

*Chapter 10*  
*“Every Songwriter NEEDS To*  
*Spend Some Nights*  
*Here In Nashville”*



After reading a book about the future, the silence felt heavy. They couldn't move because the heaviness stunned them. Eventually, they set up camp wearing empty, sad faces.

None of them had any idea what the Twin Towers were, but clearly, they were massive buildings built in the future in New York City.

They took turns reading the messages, and their focus was no longer wrapped around the little artifact that might or might not bring them fame and fortune.

The Professor looked up at Madeline. Her perfectly geometric face gentle in the soft glow of the campfire. “How the hell can we trust this to be true? It makes no sense to our world.”

She smiled back. “I understand, but who would make up such a story, Professor? It’s too outlandish to not be real.”

Gorilla piped in between bites of lizard. This was a native delicacy that Alvaro cooked and the smell was intoxicating. “My concern is, where do we take this? Who can we trust to protect this information and use it at the right moment to stop the vicious attack?”

“Gorilla’s right. Who do we trust? There are a lot of specifics in that story. Names of who were responsible and the victims. Will they even be able to save them all? If this information was used to stop the deaths, how many would really listen, and would that change history? Are we allowed to even change history? Would something worse happen if we prevent this disaster? It’s very surreal, and frightfully scary in at least nine ways I can think of,” said Charlie.

“Agreed,” said Sarantos. “Sometimes time catches up to us.”



Madeline would have none of it. “We need to get this book to the state department. Someone there will use this information. They may not tell the world, but they could use the information to stop the attacks, and yes, it might change the future, but that’s not our decision to make. It’s our responsibility to get it into the hands of someone with greater authority to decide what to do with this critical knowledge.”

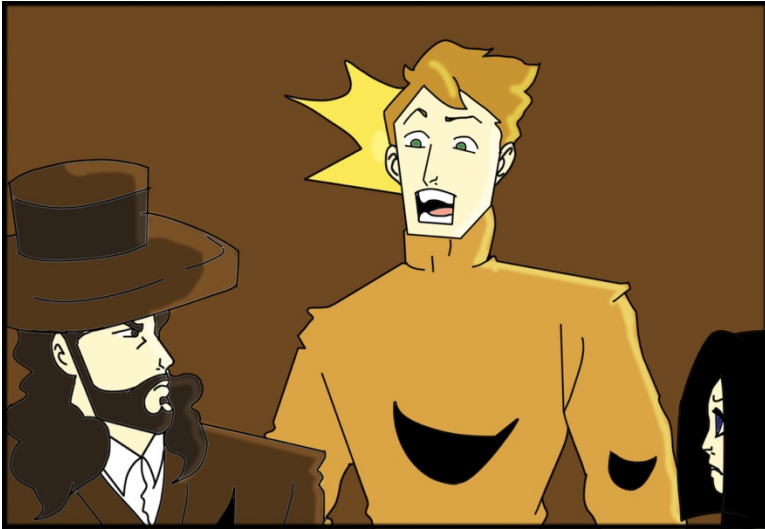
His laughter shook his body. “And more often than not, the greater authority is a network of nincompoops. Do we trust them to do the right thing? That’s highly debatable. Their why doesn’t have to match anyone else’s why.”

“I vote for the Doc’s theory if it is one. Really? We can’t trust anyone to do the right thing in this situation.” Gorilla went back to frowning and sipped on his water container.

Madeline pressed on. “We are lucky to have this information, but it needs to be in the government’s hands, right or wrong. We can’t decide something so important by ourselves.”

Charlie chimed in, “Madeline’s correct. We can’t decide what the right thing to do would be, but at least by turning it over to the proper officials, we can know we did the right thing for those people. Keeping it to ourselves won’t help stop it and it won’t help anybody.”

The Professor offered another solution. “It might. We could leave it with Gorilla in a private security vault inside a bank. He could leave the info and key to his children and their children and use it at the right time in history.”



Gorilla's jaw dropped, and his brows lifted. "Ah, Doc, that's nice and dandy, but what if I don't have kids?"

His voice rose in desperation. "Well, then Charlie. Both of you could have a key and be responsible for this delicate information getting into the right hands in the future too."

Charlie giggled. "Now I know you've lost your mind, Professor. That's an enormous responsibility!"

"What about me?" Madeline directed her question at Sarantos. "You're always the man with a plan, but we need to discuss it further and we should all agree."

