocket naive police, resell discarded items, and raid unguarded crates, all while searching for a new place to camp. The narrator tries to stay focused on their primary goal—earning enough money to save Eden—but their mind wanders to sabotaging the Republic's war efforts. Ideas like hijacking airships or disrupting power grids occupy their thoughts, revealing a rebellious streak and a desire to undermine the oppressive system.

Despite their preoccupation with survival and rebellion, the narrator's thoughts continually return to the girl. Her presence is a constant distraction, and even fleeting glances or the sense of her watching reignite their fascination. The narrator struggles to reconcile their practical need to avoid emotional attachments with the growing pull they feel toward her. This internal conflict underscores the tension between survival instincts and human connection in their unforgiving world.

The chapter captures the duality of the narrator's existence: the relentless grind of street life and the fleeting moments of vulnerability and desire. The girl symbolizes hope and resilience, a contrast to the cynicism around them. Yet, the narrator's awareness of the risks keeps them guarded, even as they yearn for connection. This dynamic sets the stage for deeper emotional and moral conflicts as their story unfolds.

Chapter 16: Part One: June 8

The chapter opens with the narrator and a boy sitting in an alley at night, sharing a bottle of stolen nectar wine while Tess sleeps nearby. The boy is in high spirits, meticulously grooming himself and savoring the cheap wine as if it were a luxury. His agility and resourcefulness impress the narrator, who notes his ability to navigate the sectors with ease. Their banter reveals a playful dynamic, with the boy offering the narrator a drink and joking about the stolen goods. The wine loosens his demeanor, though he remains cautious not to lose focus entirely.

As they continue drinking, the narrator probes the boy about his relentless pursuit of money. The boy defends his obsession, arguing that wealth buys happiness, security, and status—a sentiment tinged with melancholy. His responses hint at a deeper, unspoken struggle, leaving the narrator uneasy. The conversation shifts when the boy unexpectedly compliments the narrator's appearance, catching them off guard. The exchange escalates into a flirtatious back-and-forth, culminating in a sudden, passionate kiss that leaves both characters breathless and bewildered.

The kiss is intense and charged with unspoken emotions, with the boy's confidence contrasting the narrator's internal turmoil. Despite their mutual attraction, the boy quickly regains his composure, brushing off the moment with a mischievous grin. The narrator, however, remains shaken, struggling to process what happened. Their interaction underscores a tension between vulnerability and bravado, as both characters navigate their complicated feelings.

The chapter closes with a poignant detail: the boy unconsciously reaches for a nonexistent necklace around his neck, a gesture that triggers the narrator's memory of Day's pendant in their pocket. This moment jars the narrator back to reality, hinting at a deeper connection or unresolved history between them. The boy's fleeting vulnerability and the narrator's visceral reaction suggest that their relationship is far

more layered than it appears, setting the stage for future revelations.



Chapter 17: Part One: Day 9

The protagonist reflects on a recent intimate moment with a girl, conflicted by his emotions. Despite knowing he shouldn’t have kissed her, he can’t deny his lingering feelings, comparing her to others he’s been with and finding her uniquely captivating. His internal struggle highlights his vulnerability, breaking his own rule of avoiding emotional attachments to people on the streets. The encounter leaves him distracted as he shifts focus to his mission, attempting to push aside the memory as he navigates the night.

He visits his family’s home, noting the ominous X on the door and the flickering candles signaling his mother’s vigilance over Eden. Crouching in the darkness, he checks his surroundings before slipping under the porch to meet his brother, John. The tension is palpable as he moves cautiously, sensing something in the shadows but dismissing it. The scene underscores the constant danger and secrecy surrounding his family’s survival in their dystopian reality.

During their covert meeting, the protagonist reveals he’s close to securing enough money for cures, showing John the pouch of Notes. John’s anxious update about Eden’s deteriorating health heightens the urgency of their mission. The protagonist reassures John with determined promises, though the weight of potential failure looms. Their shared fear for Eden’s life underscores the emotional stakes, binding them in a race against time.

John offers to help, but the protagonist refuses, insisting on working alone to minimize risk. His harsh dismissal stems from protectiveness, knowing John’s capture would doom their family. The exchange reveals their deep bond and mutual frustration, as both grapple with helplessness. The protagonist departs quickly, leaving John with unspoken words, his resolve hardened by the looming threat and his personal sacrifices. The chapter ends with a sense of urgency and unresolved tension.

Chapter 18: Part One: June 9

The chapter opens with the narrator secretly following Day, who breaks into a quarantined house marked with a distinctive three-lined X. Observing his actions, the narrator realizes the significance of his visit, confirming suspicions about his involvement in past events. Overcome with anger and self-reproach, the narrator reflects on their misplaced trust and growing feelings for Day, questioning whether they've betrayed the memory of their brother, Metias. The emotional turmoil is palpable as they grapple with the possibility that Day might be responsible for Metias's death.

From a rooftop hiding spot, the narrator contacts Thomas, their voice trembling with suppressed emotion. They report Day's location and the marked house, providing specific details to ensure action is taken. Thomas initially responds with detachment but grows alert upon hearing the confirmation. The narrator's frustration surfaces as they insist on their certainty, emphasizing the need for immediate backup to intercept Day and his family during the planned medic operation the next day.

The narrator outlines a strategy to capture Day's family, instructing Thomas to deploy troops and transport them to Batalla Hall for questioning. Their authoritative tone surprises Thomas, underscoring their determination to rectify their earlier lapse in judgment. Despite lingering memories of their intimate moments with Day, the narrator forcefully dismisses them, reinforcing their resolve to see justice served. The exchange highlights the narrator's internal conflict between personal feelings and duty.

