#CHAPTER-001

EXT. BOULEVARD MEDIAN-PARK - KANSAS CITY, MO - NIGHT (GROUNDHOG DAY, 2023)

On a clear night on Groundhog Day, the full moon lights up a Madonna-and-Child–like scene. A CINNAMON-COLORED YOUNG WOMAN in a navy maxicoat and a navy burka sits on a travertine limestone bench in a boulevard median-park.

A TODDLER hangs from a wool sling around the woman’s neck. The young woman’s head is downturned. Her eyes are locked in a loving gaze at the toddler, who looks up at its mother with doll’s eyes. Both mother and child have been shot in the head and both are dead.

Folks on the east and west sides of the street cross to the median island and encircle the scene to get a better look. A few venture to guess the name of the culprit, and those whisper his name discreetly, out of the side of their mouths to the person standing next to them.

EXT. BOULEVARD MEDIAN-PARK - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, a SLENDER, COPPER-COLORED WOMAN breaks through the circle and steps forward. Onlookers stare at her. The pale blue moonlight encircles her massive Afro.

The woman seems calm and composed. But then, she recognizes the dead young woman. Her stride falters, her mouth twists, and she drops to her knees and puts her hand on the dead woman’s knee.

KHADIJAH

Why?

A brash YOUNG RECRUIT, hoping to demonstrate his knowledge of police procedures, reaches out to grab the grief-stricken woman by the arm to pull her away.

But calmly, the CHIEF steps out of the circle of bystanders and with an unwavering arm, lifts her from her knees.

CHIEF

(softly) Khadijah.

Khadijah sways, as if she is going to faint, but the Chief wraps his arms around her shoulders and holds her up. She buries her head in the Chief’s wool overcoat, and in the

moonlight, the two sway silently side-to-side.

2.

A red-tailed hawk flies overhead making a KEE-EEEE screech. Khadijah abruptly straightens her spine and lifts her tear- stained face to the sky as if the screech is a signal from God.

But, seeing only a hawk winging its way across the night sky, her hope dissipates, and her body deflates and sags against the Chief’s robust chest.

EXT. BOULEVARD MEDIAN-PARK - LATER

More and more bystanders amass along the sidewalk. Police officers prevent them from crossing to the median island where the bodies are. The officers dressed in riot-gear carry batons and other more aggressive crowd-control measures - pepper spray, tear gas, rubber bullets, smoke canisters, and stun grenades.

An OFFICER ON HORSEBACK with a bullhorn repeatedly barks a dispersal order.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (KANSAS CITY, 2023)

AHMAD, Khadijah’s son—a broad-chested, snake-hipped, tawny- colored young man with dozens of shoulder-length dreadlocks swinging around his face, screeches his door-less, roof-less, safari-style Jeep to a halt.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Ahmad quickly exits the Jeep.

He sprints to where his mother Khadijah and the Chief stand.

Ahmad gasps, puts his fist to his mouth in horror at the sight of his dead sister.

He stumbles back, momentarily paralyzed by grief.

Ahmad then turns abruptly, dashes back to his Jeep, and swerves it into the middle lane of southbound traffic.

He grabs a fifteen-inch bullhorn from his passenger seat with urgency.

Ahmad leaps onto the side-step of his Jeep, raising the bullhorn to his mouth.

3.

AHMAD

Tell the police to protect and serve us.

The onlookers repeat Ahmad’s phrase.

ONLOOKERS

Protect and serve us!

Ahmad, energized by the crowd's response, continues his chant with increasing intensity.

AHMAD

We demand justice! Protect and serve us!

The crowd echoes his call with growing fervor.

ONLOOKERS

Protect and serve us! Justice for Fatima and Aminah!

Ahmad's eyes scan the crowd, noticing the presence of a local news crew capturing the moment. He locks eyes with the REPORTER and marches towards her with determination.

REPORTER

This is a tragic night for the community. Ahmad, can you tell us what happened?

AHMAD

Put your mic down. Show some sympathy—some empathy—for my family. Feel something.

REPORTER

Who do you think is responsible for this?

AHMAD

Ask Sergeant Sauron or Captain Mordore.

Ahmad turns back to the crowd, his voice booming through the bullhorn.

AHMAD (CONT'D)

Protect and serve us!

The crowd's chant becomes a roar, reverberating through the night.

4.

ONLOOKERS

Protect and serve us!

The Chief, seeing the situation escalating, approaches Ahmad cautiously.

CHIEF

Ahmad, come down. Don’t provoke the officers. Come down, son.

Reluctantly, Ahmad steps down from the running board of his Jeep, allowing the Chief to put his arms around him. The Chief raises his left hand in the air and signals for his officers to stand down.

The officers pull their dogs away and put their batons in their holsters in response to his nonverbal command.

A city ambulance arrives and the bodies of Fatima and Aminah are taken away. Onlookers, moved by the scene, slowly begin to disperse, heading back to their homes in the nearby

Village Shire housing complex.