

Christian Moore

03/13/2025

Multimedia Storytelling

Harbinger of Unbridled Retribution

Emergency sirens echoed throughout the United Bank building that lay in ruin. Lance 'The Bastion' Lazarus, was pinned beneath the debris of a crumbled brick wall. The unsettled asbestos and concrete dust scoured into the shadows as a dark entity, draped with reaper-like regalia, emerged from a shadowed abyss. The fragrance of death followed his gloomful elegance, Void 'The Harbinger' Vikstrom descended before his foe.

Vikstrom approached the helpless hero adorned with an eagle symbol on his chest, and a sun-logo embroidered cape. The cape was caught between some nearby rubble, but waved as the cold wind and rain rushed in from the hallowed ceiling. With haste, he clasped Bastion's golden hair, and aggressively jerked his head to face his flesh-rotten face.

"These people see you as their savior," said Vikstrom. "Allow me to be the ferryman to reality. You are nothing more than an untrained canine without a leash. You are a hypocritical fool who cares not for the collateral consequences of your actions. That being said, do not spend time dwelling on your injured ego. Instead, I would suggest repenting for your sins."

"Repent? I have devoted my life to serving this country and its people. Not only that, I'm a man of G-God. Who the hell do you think you are? I need to repent?"

Bastion gripped a piece of rebar extending from the damaged wall next to him, ripped it out, and spiraled it towards Vikstrom's skeletal head. With the wave of his hand, the rebar was diminished to metal sand.

"Is cold-blooded murder not a sin to you Mr. Lazarus?" asked Vikstrom.

"I've only taken life when a situation warranted it," said Bastion.

With every ounce of Bastion's remaining strength, he hurled the concrete debris that had pinned him towards Vikstrom. The debris soared through the air with tremendous velocity, but was avoided by Vikstrom as he evaporated into black smoke.

"I was hoping you'd stop talking," said Bastion as he attempted to sit upright.

The debris landed across the room, now enshrouded in black smoke.. The violent howl of a child piercingly echoed through the ruin. A port hole in the looming smoke opened to reveal a young boy crawling towards a debris pile..

"Mamma," the boy screamed. The young boy frantically shifted the concrete wreckage to reveal a white tennis shoe with a streak of crimson painting its way to the sole. "Mamma, hold on. I will get you out," cried the boy.

The Bastion's cape ominously took on a mind of its own and repeatedly struck Bastion like an aggressive serpent. The cloak ensnared his arm and slammed him into the ground. "Run kid", he screamed. The port hole in the fog grew larger, providing Bastion with a clear visual of the young boy.

Blinded by emotion and dust, the poor boy fell victim to a hailstorm of shifting debris that consumed the boy. He and his mother were now at peace, were now entombed in collateral of the Bastion, the people's hero.

"Murderer," echoed Vikstroms voice throughout the ruin.

The Bastion screamed in rage and began to break down into tears as he flailed in an attempt to free himself from the possessed cape.

Void Vikstrom reemerged from the shadowed veil and stepped his way towards Bastion. With intense aggression, Vikstrom implanted his rotted toes onto Bastion's head. With the twist of his flesh rotten toes, he forced Bastion's head to pay respects to the silent tomb of the family he unknowingly decimated.

"Do you remember the apartment complex fire on 49th and Davy last year? Do you remember kicking down the door of apartment 213 and seeing a black man, begging you for help as his mother lay at his feet, gasping for air in a smoke filled room? Do you remember the man begging you to clear the debris that you created as you kicked down the door? No? Well of course not".

Vikstrom rolled the sleeve of his left arm and kneeled beside Bastion to reveal charred flesh. "The Bastion wouldn't get the ego hit he became addicted to; it wouldn't look good in the press now, would it?" Instead, you sought for a young girl and her cat as the rest of us burned in the inferno".

"I've rescued many people from house fires. I can't r-remember them all," cried Bastion through his clenched teeth. *I'm no killer. These people... these damn people are always in the way. It's survival of the fittest.*

"Now there is the real Lance Lazarus," Vikstrom whispered hauntingly.

With the quick snap of his hand, Vikstrom ordered the cape to raise Bastion to his knees. Malicious intent followed as the cold hearted swipe of Vikstrom's shadowed claw defiled the battered face of his foe. The Bastion of the people adorned a crimson mask as he collapsed to the stone-cold tile. His scream of agony was followed by the spat of blood and tooth towards the menace before him.

“Rest now, false prophet. Seek redemption in the next life. Be a good man,” Vikstrom chanted as he faded into the shadows.

As if grace overtook Bastion, his pain was lifted as his soul steamed from his nose and levitated its way into the shadows alongside Vikstrom. The cape that once stood for the people’s beacon of hope revealed its true colors in its final moments. A crimson red dawn had corrupted the Sun emblem embroidered on the cape.