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Iron Stream

## *Academy*

### **Chapter 1: The Child**

Smoke engulfs the skies of Section 6. A child is born to a man and a woman. The man and woman, like everyone else, work at one of the many factories in this almost completely industrial section. The child joins other children in mindless playing. The child, supposedly, will soon be taught how to work in the factories, in this section, the only lessons he would ever receive.

The Child walks down the streets of the industrial wasteland, the murmurs of elders telling stories of a past holding beautiful blue skies and white twinkles at night. These elders hold the only small amounts of truth known to this society. The child views the factories, views the workers. All the Child sees is the workers, like zombies, going to their work and coming back. The child questions these actions, already from a young age separating himself from the rest of his people.

The Child, often playing, discovers an attraction to the elders' storytelling. A nonsense which not even the Child's parents could make out. The elders are the last people in this section with any method of true, convenient communication. Wasting it with the senile manors of their unnatural ages.

He listens, slowly moving away from his social life with children his own age. He gains a fascination with their language, realizing that they can communicate with each other in a much

more mannered way than the people he is used to. The elders are castaways in this section, their language not understood, and not passed on to their children. Their children, the generation of the Child's parents, learn communication solely based on their work. Talking in commands they hear from superiors. Listening to a slurred English, only known to the elders, the Child starts to learn.

*They called it the Great Divide, when the nation was split from 50 states into 18 sections. This plan was in the works for decades, the government slowly building on the idea with every new addition, until it became nearly perfect.*

*They would turn America into an industrial monster. A plan to give America a monopoly on every possible business. Each section, dedicated to a specific manufacturing process. America was now the Grand Society.*

## **Chapter 2: The Boy**

The Boy is completely detached from how his society wishes him to be. Because of the education he has turned the elders' nonsense into, he realizes he is not bound to the chains of this world's false reality. While kids his age are learning how to work in the factories, the Boy dodges his parents, scraping what little knowledge is left in his section.

He begins to speak to the elders. The ones he befriended at an early age are near brain dead at this point, but he still suckles the leaking milk of consciousness. And the story begins to piece itself together.

*The government realized the funds needed for the plan of the Great Divide were astronomical, and they needed to pull money from other areas. Already in a slow decline, the government decided to deplete financial resources, slowly turning public schooling into a thing*

*people feared. The 1% were making a lot of money from the plans of the division, and were starting to upgrade already existing private schools, combining them. Slowly education became available to the 1%.*

*Then it really happened, America rebranded. The government decided to cut public education funding totally. Expecting rebellion, the government completely upped security in sections, limiting people to their specific industrial neighborhoods. And eventually, the people got used to it.*

The Boy knew about the rich folk, the Higher Class, their neighborhood in the center of the section, surrounded by the industrial wasteland. He found it odd how his parents and everyone around him worshiped these people. Yes, they controlled their jobs, but the Boy could not understand why they controlled their lives.

*18 sections, each a manufacturing beast. Factories, lumber yards, power plants. They were run by the government, but overall ruled by corporations. These corporations, and the people working for them, became the leaders of this world, the leaders of the Grand Society. Each of their sections, a neighborhood in the middle for them, surrounded themselves with what their company does. Surrounded by their employees' living space and their jobs, controlling them was easy. Especially with the lack of their education.*

That word caused curiosity for the Boy, he had known what teaching was, but did not realize what the significance was. His idea of teaching was learning what he had to do for his job for the rest of his life. He did not realize that in the Grand Society, an education could lead one to being a High Class.

*Each High Class neighborhood contains a school. 18 schools in an entire nation. The teachers, also being High Class, simply teach their ways, so the students can continue the businesses, the surrounding neighborhoods, contain no schools, the only education they get is learning how to do their specific job. It is an infinite loop of oppression.*

An egg develops in the Boy's brain, a fragment of a thought, the thought to change this.

### **Chapter 3: The Teenager**

The Teenager has used his years well, his time being growing, developing thoughts. Unable to write, he holds these thoughts exclusively in his mind.

The Teenager walks down the dusty street of Section 6, not being able to see more than 50 feet in front of him, the factories have truly turned his section into a no man's land. Reading signs along the road, curiously decoding the sounds and meaning of each letter. He knows everyone can read these signs, but they don't know what The Teenager knows. He knows the extent of these symbols, these letters, he's figured that one is able to expand on the words known to his people. He can craft letters into whatever he wants.

The elders, mostly dead at this point, direct him towards an old library. One of the last libraries, even before the great divide, it stands hidden in one of the worst parts of Section 6. The Teenager arrives at his destination. A crumbling building in the middle of a row of unused tents that was previously what the government claimed as public housing. He struggles, pulling and pushing at the door of this clearly unsafe building. The walls crumbling at his attempts, it almost seems as if the Teenager is risking his life for this experience, risking his life for the curiosity of knowledge.

Like that, he is in. His eyes widened at the spectacle. Words, letters, filling up walls and walls. The dust left him coughing, but The Teenager is on a mission. He picks up the first book he sees, and while it nearly deteriorates with human touch, he begins to read.

Each book, different histories, different words. The Teenager wasn't just expanding his knowledge on how the Grand Society was created, his mind was growing, enveloping words and letters. He was learning the art of wordplay.

Above all that, his mind was inevitably fixed on changing his situation, he focused on nothing else but creating the solution to the forces that had persecuted him and his people. These forces which his people don't even know exist. The Teenager read to uncover the tactics of the government and the principles of education. He learned how to spread and convince knowledge, but most importantly he learned how to teach it.

The Teenager fills his mind with the infinite knowledge of generations. Over years of coming back to the library, The Teenager knew what he wanted and how he was going to do it.

#### **Chapter 4: The Man**

The walls begin to be put up, the building, a mere facade for what truly matters in this construction. Construction workers, volunteering from around the section, have trouble understanding what they are building, but are convinced that it is for the better of their people. The Man sees this as progress, using the weak minds of the people of Section 6 to ultimately strengthen them .

Bricks, with letters are put up, the Man must oversee this process due to the workers not knowing the order the letters would be in. The Man knows this is the exact reason he is building what he is building. The man stands back to admire this sign and it reads,

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A building worth more than infinite bricks and mortar. A building that will begin a new legacy for the people of section 6. This building will begin a revolution in the entirety of the Grand Society. The value of this building is astronomical.

It is complete.

The Man walks through the gaping halls of the building, the design resembling that of the High Class schools, but flipping it. Nothing but pure vision. The man wishes to give an education equal to the education of those academies. But being one that allows knowledge to spread. It is a school that teaches teaching.

He wishes for every man, woman, child, to be able to come out of the program with not just the knowledge they were taught, but with the craving to constantly learn more. And more than that, the craving to teach others this craving. He wishes for people to experience the processes he went through. He wishes for the people to spread to the other parts of section 6, and start schools themselves. A mission for complete expansion, for the people of the Lower Class to match and become what their oppressors are. A mission for equality.

This Academy, a chance for redemption, a chance for the Lower Class to experience the thing they have been missing, the thing that has prevented them from being able to make their own decisions and have freedom. This Academy is a chance for an education.