Gorilla slid his hand over his mouth to chew and talk at the same time. “Baloney, this is driving me crazy. I agree with Madeline. We need further analysis and debate.”

“Good lord, kid, decide and take a stance. Pick a side, own up to your own thoughts or something like that.”

“Doc, let’s talk some more about it.”

They were going in circles. The Professor felt like the entire world was going crazy, but maybe it was just him? He pulled out his guitar. He needed to play to ease his heart and mind. It’d been a long and eventful day. He knew the other artifact no longer mattered, and this was the most important thing they could’ve found. No glory, but a piece of the utmost of importance, or a story made up by a madman. Who knew?

But it was the former reason he couldn’t release this information, anyway. No one would believe it and his name



would be tarnished, and possibly, he would find himself in a situation that allowed no recovery. It could ruin his future.

Sarantos sat down on a rock and looked around. You don't need to ask questions you already know the answers to. Madeline was reading a book like it was a bestseller hot off the press. Charlie and the kid were whispering and touching

each other's faces. Young love. Sometimes he couldn't remember what that ever felt like. Memories run away from you after a while. Alvaro was to the left, trying to conjure up a little more dinner, using the resources he stole from the jungle. He didn't understand why, but the lizard they just had tasted like chicken.

He forgot everyone around him as he strummed his guitar.

The air was thick with memories of a place he visited long ago, Nashville. The perfume, cigarette smoke, smell of whiskey and a lot of friendly people rushed back. He thought about how radio communication had taken off in Nashville and recently that little town had introduced a barn dance, which was quickly becoming well known as the Ole Opry.

He felt like he had a premonition, an attachment to the music world via energy cords from his body to an unheard voice of the future. Now, who was crazy?

He strummed several more chords and visualized himself in that barn in Nashville, where he would start the revolution of a different type of music.

The smile on his face hurt as it stretched from one ear to the other. This was a welcome distraction.



He now stood up on stage next to a guy named Johnny who walked a line across the barn stage, and together they were singing about the book from the future.

His voice rose with their chords. “A guy named Kenny rolled his whiskey dice and held the hand against the house, but didn’t know when to fold them. He was always hungry and workin’ into the heat of the night, chasing those music vibes. Most don’t know the secret, I was told it long ago, the road to the secret lies inside an ole barn door.”



Everyone stared at him, so he put down the guitar abruptly.

“Hey Doc, where’d that come from?” The kid’s face was lit up like a Christmas tree.

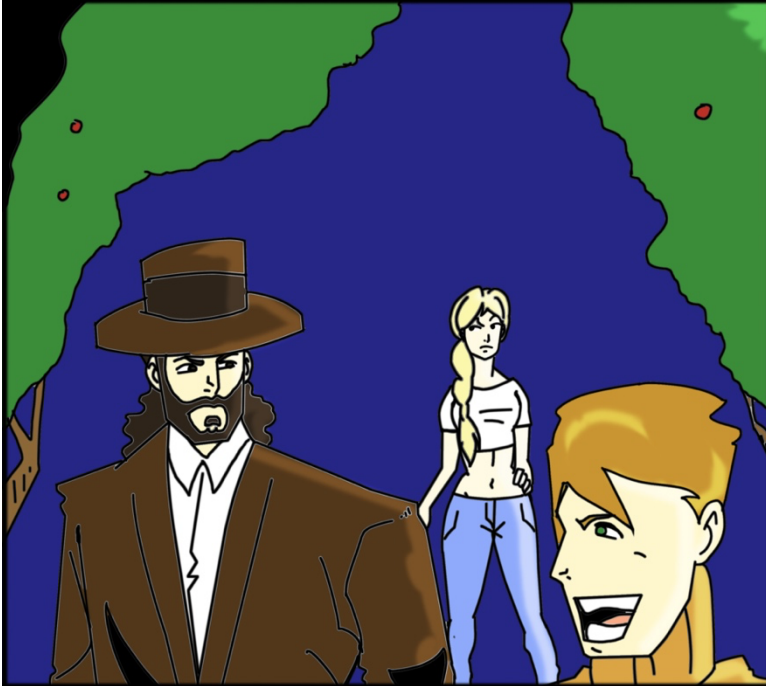
“Don’t know. I think I saw the future? I was a famous singer-songwriter up on stage at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville...”