The chapter concludes with the narrator returning to their hiding spot, ensuring Day remains unaware of their surveillance. The tension between their past attraction and present mission lingers, setting the stage for the impending confrontation. The narrator's hardened resolve contrasts sharply with their earlier vulnerability, marking a

pivotal shift in their approach to uncovering the truth about Day and avenging Metias.



Chapter 19: Part One: Day 10

The chapter opens with the protagonist dreaming of a nostalgic scene at home, where John reads to their mother while Eden doodles nearby. The dream takes a turn when the Girl appears, and the protagonist introduces her to their mother. However, the dream turns nightmarish as Eden vanishes, and the Girl solemnly declares, "Eden is dead." The protagonist wakes abruptly to the sound of a military medic siren, a sound that signals urgency and danger, pulling them back to reality. The dream's vividness lingers, leaving them unsettled.

Upon waking, the protagonist notices the Girl already awake and tense, her demeanor starkly different from the previous night's intimacy. The sound of the siren sparks curiosity and concern, as such trucks are typically used for transporting plague cases or injured soldiers. Tess, another character, questions the siren's purpose, but the protagonist is preoccupied with the Girl's sudden emotional distance. Her coldness contrasts sharply with their shared moment the night before, leaving the protagonist confused and uneasy.

The Girl's behavior takes a darker turn as she confronts the protagonist about their family, revealing she followed them the previous night. She questions their motives for saving money, implying it’s for a plague cure, and drops a devastating bombshell: the plague patrol is coming for their family today. Her bluntness and detachment suggest she knows more than she’s letting on, heightening the protagonist's anxiety. The revelation shifts the tone from introspection to impending crisis, as the protagonist grapples with the Girl's cryptic warning.

The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, with the Girl’s ominous statement casting a shadow over the protagonist’s reality. Her knowledge of the protagonist’s family and the impending plague patrol raises questions about her role and intentions. The protagonist’s confusion and fear are palpable as they face the possibility of losing their

family, mirroring the loss foreshadowed in the dream. The chapter masterfully blends dreamlike nostalgia with harsh reality, setting the stage for an urgent and emotional confrontation.



Chapter 20: Part One: June 10

The chapter opens with the narrator convincing Day to flee after revealing that authorities are targeting his family. Day, despite his initial shock and confusion, immediately trusts the narrator and rushes toward his family's location without questioning the information. The narrator feels a pang of guilt for exploiting Day's trust, reflecting on how rare such unwavering belief is, even comparing it to relationships in their past. The urgency of the situation is underscored by the approaching sirens, heightening the tension as Day dashes into the streets.

Tess, alarmed by Day's sudden departure, urges the narrator to follow and help him. However, the narrator insists Tess stay behind, prioritizing her safety while secretly planning to track Day alone. The narrator's internal conflict is evident as they grapple with their mission to capture Day and the guilt over deceiving him. Tess's frightened reaction highlights her loyalty to Day, contrasting with the narrator's calculated detachment. The scene sets up a moral dilemma, pitting duty against empathy.

The narrator contacts Thomas, their ally, to coordinate the arrest of Day, emphasizing the need to avoid harm. The communication is abruptly cut off, leaving the narrator's instructions incomplete and adding to the suspense. As the narrator pursues Day through the streets, their physical pain mirrors their emotional turmoil. They spot Day in the crowd, torn between their anger and fleeting memories of his kindness, particularly when he helped heal their injury. The chase becomes a metaphor for their conflicting emotions.

Despite their resolve to see Day as a criminal, the narrator struggles with their growing sympathy for him. They chastise themselves for being swayed by his actions, reinforcing their determination to fulfill their mission. The chapter ends with the narrator's internal battle—between vengeance and compassion—intensifying as they close in on Day. The tension between duty and humanity remains unresolved, leaving

readers anticipating the consequences of their choices.



Chapter 21: Part One: Day 11

The chapter opens with the protagonist, Daniel, navigating the crowded streets of Lake, usually a refuge but now an obstacle as he races to save his family from approaching soldiers. The urgency is palpable as he pushes through the chaos, ignoring collisions and shouts, driven by the need to reach his quarantined home before the patrols. His family—mother, John, and gravely ill Eden—are unaware of the imminent danger. Eden's condition has worsened, his skin pallid and breath labored, heightening the stakes as Daniel debates escape plans, weighing risks like cargo trains or fleeing inland, though time is running out.

Daniel's desperation peaks as he hears the sirens drawing nearer, confirming his fears. He bursts into the house, revealing his true identity to his shocked mother, who had believed him dead for years. The emotional reunion is cut short by the need to act—Eden is the patrol's target. Daniel's mother, though stunned, quickly shifts to survival mode, helping hide Eden under the porch. The family's fragile hope hinges on evading the soldiers, but the overwhelming number of troops outside suggests their odds are slim. The tension mounts as they huddle in darkness, listening to the approaching boots.

Daniel, determined to divert the soldiers, prepares to confront them alone despite John's protests. His plan involves using the element of surprise, leveraging his knowledge of the terrain to outmaneuver the patrol. As he climbs onto the roof, he realizes the scale of their threat—far more soldiers than expected, their masked faces a grim reminder of the ruthless system hunting Eden. The chapter's suspense culminates here, with Daniel poised to act but facing impossible odds, leaving the reader questioning whether his bravery will be enough.

The chapter masterfully blends action and emotion, capturing Daniel's internal conflict and the family's resilience. Themes of sacrifice, identity, and survival are woven

throughout, as Daniel’s return forces his family to confront the past while fighting for their future. The looming confrontation with the soldiers sets the stage for a high-stakes showdown, emphasizing the brutal reality of their world and the lengths one will go to protect loved ones.



