Transylvanian Blood

The year is 2375, humans are still alive despite what is left of the ozone layer, attracting harmful radiation, solar flares continue to threaten us, and number our days. Everybody has heard the rumor that politicians are corrupt, when really everything around us is corrupt, the murdering of our brothers and sisters, nobody will fall to that bounty, but a select few. We are being watched, everywhere we drive, every e-mail we send, every chat or profile search through social media, and everything we buy. the only way to prevent this data from getting used wrongly, is to play a friendly game of hide and seek, with an unfriendly twist, and on the day of the game, it was time for me to enter, it was going to decide my fate, no matter what religious or political viewpoint I believed in.

I had no idea what I was getting myself into, when I crossed the boundaries, from what s known as South Hauntington Beach, into the chaos I call hell. What is a border? An imaginary line between beliefs? The same line that tears our souls apart, spilling every ounce of blood from a cold, dark carcass.

The world is not safe, will anyone wake up from this nightmare? The nightmare continues to feed on every wrong choice you make, feasting on the murders, substance abuse, every sexual craving, and that  a few pleasures this beast has. This is all the more reason for this game.

The ones who tame the beast is the phantom mafia, the creators of the game. Nobody is safe anymore, we are all preyed upon. This is what they want, they thrive on fear; but this is only my opinion, maybe you will believe me once we enter the game. it is a simple game of hide and seek, but once s the rules  change. This all went from a game of laughter, to one where we fight for our lives. The only choice  now is between life and death.

Are you ready? You don’t have to do this you know.

I must, there’s no turning back.

Well, here’s your gun. Remember, you only have so much ammunition.

Don’t worry about me, you should be more worried about yourself. I can handle it.

I grabbed the gun, and as the clock ticked closer the middle aged dreary competitor climbs down the tower and reaches the starting line. His backpack dangles from the shoulder.

Nobody makes it back alive you know. They get caught, and there they tie you on a board, raise it, and drive a stake through the heart, right there.

The decision is made, I’m going on with it.

Then I snap back the gun and load it.

Ready to begin this game?

As ready as I’ll ever be.

Okay, you hear that, he’s ready!

Begin the countdown.

And 5, 4, 3...

The game has become  known for its gruesome crucifixion which is the punishment if one  loses to The Phantom Mafia. Every street corner is unsafe, infested with a swarm of lies, there is no way of telling who is a friend or foe.  The worst sin, in a family of sins, is not something in the past, but is something here and now, and something one has to deal with all the time.

When looking into the distance, I am reminded of those defeated by the game. I see the pinned bodies dangling lifeless, their heads hanging forward, blood pouring down their sternum from the stake buried within their ribcage. There they hang, raised and left to sway lifeless in the cool air, where all that can be smelled is rotting flesh; there the bodies hang, decorating the horizon where the sun sets, putting a final end to this misery.

What has gotten into me? Is it a thirst for vengeance, or is it something more I crave? Whatever it is I must go on. Call me crazy, but I’m about to risk my life, that is if I make it back alive. By volunteering to be included in the collection of souls the disbelief in myself has been challenged.

Then it happened, the starting shot was fired, it was  as if my heart stopped. Is the world coming to an end, or is it all a lie? The race is on, and who do I have to thank for this, but myself. My first checkpoint is not that far, according to the map it is about twenty blocks away, but somewhere within those block is a phantom.

If I am going to complete this course and hopefully survive, I have to think smart, I have to cover as much ground as possible with the sun up. Otherwise, I’m not safe. With the sun swiftly setting, I can waste no time and must jog a steady pace towards my checkpoint.

I keep the gun Ii was given tucked within my pants and make my way, carefully disguising myself  in the shadows. There’s no way of telling how much sunlight I have left, so I go on.

The memories, the mixed emotions, I have loved ones to return to, but what if I don’t make it back alive? Quit telling yourself that. Of course you’ll make it back alive. The truth is, I’m afraid. I’m afraid for my life. Is this where it ends? It is far from over, and the game is a test, a decision as to whether you are good enough, if you have what it takes to defeat The Phantom Mafia.