Book 1:

The Hunt

Book 2:

The Maze

Novels by Blake Jeffreys

The Hunt

Book 1

Chapter 1

The United States have crumbled. The original states have been divided into 25. All the states must participate in a year long event. 49 of each gender are offered up along with 2 male hunters, to be tracked down and killed. The last one left at the end of the event will be spared from the rest. For the rebellion against State 1, every year there will be a massacre of an event. This event will be known as The Hunt. "I didn't want to move, didn't want to do anything. Fang was not waiting for me out in the living room. Tomorrow morning, when I wake up, Fang would still be gone." "Ahh, another good one." I spoke to myself, trying not to wake up my roommate, Miles. I had just finished reading Fang, by James Patterson. "I need to see if anyone would trade some game for the next book, Angel." I said in a hushed whisper. Forgive me for not introducing myself, I am Chris Cornall, this is the book I wrote to spread my legend, of how a victim, an animal in these games has won. We don't have a clue why America changed, but the rulers of The States say that it was all our fault. But nobody could prove it. The Hunt from 3044 has just ended, and they need something to get the people excited about again. "Grumble grumble grumble." Sorry, my stomach. "I need to go hunting I said." "Get me some bacon at The Hub if you can, that stuff is so addicting." Miles grumbled from under his bed covers. "No, I need to put you in bacoholics anonymous." I joked back, that boy is scrawny, but loves food. I walked into my bedroom and opened the secret safe behind my bed to get my crossbow and other hunting equipment. I geared up, walked over to my window, and jumped. My apartment was only on the second floor so the jump only hurt a little. I looked around and tried to find a motorcycle that I always hide so that I can get to the forest and hunt. All I saw were shiny bright skyscrapers and the glares they gave off. "Where did I hide you this time." I muttered to myself. I was looking, until I saw the faintest strip of black paint in a dumpster. "Now who the heck put my motorcycle, into a trash can, that's right, I did." I said to myself, almost believing I had gone insane. "I grabbed my small pocket knife, and found the, what used to be knife, and slid it into the ignition. (I had heated it, and bent it into the shape of the key by taking the ignition out and modeling it exactly, I don't want to go into the details.) The bike started and I was off to the woods, a forty five minute drive. It would be easier to pass straight thought the city, but The Guards would catch me and imprison me, or worse, send me to The Hunt of 3045. I took my usual route of cutting through alleys, and going through streets with minimal people on them. "Halt!" I heard two robotic voices scream as I drove by. "Crap, I am screwed." Muttered to myself, seeing the guards flagging me down. My heart started racing, I needed a way out. I pulled up to the two grey robots, trying not to look nervous. "Good morning officers, how are you?" I asked trying to pull my charm on them, too bad they don't show emotion or are girls. "License and registration please." The taller one said cooly, the voice creaked and it sent chills down my spine. "Ok." I said, I reached down to the side pocket, not for my license or registration, but for my machete. "Here you go officers." I quickly yanked the knife out of its sheath, and sliced one of the robots in half. The other one had already transformed its lower half into a motorcycle. "The new 5.5 eh, these guys I haven't seen yet." I said. The cycle had its sirens blaring, drawing others into the mixture. "Brother." I said. I kicked the bike two or three times until it started. I sped off, my left hand steering, and my right hand hacking at the robot that chased me. I swung and swung, sending sparks all over the road. I finally hit the head, sending it flying and destroying the bike. I turned around, and went the back route to the forest.

Chapter 2

In a few more minutes, I had reached the state border, the normal entry spot. "Dang. They sealed my opening." I said as I looked at the fence. "No matter." I said, pulling my machete out. I cut a few strips of the barbed wire out and threw it off to the side. Before I snuck in, I stashed my bike behind a poison oak bush, because I am immune! I squeezed through the hole, and tied the strips back onto the fence, so I don't cause suspicion. I walked, and found my favorite spot that had a tree that was the best vantage point so I could see anywhere. I climbed the tree, and noticed something out of place, a bush, that was never there. I climbed down the tree, and walked over to the bush, and jabbed at it with my machete. I heard a little growl and stepped back. "Back up real slowly." I whispered to myself, and as I stepped back, a twig broke and made a loud SNAP! I froze dead in my tracks, in fear that the creature in the bush heard me. It did. I drew my machete, thinking that I would have to fight my way out. But I didn't, a small bear cub had jumped out of the bush. "Phewwww, I thought you would kill me. Come here little guy." The small bear hesitated until I pulled out a little fish. The little guy trotted over to me and took the fish. I had gained the bears trust. He sat down by me, until he saw the cuffs of my jeans, he started to play tug of war with them. "You lil' tough guy, why are you growling?" I pulled the fabric out of his mouth, but he didn't like that, he started grunting and whining. "Bye bye lil' cub." I said calmly, but before I could leave, the mamma came trampling through the forest, ready to strike. I drew my machete, and aimed my crossbow at the heart. Right before I could pull the trigger, the bear hit me hard, and sent me flying. I lost the grip of my crossbow and machete. "Oooomphhhh!" Was the noise I made when I smacked the ground, I hit it hard. I quickly stepped up, on fear that the bear would strike again, I booked it over to the nearest tree. I had a plan. I climbed up the tree like a ninja monkey. I hopped across the branches until I landed on a branch nearest my machete. I made sure the bear didn't know where I was before I leaped down. My legs collapsed, and I was unable to move for quite some time. I finally regained my balance, before the mamma bear saw where I was. I ran over to my machete, and charged toward the bear. The bear saw me and returned charge. We were headed for a full on collision when the bear stopped. The ten foot tall brown bear stood on its hind legs, standing its ground. "Now's my shot." I ran forward, piercing the bear in the heart with my short knife. The bear fell backwards on the ground. I stood there examining my prize. Then I skinned the animal needing something other than the meat to trade.