Chapter 22: Part One: June 11

The chapter opens with a chaotic scene where Thomas shoots a woman unexpectedly, shocking the narrator, June, who believed the mission was only about arrests. As the boy, later identified as Day, leaps from a rooftop in defiance, June is horrified by the violence, contrasting with Thomas's cold detachment. Commander Jameson orders Day's capture, leading to a brutal struggle where Day is eventually subdued after being shot in the leg. The scene underscores the brutality of the operation and June's internal conflict as she grapples with the unplanned bloodshed.

Commander Jameson's ruthless tactics become evident as she dismisses June's objections, emphasizing efficiency over negotiation. June's protest is met with scorn, highlighting the authoritarian nature of their mission. Day and another young man, likely his relative, are forcibly taken away, while June struggles with the moral weight of the actions. Thomas praises her for the successful capture, but June is haunted by the woman's death, unable to reconcile the violence with her own sense of justice.

The aftermath leaves June emotionally torn. She observes the indifference toward the dead woman and the preferential treatment given to wounded soldiers, deepening her unease. Despite her initial desire for vengeance—fueled by the belief that Day killed her brother, Metias—she feels no satisfaction. The sight of the bloodshed sickens her, and her repeated mantra about Day's guilt rings hollow, hinting at her growing doubts about the mission's righteousness.

In the end, June mechanically agrees with Thomas's congratulations, but her voice betrays her detachment. The chapter closes with her unresolved turmoil, as the violence she witnessed clashes with her loyalty to the regime. The empty repetition of "Day killed Metias" underscores her fractured conviction, leaving her questioning the cost of her actions and the truth behind her brother's death.

Chapter 23: Part Two: Day 1

The chapter opens with the protagonist, Day, disoriented and in severe pain after being captured by soldiers. He recalls fragmented memories of violence, including his mother’s death at the hands of a captain, a traumatic scene that replays in his mind. Awakening in a sterile, windowless cell, he finds himself restrained and injured, his leg wrapped in a bloodied bandage. The setting suggests a government facility, confirmed when a commander—responsible for his mother’s death—enters, mocking him and revealing he’s plague-free. Day’s rage and helplessness are palpable as he demands to know the whereabouts of his brothers, John and Eden.

The commander departs, replaced by a young girl Day recognizes—once a street ally, now a high-ranking Republic officer. Her polished appearance contrasts sharply with her former self, and her cold demeanor shocks Day. She taunts him, claiming she ensured his leg was treated only so he could stand for his execution. Their exchange is tense; she reveals she knows his real name, Daniel Altan Wing, and threatens his brothers to force his cooperation. Day’s sarcasm and defiance mask his fear for his siblings, though he notes her gun isn’t loaded, a small reassurance.

The girl proceeds to interrogate Day, listing his past crimes against the Republic, from bank robberies to sabotaging military equipment. Day admits to each act with pride, refusing to show remorse. The interrogation reveals his rebellious history and his willingness to defy authority, even in captivity. The girl’s methodical questioning underscores the Republic’s control, while Day’s responses highlight his resistance. The tension escalates as she hints at his latest, unnamed crime, leaving the chapter on a cliffhanger.

Throughout the chapter, Day’s physical suffering and emotional turmoil are juxtaposed with the cold, calculated cruelty of his captors. His love for his family and his hatred for the Republic drive his actions, even in captivity. The girl’s transformation from a street

ally to a ruthless enforcer adds layers of betrayal and intrigue. The chapter sets the stage for a deeper conflict, blending personal vendettas with the oppressive weight of a dystopian regime.



Chapter 24: Part Two: June 1

June attends a grand ball celebrating the capture of Day, a notorious criminal, and is met with admiration and envy from the Republic’s elite. Despite the accolades, she feels uneasy, haunted by guilt over betraying Day, who had trusted her. Her companion, Thomas, dismisses Day’s significance, but June struggles with conflicting emotions, recalling Day’s kindness and the warmth of their interactions. The opulence of the event feels hollow, amplifying her sense of dissonance with the Republic’s celebration of Day’s capture.

Thomas and Commander Jameson insist June wear an elegant dress, hinting at a surprise involving someone she cares about. For a fleeting moment, June hopes it might be her deceased brother, Metias, but she dismisses the thought as impossible. As Thomas guides her through the ballroom, she reflects on the extravagance of her attire, contrasting it with the poverty of the slums. The evening’s festivities feel performative, and June’s discomfort grows as she grapples with the moral weight of her actions.

The conversation shifts to Day’s impending sentencing, and Thomas expresses disdain for him, calling him a dangerous street con. June, however, recalls Day’s compassion—his care for her wound, his grief for his mother—and questions the Republic’s narrative. She probes Thomas about Day’s younger brother, Eden, who is being held in a lab, but Thomas deflects, citing confidentiality. June’s suspicion deepens as she wonders why warfront generals are interested in Eden, hinting at darker motives behind the Republic’s actions.

Chian, a high-ranking official, interrupts to congratulate June on her promotion and reward, then leads her and Thomas to a secluded area behind a curtain. There, they encounter a circle of elite officials, including a distinguished older man June eventually recognizes. The chapter ends on a note of anticipation, leaving the identity of this

figure and the nature of the surprise unresolved, while underscoring June’s growing unease with the Republic’s power structures.



Chapter 25: Part Two: Day 2

The chapter opens with Day being violently awakened by soldiers, dragged from his cell despite his severe leg injury. Disoriented and in pain, he is gagged and led through a series of guarded halls, where he glimpses tortured prisoners of war. Commander Jameson, the cold and calculating officer overseeing his sentencing, ensures his silence as they proceed to a public platform outside Batalla Hall. The scene is chaotic, with a massive crowd and media frenzy, as Day is displayed like a spectacle, his bruised and bloodied face broadcast on JumboTrons. The headlines branding him a "dangerous menace" contrast with the mixed reactions of the crowd, some cheering while others protest his treatment.