Charlie laughed. “Applesauce. That’s too mad, Professor.”

“Thanks for the support, Charlie. So you don’t love my guitar playing then?”

“Hey Charlie, that’s all wet. After all we’ve seen and been through, I think the Doc is on to something. So, tell us Doc, what’s the story?”

What happens is not as important as how you react to what happens. He didn’t want to do this with them. The beautiful cheeks of Madeline were glowing in blue flames and her eyes stared into his, dancing with excitement. Not of him, but his premonition. That bird was thrown into the future, even if they based it on nothing but speculation and visions.



“First off, everyone wants to be a songwriter, but they don’t want to put in the work to become a brilliant songwriter. It’s rare to write a great song in a few minutes, but it could happen though they are a minority.”

“And how, Doc,” giggled Gorilla. “You seem to struggle to get up on that bright lit stage. Not that you’re bad, but it takes lots of sweat and effort, but you’re wrapped up in mummy bandages, if you get my drift.”

Everyone laughed at the kid’s interpretation of exactly what the Professor did.

“Yes, kid. I’m wrapped up in mummy bandages. I had a thought about Nashville and that Ole barn Opry. It could be a future magical place where you could breathe in the music and spend a few nights there to soak in it.” Courage begins by trusting yourself.

“I can hear your cheering fans, Doc. You’re strutting up on that stage and listening to the crowd go crazy.”

“You have the right idea, kid... I’m working 9 to 5 and dreaming of a better life. I love what I do, but my time is valuable, and it’s hard to find the time to make it in the music world. I might do it when I retire, then I can spend all my nights in Nashville.”



Charlie frowned. “Sorry Professor. I understand. It’s your dream, but dreams have to be worked at. Your time is here, in study, and with your students. It’s rough when you have so many loves.”

“Yes, Charlie. I think if I’m being honest with myself that what we’re doing with our adventures, my teaching young minds, and music are my three loves. I work to connect to them daily if possible.”

Madeline stood up and walked over, and sat next to him. Perhaps she wasn't willing to go away quietly.

“I have three loves as well. Studying the synchronicities in the world, adventuring, and making the perfect spaghetti sauce.”

He grinned at her. “Madeline, I too, would love to taste the perfect spaghetti sauce.”

“Geez, Doc. You two have a lot in common.”

Charlie elbowed him.

“Applesauce. Why'd you do that Charlie?”

“You know what, Gorilla? I'd love one of your candy bars right about now. You got any left?”

His pupils dilated in wonder. “You're a bearcat, Charlie. I have six left and one is yours.”

The kid got up and found his bag. He opened it up and pulled out a Babe Ruth bar.

“Anyone else?”



Madeline nodded.

The kid threw one at each girl.

Madeline said, “Thanks, I haven’t had one of these in a long time.”

“Glad I could make a lovely lady happy.”

He smiled at the exchange of his companions; he was glad to be there.

The music rang in his ears. It wouldn’t stop. He knew if he wanted to make it in the music industry, he’d have to work harder at it, but was he committed enough to the songwriting end of it?

Was he good enough? He could write anything down and call it a song, just like he did nowadays, but what made someone a brilliant songwriter versus just an average songwriter?

In his heart, he knew talent played a crucial role as well. Oh, he could be a one hit wonder if he got lucky. But what did he really want?



He wanted to be recognized in the industry he was in right now; he wanted a discovery that mattered to the scientific world. That was his top priority, his first passion.

Songwriting was here in the moment right now, but this moment belonged to the world, not him. He might like it, but it didn't mean the world was in the same place as his song was right now. The right beat and the right words with the right chords could send a meaningful message to others. If they weren't ready for it, though, it wouldn't work.

Alvaro interrupted him and served him a colorful vegetable medley that smelled like earth. He took a bite, never questioning what kind of food he ate. The soft veggie dish tasted like earth too, but not in a bad way.

