

## The Hope of My Life

Torture and death became my only friends. However, my own force of will outweighed the gravity of the torture and death I knew so personally.

Long ago, before I came into existence, my family ruled the continent of land I grew up on. The land, lush with pine and redwood trees, embodied beauty. Water, found in limitless abundance, tasted pure and gave eternal youth with each drop. I remember climbing the trees as a small child until I reached the highest branches without fear or exhaustion. The pure, royal blood flowing in my veins allowed me a great advantage over my people. All members of the royal family retained this same advantage. Flight, a gift from my bloodline usually manifested once members in the royal household reached adulthood. Adulthood for me remained a few more years away. Flight, my sole reason for waiting in silence, held little appeal to me. I hated my bloodline because I knew my bloodline prevented my own demise. Unlike the other members of my family, I came into existence being able to fly.

The wind rustled the trees unexpectedly. I stood on the edge of a secluded cliff, elevated above my surroundings. My perceptive eyes, ever watchful, missed nothing. I waited for the screams death would bring. Nightfall, delayed only by time, would signify the commencement of torture and death. I refused to take a direct part in such torture, which diminished my own drive for life. The very idea of my people tasting death solely as a result of their birthright, became a monstrosity in my mind.

My people taken as slaves to a warring planet, occupied positions under tyrannical masters. I could not think a way to easily help my people. This option, never left open to me, held little of my focus at any point in time. I refused to entertain these thoughts, to do so ensured my own demise. I watched in rapid succession the capture, torture, and deaths of countless members of my people. My life, spared only as a result of my heightened abilities remained morbid; a stark contrast of my former days. I found my only reprieve in the rare beauty hidden from the dead eyes of my masters. I found great comfort standing high above the pungent stench of death. I chose solitude, because the silence made way for thoughts of better days. My thoughts enabled my very life to adopt a continued hope, which propelled me forward through time. My own life continued through my own force of will. I lost track of time as I lost myself within my own thoughts. Complacency became my lover while hope became my spouse. Under the rule of my tyrannical masters, I committed an abundance of treacherous and unexcusable crimes. For my own crimes, I remained unforgiving of my masters and even more unforgiving of myself. My hope, ever growing, refused to be snuffed out by my own crimes.

I looked down at the bundle in my arms and allowed myself to smile slightly. The child slept silently, oblivious to the terrors of slavery. My hope, wrapped up in the child's very existence outweighed the gravity of the torture and death I knew so personally. The child, my son, gave me hope.