Day is forced onto a platform where a judge, flanked by Commander Jameson and the Girl—a stoic figure from his past—delivers his death sentence. The judge lists his crimes and declares his execution by firing squad in four days, a spectacle meant to deter further rebellion. Day’s thoughts race to his brothers, whom he must save before his time runs out. The crowd’s divided reaction—some celebrating, others booing—hints at underlying dissent within the Republic. Despite his agony, Day notices a flicker of emotion in the Girl’s otherwise blank expression, a reminder of their complicated history.

As the sentencing concludes, Day is not returned to his cell but taken to the roof of Batalla Hall, where he is chained to a stand under the scorching sun. Commander Jameson orders him left there for two days, a brutal addition to his punishment. The physical torment is overwhelming, with the heat blurring his vision and his wounds throbbing. Yet, even in his suffering, Day remains acutely aware of the Girl’s presence, her lingering gaze suggesting a conflict within her. The chapter ends with Day’s resilience in the face of dehumanization, his determination to survive and protect his family undiminished.

The chapter underscores the Republic’s ruthlessness in crushing dissent, using Day’s public humiliation and impending execution as a warning. Yet, the crowd’s mixed reactions and the Girl’s subtle hesitation reveal cracks in the regime’s facade. Day’s internal struggle—balancing hatred, pain, and hope—highlights his humanity amidst systemic brutality. The setting, from the sterile halls to the exposed rooftop, mirrors his isolation and vulnerability, while the media spectacle emphasizes the propaganda machine at work. Through Day’s perspective, the chapter paints a stark picture of oppression, resistance, and the fragile connections that endure even in the darkest moments.

Chapter 26: Part Two: June 2

The chapter opens with June observing Day’s deteriorated condition after his sentencing, noting his physical suffering under the harsh sun. Despite his weakened state, Day’s defiant spirit remains evident as June dismisses the guards to tend to him privately. She offers him water, and their interaction reveals a tense yet curious dynamic, with June recalling their first meeting and Day expressing concern for his brothers and Tess. Their dialogue hints at a deeper connection, as Day apologizes for June’s brother’s death, leaving her conflicted between her training and his apparent sincerity.

June notices a peculiar blemish in Day’s eye, prompting her to question its origin. Day reveals it was a result of Republic experiments during his Trial, contradicting June’s belief that he scored perfectly. He recounts being injected and cut, then left for dead in a hospital basement. June pieces together that the Republic likely experimented on him to study his physical and mental abilities, possibly for military enhancements. This revelation unsettles her, as it clashes with Republic values and raises questions about why they would discard a prodigy like Day.

The conversation shifts to Day’s disbelief about his perfect Trial score, which June confirms, revealing she also achieved the same. Day struggles to reconcile this with his experience of being labeled a failure and subjected to brutal procedures. June theorizes that the Republic saw him as a threat due to his rebellious nature, leading them to suppress his potential. Their exchange underscores the Republic’s manipulation and the systemic cruelty hidden beneath its facade of order and meritocracy.

As new guards arrive, June and Day’s dialogue remains charged with unresolved tension and mutual curiosity. Day’s resilience and June’s internal conflict highlight their complex relationship, blending suspicion with an unspoken bond. The chapter ends

with lingering questions about the Republic’s motives and the truth behind Day’s past, setting the stage for further revelations about their intertwined fates and the oppressive regime they navigate.



Chapter 27: Part Two: Day 3

The chapter opens with the protagonist, Day, experiencing a vivid nightmare about Tess, a girl he cares for deeply. In the dream, he futilely chases her through the streets of Lake, only to witness her being attacked by a soldier. The nightmare shifts abruptly, morphing into a memory of his mother’s death, leaving him guilt-ridden. The scene then transitions to a hospital lab where doctors operate on his injured leg, blending his subconscious terror with physical pain. The nightmare culminates in a jarring awakening as he finds himself strapped to an operating table in Batalla Hall’s hospital wing, his leg bandaged but his mind still haunted by fear for Tess’s safety.

Upon regaining full consciousness, Day learns that Agent Iparis has ordered his treatment to ensure he survives until his execution. The doctor, resentful of tending to a criminal, coldly informs him that the patched-up leg will allow him to stand for his impending execution. Day’s relief at the reduced pain is overshadowed by lingering worries about Tess’s well-being and his inability to protect her. His thoughts briefly touch on his mother’s death, but he pushes them aside, emotionally drained. The tense atmosphere escalates when Commander Jameson storms in, berating Day for causing disruption and wasting military resources, her fury hinting at deeper unrest.

Commander Jameson reveals that protesters have gathered outside Batalla Hall, clashing with street police and soldiers. As Day is forcibly removed from the hospital room, he catches glimpses of live footage on hallway monitors, showing a chaotic scene of rioters confronting armed forces. Among the crowd, he notices some with bloodred streaks in their hair—a symbol he recognizes. The realization dawns that the protests are linked to his capture, filling him with a mix of pride and dread. He anticipates a brutal crackdown, fearing the military will respond with lethal force to suppress the uprising.

The chapter closes with Day being dragged toward elevators, the chaos outside mirroring his inner turmoil. The protesters’ defiance sparks a fleeting hope, but the overwhelming power of the military leaves him pessimistic about their chances. The juxtaposition of his physical vulnerability and the external rebellion underscores the themes of resistance and sacrifice. Day’s fate remains uncertain, but the chapter highlights the growing tension between the oppressed citizens and the authoritarian regime, with Day at the center of the storm.



Chapter 28: Part Two: June 3

The chapter opens with June reflecting on past minor rebellions her brother Metias handled, contrasting them with the unprecedented scale of the current riot. Hundreds of protesters, mostly impoverished citizens, clash with Republic soldiers outside Batalla Hall. June, armed and uneasy, questions their motives while observing the chaos. Thomas, her colleague, dismisses the protesters as fools and hints at the commanders' impending retaliation. June’s thoughts drift to Day, the rebellion’s catalyst, whose accusations against the Republic fuel her anger. The tension escalates as soldiers box in the crowd, deviating from standard riot protocols.