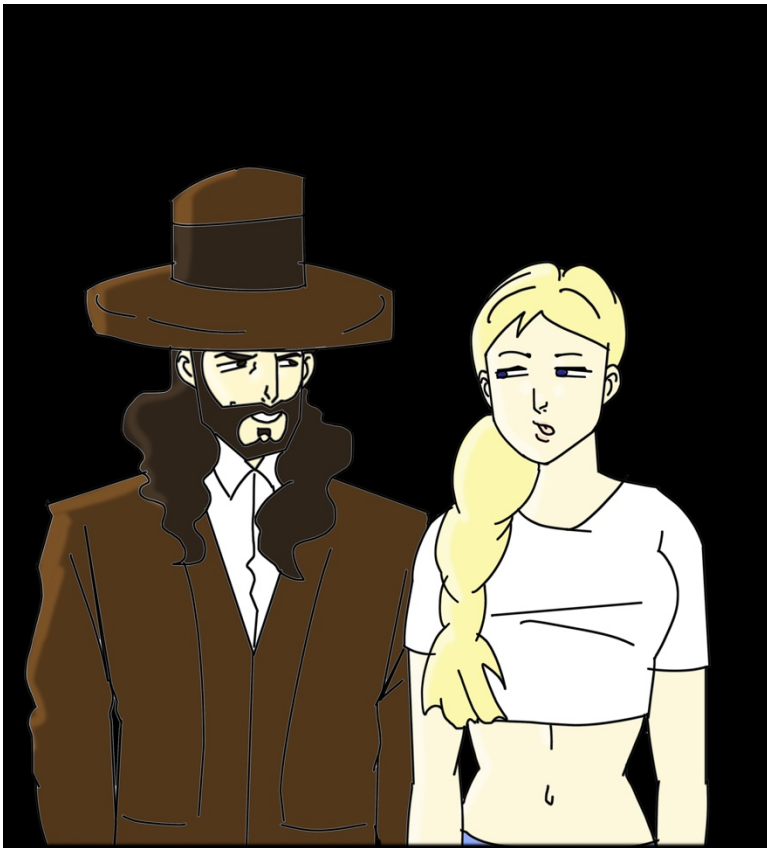
Life comprised many variables and timing.

His timing wasn't what he'd call perfect.

Proposals to move forward in the scientific and geographic world would depend on who he was, who he knew, and if it was believable. That's what he worked on the most—was it believable? But no matter how hard he tried, the believable part usually fell through.

How could he succeed in the music field when it was fickle, and he didn't spend enough time on it?

Art is always fickle. You need a gimmick, a clue, a knowledge of people. Their desires, longings, and where they're at in the moment in time. But you also need luck and timing.



He thought about that for a minute and smiled.

“What’re you smiling about, Professor?” Madeline had finished her candy bar and was licking her lips. It was very sensual.

“Oh, how to work towards success in the music industry without arrogance and anger.”

“Well, Professor. Art is fickle and sometimes you might love what you do or create, but it doesn’t guarantee others will.”

“How right you are, my charming Madeline.” He hadn’t meant to say that, but it slipped out.

Her face lit up, and her eyes grew.

Maybe he hit a soft spot? It exhausted Sarantos to pursue women and not have it work out.

Women were fickle. He stared at her braided hair and marveled at how it glistened. He was so weak with beautiful women.

“Thank you, Professor. That’s a nice compliment. Sometimes I forget that I have several nice feminine

qualities because I'm usually so busy playing in the dirt." Her smile washed his heart with love.

"Well, you have gorgeous skin, if I might add. So, no need for make-up."

She chuckled. "That's good then, I have no time for such nonsense."

She was just his type. Was he falling in love? How he wished she could cater to his needs and hide many of his warts. *Stop thinking that way.* Why couldn't he just have a girl as a friend?

He coughed, a way to draw attention away from the topic.

"The music thing is hard. When I was younger, I thought of being a composer."

"Interesting."

She was interested in his story. He could tell.

The night felt chillier as he noticed she wrapped her arms around herself and moved in a little closer to the fire.

“I wrote a book once, but it’s different from writing a song. I wasn’t particularly good at writing songs.”

“Why not?” She looked puzzled.

“Writing a great song is more than just words. It’s fueled with passion, and that passion needs to lift the listener off the ground. The singer’s voice falls out into the audience, touching their soul so they will never forget.”

Madeline looked into the flames. Her eyes glowed.

“You make it sound complicated.”

“It is. Do I really want screaming people pawing at me, or is it more about my voice being heard?”

“Sure, you want to reach them, not addict them.”



“Yes, that’s it. That’s when it’s a hit, but wouldn’t it be the bomb to spend a few nights in Nashville to learn more about how to be the best songwriter ever and to stand on the old barn stage at the Grand Ole Opry??”