

*As a veteran of the Vietnam War, I have learned how to defend myself in any situation. Basic training was the closest thing to Hell I've ever experienced. Burning lungs, deep slashes, bruised knees and fear was all a part of my daily routine. Constantly pushing and pushing, working and working just to keep up with the rest.*

*Educated to kill. Brainwashed not to care. Learning how to quickly cause demise. 2,709,918 uniformed Americans striving into their deathbeds. We all knew this war wouldn't end well.*

*The M16A1 at my side as my only trusted ally and best friend. Learning how to use it was nothing short of difficult, but well worth it. Any savage within 1,000 feet of me was in big trouble.*

Setting down my pen, my mind folds within itself while a flashback begins to play as if projected upon a movie screen.

Numerous memories of the war impregnated with horror; thoughts of mortality suffocate me with fear and strain my heart. I hope no one else ever has to go through what has tormented my psyche. But, the world we live in is filled with pain and sorrow. Essentially, life is survival of the fittest.

My poor, poor Katniss; the Hunger Games is a gift from the devil no one fancied. I was in the town square when it happened. Primrose, my son's daughter, was unfortunately chosen from the cruel glass ball. I stared in disbelief as my worst nightmare came true, for Primrose was not like Katniss, handy with a bow and able to support herself, she was young and fragile.



Then by an act of God, Katniss volunteers to stand in her place. I felt the muscles in my throat relax, but the thought of her risking it all was too much to bear.

I knew what needed to be done; a talk with Katniss was past due.

The capital gives the tributes about a week's worth of time before they are to begin training. But, was I to teach her my skills of torture, full of immoral acts of sin, and remember those bitter days of war, or let her try to get by with the guidance of the capital?

I decide not to give into my selfishness. Katniss needs these skills to live.

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I approach her after the ceremony releases as she's about to depart onto her walk home.

"Katniss, I must speak with you." She turns her head in the direction of my voice while her face depicts feelings of confusion.

"Who are you...?"

"I am your grandfather."

"I thought you were dead. Where have you been all this time?"

"I brought it upon myself not to let you have any knowledge of my existence after the death of your father. There is little time; you must learn to better your chances in the game. Come quickly, my dear."

I could tell she wanted some time to take the situation in, but there was no time to spare. Looking past the confusion, she promptly follows me to my cottage that lies along the boundary of District 12.