June notices the protesters’ desperation—their tattered clothing and scarlet-streaked hair, a tribute to Day. Thomas coldly remarks on Day’s impending execution, underscoring the Republic’s ruthlessness. The scene grows darker as June spots executioners positioning themselves on rooftops, their presence signaling lethal intent. Confused and alarmed, she confronts Thomas, who remains stoic. Commander Jameson’s orders, relayed through Thomas, culminate in a sudden command to open fire. June’s horror mounts as she realizes the protesters are being trapped and slaughtered rather than dispersed.

The gunfire erupts, and June’s attempts to intervene are violently thwarted by Thomas, who shoves her to the ground. Wounded and powerless, she watches in disbelief as the square transforms into a bloodbath. The gunfire lasts only a minute but leaves over a hundred dead and hundreds more arrested. Thomas’s guilt appears limited to his rough treatment of June, not the massacre. June, traumatized and furious, refuses to meet his gaze as he departs, her faith in the Republic further shattered.

The chapter concludes with June surveying the carnage, her mind reeling. The brutality of the Republic’s response—executioners, indiscriminate gunfire, and mass arrests—reveals its true authoritarian nature. June’s internal conflict intensifies as she

grapples with her loyalty to the system and her growing empathy for the rebels. The massacre marks a turning point, foreshadowing her eventual reckoning with the Republic’s atrocities and her own role in perpetuating them.



Chapter 29: Part Two: Day 4

The protagonist, disoriented and exhausted from a recent operation, is dragged by soldiers to an interrogation room instead of his cell. He observes the blurred surroundings, suspecting he was sedated. The room, lined with soundproof glass, amplifies his dread as he hears distant gunfire and screams, likely from a crackdown on protesters. As he waits, his fatigue grows, but his tension spikes when Captain Thomas—the man who killed his mother—enters. Thomas, visibly uncomfortable, begins a formal interrogation, hinting at the protagonist’s impending execution.

Thomas projects images of suspected Patriots, demanding the protagonist identify them. The protagonist denies recognizing anyone, mocking Thomas’s loyalty to the state. The tension escalates when a photo of Kaede, a familiar face, appears, but the protagonist hides his recognition. He taunts Thomas, accusing him of cowardice and cruelty, particularly for murdering his mother. Thomas remains restrained, adhering to protocol, but the protagonist’s provocations chip away at his composure.

The confrontation turns physical when the protagonist spits in Thomas’s face, triggering a violent outburst. Thomas strikes him repeatedly, venting his resentment toward slum dwellers and accusing the protagonist of entitlement. The protagonist needles Thomas further by referencing a past kiss with June Iparis, Thomas’s apparent love interest, igniting his rage. Thomas threatens the protagonist’s brothers, leveraging their safety to silence him, but the protagonist refuses to back down, enduring the beating with defiant humor.

The chapter ends with Thomas storming out, his orderly demeanor shattered by the protagonist’s taunts. The protagonist, battered but unbroken, steels himself against the pain, focusing on protecting his brothers. The encounter underscores the deep animosity between the two men, with Thomas representing the oppressive state and the protagonist embodying rebellious defiance. The interrogation fails to extract

information, instead revealing the personal vendettas driving both characters.



Chapter 30: Part Two: June 4

The chapter opens with Thomas attempting to apologize to June for his role in the violent events of the day, particularly his unquestioning obedience to Commander Jameson’s orders. June, however, is deeply disturbed by the sound of machine guns and Thomas’s willingness to carry out executions without hesitation. She reflects on the contrast between the Thomas who once cared for her safety and the one who now follows orders blindly, leaving her to question whether she, too, is complicit by standing by silently. Her internal conflict grows as she grapples with the morality of their actions under the Republic’s authority.

June’s thoughts shift to Day’s claims about the Republic’s corruption, including the poisoning of its own people during the Trials. She dismisses these ideas angrily, recalling her father and brother’s involvement in the system. To distract herself, she turns to her late brother Metias’s journals, which recount mundane details of his life, offering her fleeting comfort. As she reads, she is overwhelmed by grief and falls asleep, dreaming of Day, who insists he did not kill Metias. This dream reignites her doubts about the official narrative of her brother’s death.

Upon waking, June revisits the crime report from Metias’s murder, focusing on the photos she had previously avoided. She notices inconsistencies, such as the lack of close-up shots of the wounds and the odd angle of the images. The knife’s hilt appears to have rifle grease marks, sparking a disturbing memory of Thomas’s grease-streaked forehead. June begins to suspect the report was deliberately altered, though she struggles to reconcile this with her trust in Commander Jameson, who had shown apparent respect for Metias. The incomplete evidence leaves her frustrated and questioning the truth.

The chapter ends with June’s growing suspicion that key details of Metias’s death were hidden from her. The discovery of the grease marks on the knife hilt raises unsettling

questions about Thomas’s potential involvement. June’s faith in the Republic wavers as she confronts the possibility of a cover-up, leaving her torn between loyalty to the system and her desire for justice. Her investigation into Metias’s murder becomes a catalyst for deeper doubts about the regime she once unquestioningly served.



Chapter 31: Part Two: Day 5

In "Part Two: Day 5," June visits Day in his cell, initially appearing shocked by his battered condition. She dismisses the soldiers and cuts the surveillance, seemingly preparing to confront him with knives. However, her demeanor shifts as she offers him water and expresses concern about his injuries. Day reveals that Thomas, June's colleague, interrogated him about the Patriots, leading to his current state. June's anger flares, hinting at her growing distrust of Thomas and the system she serves. Their interaction reveals a fragile tension, with June oscillating between her duty and her empathy for Day.

