





WANDSWORTH PRISON CELLS

WOULD YOU DENY A DYING MAN A FINAL SMOKE?

I'M DOWN TO MY LAST FOUR. THEY ARE ON RATION, YOU KNOW.

SHOW SOME MERCY. IT'S NOT LIKE I MURDERED YOU AFTER ALL.

IMAGINE THIS CIGARETTE IS A BAD THING...A GREAT EVIL.

AND HERE ARE TWO GOOD WOMEN AND ONE VERY, VERY GOOD MAN.

WOULD THEIR COMBINED WILLS BE ENOUGH TO PREVAIL?

ENOUGH WITH YOUR PUZZLES. YOU'VE WON ALREADY.

BUT WHY COME AFTER ME? WHY NOT THE ONE WHO MURDERED YOU AND LEFT YOU IN MY FAKAKTA ALLEY?

OY VEY, KARL. MYSELF I SHOULD CHASE?

LET ME TELL YOU HOW THIS WORKS.

For the briefest of times, there are two of us, arriving in tandem in the sacred place...

...the slayer and the slain, unwitnessed, unknown. And when the death rattle sounds, only one remains - the victim.

Victim of blade and burning, blinding and branding, drowning and disembowelling....

...year after decade after century after epoch. Same place, same time, same channel.

And then I am found, by some single agent of good or lone agent of death. As insignificant as a dead man's cigarette on a prison bench.

Then I wake up alone in some shallow grave or charnel house or steel shelf or marble slab...

...and the LONG HARVEST of change begins...

...a very English apocalypse.





SO WHAT HAPPENS TO ME NOW? THE LAKE OF BRIMSTONE, THE RING OF ICE? I COME BACK AS A MAGGOT OR A COCKROACH OR A BELGIAN?

OR ETERNAL CONDEMNATION FROM ESTHER AND THE REST OF MY WORTHLESS KIN?



ESTHER, NEEDHAM, MAHONEY... ALL YOUR HARVEST. THEY ARE SAFE ELSEWHERE.

YOU'LL NEVER SEE THEM AGAIN. FOR YOU THERE IS NOTHING. NOTHING AT ALL.



NOTHING?

THAT'S YOUR JUSTICE? HA. I'LL TAKE NOTHING.



NOTHING--EXACTLY THAT. DESIRE UNFULFILLED, HOPE FAILED, AMBITION CRUSHED, GREED UNSLAKED, REDEMPTION LOST.

NEVER TO RECEIVE FORGIVENESS, NEVER TO KNOW YOU ARE LOVED, KARL WEISSMAN. NOTHING. FOREVER.