June updates Day on Tess and his brothers, though information is scarce. She admits she cannot locate Tess but assures Day she hasn't been arrested or killed. Day's brothers, Eden and John, are alive but inaccessible. June's subdued and sorrowful demeanor puzzles Day, prompting him to question her unusual kindness. She hesitates before confessing she revisited her brother Metias's crime scene report, seeking answers about his death. June's vulnerability surfaces as she struggles with grief and uncertainty, revealing a side of her Day has never seen before.

The emotional core of the chapter unfolds as June directly asks Day if he killed Metias. Day denies it, recounting his confrontation with Metias but insisting his knife only wounded him. June's heartbreak is palpable as she mourns her brother's loss and the unanswered questions surrounding his death. Day recognizes her pain, drawing parallels to his own grief over his mother's death. Their shared sorrow bridges the divide between them, fostering a moment of raw connection. June's tears and Day's gentle comfort underscore their evolving relationship, hinting at a possible alliance against a common enemy.

The chapter concludes with June returning Day's pendant necklace, a token she found at the hospital the night Metias died. This act symbolizes her tentative trust in Day. As

he holds the pendant, memories of his father flood back, adding depth to his character and motivations. The chapter leaves their relationship at a crossroads, with June questioning her loyalties and Day grappling with his past. Their mutual vulnerability and unresolved tensions set the stage for deeper revelations and conflicts ahead.



Chapter 32: Part Two: June 5

The chapter delves into the protagonist's conflicted emotions about Day, the accused killer of her brother, Metias. She dreams of him vividly, recalling his touch and words, which challenge her previous hatred. Day’s claims—that someone else murdered Metias and that the Republic is spreading the plague—haunt her, making her question her convictions. Her fascination with Day resurfaces, mingled with guilt over her growing attraction. She struggles to reconcile her feelings with her loyalty to the Republic, torn between suspicion and desire.

During a tense dinner with Thomas, a fellow soldier, the protagonist navigates a web of distrust. Thomas probes her about her private conversation with Day, hinting at jealousy or suspicion. She feigns indifference, masking her inner turmoil with calculated responses. The encounter leaves her wary, as she wonders if Thomas is testing her or genuinely seeking reconciliation. The setting—a café she once visited with Metias—heightens her unease, especially as she notices details like rifle grease on the murder weapon.

Alone in her apartment, the protagonist pores over Metias’s crime report and journals, searching for clues. She notices odd misspellings in his recent entries, realizing they form a hidden message. The discovery excites and unsettles her, suggesting Metias may have left a coded warning. Her grief and determination intertwine as she pieces together the puzzle, sensing her brother’s hand guiding her toward the truth. The misspellings, out of character for Metias, hint at a conspiracy he sought to expose.

The chapter culminates in her growing resolve to uncover the truth, even as she risks alienating allies like Thomas. Her internal monologue reveals a shift from blind loyalty to critical inquiry, driven by love for her brother and Day’s unsettling revelations. The misspellings become a beacon, pulling her deeper into a mystery that could upend her understanding of the Republic. Her journey—marked by emotional turmoil and

intellectual rigor—sets the stage for a reckoning with the forces that shaped her world.



Chapter 33: Part Two: Day 6

The protagonist, imprisoned and aware that his execution is imminent, devises a plan to escape his cell on the sixth day of captivity. Outside, chaos erupts as plague patrols clash with civilians in the Lake and Alta sectors, the gunfire underscoring the brutality of the regime. His thoughts drift to June, whose presence he longs for, as she provides him comfort and clarity. Determined to break free, he assesses the building's structure, recalling its ledges and his ability to navigate them despite his injured leg, while also plotting to rescue his brother, John, from another cell.

Observing the four armed guards in his cell, the protagonist analyzes their weapons and uniforms, deducing that their rifles likely use non-lethal ammunition. To manipulate them, he feigns illness, gagging and coughing to sow doubt about a potential plague infection. The guards, wary of contamination, debate calling a bio team. Seizing the moment, he pretends to worsen, spitting on the floor to heighten their fear. Their hesitation grants him an opportunity as one guard approaches to handcuff him, creating the opening he needs to act.

In a swift move, the protagonist disarms the guard, using him as a hostage to force the others to unlock the cell door. Despite warnings of overwhelming opposition outside, he bursts into the hallway, dodging rubber bullets and soldiers. Leveraging his agility, he climbs and swings through the chaos, aiming for the sixth floor to reach John. However, his injured leg hampers him, and after a brief struggle, he is overpowered by a rifle strike to the head. The guards restrain him as Commander Jameson arrives, reprimanding her troops for their incompetence.

Jameson condemns the escape attempt as foolish and orders the protagonist returned to his cell under stricter guard. As Thomas carries out her commands, the protagonist, still dazed, reflects on his failed plan. The chapter ends with his recapture, emphasizing the relentless control of the regime and the slim hope of freedom. His

determination to rescue John remains, but the odds against him grow starker, leaving his fate uncertain as his execution draws nearer.



Chapter 34: Part Two: June 6

The chapter follows June as she navigates the rooftops of Los Angeles at night, using her skills to remain unseen while traveling to the border of Lake and Alta sectors. Her mission is to find Kaede, a key ally in her plan to help Day, who is scheduled for execution. June reflects on her rooftop tactics, the stark contrast between wealthy and impoverished sectors, and the plague-ridden streets marked by red tape and patrols. Her journey is fraught with danger, as she avoids detection and traverses crumbling buildings, driven by her determination to fulfill her brother's legacy.

Upon reaching the outskirts of Lake sector, June observes the Republic's plague control measures, suspecting the patrols are secretly distributing cures to manipulate the outbreak's end. She avoids looking at Day's former home, haunted by memories of his mother's death. Descending to the ground, she searches for Kaede in the bars of Alta, aware of the risks if she's caught. Her persistence pays off when Kaede ambushes her in an alley, accompanied by Tess, Day's young friend, who appears to have joined the Patriots.

June attempts to negotiate with Kaede, offering a substantial sum of money in exchange for the Patriots' help. Kaede is initially hostile, distrustful of June due to her role in Day's capture, but Tess's presence softens the tension. June expresses regret for their past conflict and emphasizes her genuine concern for Day's safety. Kaede reluctantly agrees to hear her out after verifying June isn't carrying tracking devices, though she remains wary of her motives.

The chapter ends on a tense note as Kaede demands June surrender her weapons and submit to a search, underscoring the fragile trust between them. June's willingness to cooperate hints at her desperation to save Day, while Tess's involvement suggests a potential bridge between June and the Patriots. The encounter sets the stage for a precarious alliance, with June's fate hanging in the balance as she seeks redemption

for her past actions.



Chapter 35: Part Two: Day 7

The chapter opens with the narrator, on the eve of their execution, experiencing fragmented dreams blending familiar and unfamiliar voices. The final dream is a vivid childhood memory set in Lake sector, where the narrator, aged nine, recalls a joyful afternoon playing street hockey with their older brother John while their younger brother Eden tinkers with machinery. The scene is idyllic, filled with laughter and the aroma of a rare chicken dinner their mother prepared by sacrificing personal belongings and working extra shifts. The memory captures a rare moment of familial warmth and John’s uncharacteristically cheerful mood.

The tone shifts when a street policeman interrupts their game after the narrator accidentally hits him with a paper ball. Despite the harmless nature of the incident, the officer reacts violently, striking the narrator with a knife handle and kicking them. John intervenes, pleading and offering their family’s meager savings to appease the officer. The policeman further extorts their cherished chicken dinner, leaving the family humiliated and deprived. The narrator’s mother avoids eye contact, focusing on comforting Eden, while John admonishes the narrator for defiantly staring at the officer, emphasizing the dangers of provoking authority.

John’s protective instincts are highlighted as he scolds the narrator for their recklessness, insisting compliance is necessary for survival. He reveals his deep fear of losing the narrator, stating, “I would rather die than see them hurt you.” The narrator, though physically hurt and emotionally shaken, responds with tearful guilt over the lost meal. The memory ends with John hugging the narrator, a rare display of affection that underscores the bond between them. The dream’s clarity and emotional weight leave the narrator unsettled upon waking.

The chapter concludes with the narrator’s growing dread that John’s words in the dream might foreshadow a tragic reality. The juxtaposition of the cherished memory

with the narrator’s impending execution creates a poignant contrast, emphasizing themes of familial love, sacrifice, and the brutality of their world. The dream serves as both a comfort and a haunting reminder of loss, leaving the narrator with an overwhelming sense of foreboding as their execution date approaches.



Chapter 36: Part Two: June 7

The chapter opens with June preparing for Day’s execution, scheduled for the following evening. Thomas, her colleague, invites her to a movie, *The Glory of the Flag*, which she accepts to maintain his trust while secretly planning to help Day escape. As they step outside, signs of an approaching hurricane unsettle the city, with residents stocking up on supplies and activities being postponed. The atmosphere is tense, mirroring June’s internal conflict as she balances her facade with Thomas and her clandestine mission.

During the movie outing, Thomas hints at his role in monitoring the execution, while June probes for details to refine her escape plan. Their conversation takes a turn when Thomas reveals he visited her apartment the previous night and found her absent. June deflects his questions with a fabricated story about being on the roof, but his suspicion lingers. The exchange highlights the growing tension between them, as June struggles to maintain her cover while Thomas’s curiosity suggests potential distrust or surveillance.

The situation escalates when Thomas announces a surprise: Day’s execution has been moved up to that very evening. June feigns relief, but internally, she panics as the accelerated timeline disrupts her plans. The sudden change raises alarms—Commander Jameson’s decision to withhold this information suggests she may suspect June’s loyalty. June’s mind races, questioning whether Thomas is complicit in testing her or if he, too, is being manipulated. The revelation forces her to reconsider her strategy, as time to act dwindles.

As the movie begins, June retreats into her thoughts, grappling with the urgency of her predicament. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, with June resolved to adapt her plans to save Day, despite the heightened risks. The abrupt schedule change and Commander Jameson’s secrecy underscore the oppressive control of the regime, while

June’s determination reflects her moral conviction to protect an innocent life, even at great personal cost.



Chapter 37: Part Two: Day 8

The chapter opens with the protagonist awaiting execution in a stark, heavily guarded cell, reflecting on the Republic’s brutal tradition of broadcasting prisoners’ final moments to a public square. The crowd revels in the spectacle of criminals breaking down or attempting futile escapes. Despite the opportunity to "entertain," the protagonist remains still, consumed by dread and thoughts of his brother John, whom he hopes June—a privileged ally—might save. His emotions oscillate between fear and determination, as he resolves to fight until the end, even if June’s plans fail.

As time drags on, the protagonist observes the soldiers’ heightened vigilance, mocking their fear of him. He imagines the crowd outside, torn between pity, hatred, and morbid curiosity. The monotony of waiting becomes unbearable, and he begins to crave the execution as a reprieve from his grim surroundings. His thoughts linger on loved ones, especially Tess and John, whose fates haunt him. The tension escalates when June arrives in full military regalia, signaling the approaching execution time.

June’s arrival marks a pivotal moment. She formally offers the protagonist a final request, subtly mouthing "John" to prompt him. When he asks to see his brother, Commander Jameson reluctantly agrees. The reunion with John is brief and heart-wrenching; John, visibly weakened, urges the protagonist to face death with defiance. Their exchange underscores the injustice of their situation—John, innocent and kind, trapped in the same brutal system as his rebellious brother. The protagonist is left grappling with guilt and sorrow.

The chapter closes with the protagonist steeling himself for what comes next. June’s cryptic actions hint at a possible escape plan, but the stakes are perilously high. The protagonist’s resolve hardens as he prepares to confront his fate, whether through June’s intervention or his own defiance. The emotional weight of John’s words—"scare them all the way until the end"—echoes in his mind, reinforcing his determination to

resist the Republic’s cruelty until his last breath.



Chapter 38: Part Two: June 8

The chapter begins with June’s internal conflict as she is detained by Thomas, a soldier who suspects her of stealing an electro-bomb. Despite her initial urge to attack him, she feigns cooperation as he leads her to the basement for interrogation. Thomas confronts her about the missing weapon, citing her access to the area and her recent interactions with Day as suspicious. June maintains her innocence, but Thomas remains unconvinced, his hand lingering near his gun as tensions rise between them. The scene underscores June’s precarious position and her need to stay composed under pressure.

A sudden explosion disrupts the interrogation, caused by the Patriots’ electro-bomb detonating in the square. Seizing the opportunity, June disables the basement’s power grid, plunging the area into darkness and neutralizing Thomas’s gun. She escapes up the stairs, counting down the 109 seconds before the guns reactivate. The chaos outside—crowds scrambling for money raining from the sky—provides cover as she races to rescue Day from the firing squad. The explosion and ensuing disorder highlight the Patriots’ coordinated efforts to disrupt the execution and buy June time.

June reunites with John and Day, who is weakened and barely conscious. Together, they navigate the chaotic halls, but with soldiers closing in, their escape seems impossible. John realizes they need more time and makes a sacrificial decision: he turns back, intending to distract the soldiers by offering himself as a decoy. June is horrified but understands his choice, as it gives her and Day a chance to reach the exits. The moment is fraught with tension, emphasizing the dire stakes and the lengths to which the characters will go to protect one another.

The chapter ends on a cliffhanger as John runs toward the firing squad yard, leaving June and Day to continue their escape. June’s calculations reveal they still lack enough time to reach safety before the guns reactivate, and the sound of approaching soldiers

heightens the urgency. John’s selfless act underscores the themes of sacrifice and loyalty, while June’s strategic mind races against the clock. The unresolved tension sets the stage for the next chapter, leaving readers anxious about the fates of all three characters.



Chapter 39: Part Two: Day 9

The chapter opens with the protagonist, Day, waking up disoriented on a rain-soaked rooftop in Valencia, struggling to recall recent events. He remembers a firing squad, an explosion, and soldiers, realizing he should be dead. June, his companion, reveals they were rescued by the Patriots but are now hunted. Day is shocked to learn he's free, though confused about how they escaped Batalla Hall. June directs him to look at nearby JumboTrons, where a headline declares his execution—yet the footage shows a boy resembling him being shot. Day's disbelief grows as he recognizes subtle differences in the boy's appearance.

Upon closer inspection, Day realizes the executed boy is his brother, John. Overwhelmed, he confronts June, demanding answers. She explains that John sacrificed himself by pretending to be Day, buying them time to escape. Day grapples with guilt, believing he didn't deserve this act of selflessness. June, injured and shivering, reveals her failed plan to save both brothers, emphasizing John's deliberate choice to protect Day. The weight of his brother's sacrifice leaves Day emotionally shattered, questioning his own actions and their consequences.

As the rain pours, Day and June share a moment of raw vulnerability. June comforts him, affirming John's decision was intentional—a brother's act of love to ensure Day could save their younger brother, Eden. Day reflects on the chain of events leading to this tragedy, wondering if different choices could have altered their fate. The emotional intensity peaks as Day questions why June risked everything for him, to which she responds with quiet conviction, acknowledging he was right about their corrupt world.

The chapter closes with their embrace, a tender moment amidst the storm. Day finally allows himself to grieve, while June's unwavering support underscores their deepened bond. The scene captures their shared loss, resilience, and the beginning of their

journey forward. The chapter’s emotional core lies in themes of sacrifice, guilt, and the enduring strength of familial and romantic love in the face of adversity.



Chapter 40: Part Two: June 9

The chapter opens in Barstow, California, during the aftermath of Hurricane Evonia, where the Republic’s propaganda broadcasts dominate the news. Despite official reports of Day’s execution, whispers among the populace suggest he survived with the help of a Republic soldier. The protagonists, Day and June, navigate the storm-soaked streets, disguised and cautious, seeking refuge in a secluded rail yard. The oppressive atmosphere underscores the constant threat of capture, while June’s grief for her lost dog, Ollie, and memories of her brother, Metias, add emotional weight to their flight.

Day and June take shelter in an abandoned railway car, exhausted and soaked but relieved to find a dry space. Their banter reveals their strained yet intimate connection, with June admiring Day’s resilience despite his injuries. The conversation shifts to their next steps: Day insists on finding Tess, a young girl he cares for, before heading to the warfront to rescue his brother, Eden. June, though wary of the risks, refuses to let him go alone, emphasizing their need to stick together for safety and mutual support.

Their bond deepens as they share a tender moment, kissing and reflecting on their intertwined fates. Day questions why June would risk her life for him, but she dismisses his doubts, affirming their shared foolishness. The emotional intensity peaks as they discuss their contrasting backgrounds, imagining how their lives might have been different if their roles were reversed. Day explains the symbolism behind his name, representing hope and living one day at a time, which resonates with June’s own need for closure with her past.

As the storm rages outside, June and Day curl up together, finding solace in each other’s presence. June privately bids farewell to her brother, Metias, drawing strength from his memory while Day watches her with understanding. The chapter closes with them awaiting dawn, their future uncertain but their resolve strengthened by their

connection. The rain and thunder mirror their turbulent journey, blending danger with fleeting moments of peace and intimacy.