Chapter 3

After the bear was skinned, I took it over to The Hub, the trade outpost for State 13. "Good morning everybody!" I said as I walked in. "Maryann, what books do you have, I need to find the next book in my series." I said as I approached a small counter, behind the counter was a whole personal library. "What book are you looking for?" She said in a calm voice. "Angel, the next book in The Protectors series." "What do you have to trade for it?" "A bear claw, not the pastry, an actual claw." "Give me the claw and I will see what I can do." I pulled the claw out of my pocket, being careful of the edges. "Thank you, one moment." She went into the back of her area and went to the A's. "Angel, Angel, Angel, ah here it is. Is this what you're looking for Chris?" She slid the thick book over the table. I examined the whole thing and nodded. "This is it, thank you." I left The Hub, with a smile on my face. My day got a little better. I walked back to my hiding spot, and hopped the fence. I went and found my motorcycle. I hopped on, and put my "key" into the ignition. The bike started and ran cleanly all the way back to my apartment. "Did you get my bacon?" The first thing Miles said when I walked in. "No Miles, I didn't get the bacon, I got bear meat though." I said, trying to make that sound just as good. "It's not the same." Miles complained. "Well that's just to bad." I said back, finishing our conversation. "I'll be in the kitchen." I yelled across the hall. No reply. I walked over to the kitchen, and got all the ingredients out for my bear burgers. I cooked the meat all day, with no interruptions from Miles or any of our dumb neighbors. "Miles, dinner!" I yelled towards the direction of his room. He slowly walked out, looking like a zombie that moves at the speed of a slug. "Eat up, we have a long journey tomorrow, we gotta get to State One. For the Selection." "I don't wanna go! What's the point, neither of us are gonna get picked." Miles complained. "Do you wanna be sent there automatically if we don't go, that's what I thought, we leave after dinner." I said, ending all talk at the dinner table.

Chapter 4

After our dinner ended, we packed our bags for the short stay at State One. Then we hopped out the window and found another motorcycle after an hour of searching for one. This one had the keys in it so we got lucky. "Come on Miles, let's ride!" I said loudly, but not loudly enough to wake anyone up. We started the bikes, and I loaded my gps with the coordinates for State One. Nobody travels the roads at night because, all the guards are patrolling and will crack down hard on anything illegal. State 13 used to be known as Utah. And State One was California, so we don't have that long of a drive. We cruised by all the other states, and made it to State One in about Ten hours, relatively good timing compared to what most of the eastern States have to drive. We got there at 7 in the morning. "Darn, registration doesn't open until 8, at least we will be the first here. Lets just walk around until 7:45 then we get in line to register." "Alright, we'll do that." Miles responded, not paying attention to what I said. We started walking around the shops when something caught Miles' eye."Chris look, BACON!" "Miles, NO MORE BACON, you know what it does to you, don't eat it." But he didn't listen. By the time I had finished my shpeal about what it does to him, he was already inside the store, buying bacon. "Miles, lets go!" I said as I dragged him out. He had just enough time to buy the bacon, and shove some pieces into his mouth. I came up behind him, and slapped his back a few times until he spit it all out. "Good boy." I said, then I pulled out one piece I had saved. "Here, this is a treat for being good and spitting out the bac... OW!" I said. "You bit my hand." I spoke sternly to Miles about why biting people is wrong and then gave him the bacon. "7:40, let's head back to the town square, we need to get in line." Miles said.

Chapter 5

We had been signed in, and were ready to be lined up with the other people waiting to be selected. After about three hours of lining people up, and being signed in, The Selection was ready to begin. A gigantic t.v screen was lowered down. The board lit up with the first name, Sierrah. A short girl, who looked homeless. I wasn't paying attention until the last girl was chosen, Janie Wilhome, the board projected. This girl walked up there and looked like she had been drained of all her blood. The boys started, and I didn't pay any attention, until the final two. Miles Amilton was the next name on the board. I glanced over at him, feeling sad knowing that there was no way he could survive. He put on a brave face, and walked up and took seat. There was one name left, and the screen had projected it, Chris Cornall. I was in complete and utter shock, I would have to fight, I would for once be the hunted. I looked forward, trying not to meet anyone's eyes, and took a seat next to Janie. The Hunters were next. These people would be the strongest and the smartest of everyone in The Hunt. James Kenth. The first man walked up with a look of pride in his face. James was a bulky fellow and didn't look to be the smartest. Sirius Wilhome. The next man, now he looked like a well fit man, probably in his thirties. This guy looked smart. "My dad." I heard Janie mutter. Now there was some juicy information I could use. We were then rushed off into a building that was behind us. This building would hold the whole training center, but it is below us. We were shoved and pushed into several elevators, packed like sardines. After about a five minute downward ride, we were all emptied into a huge room that had so many weapons and obstacle courses. A well groomed man that resembled one of my favorite actors, Wes Bently had explained to us that we will have a month to train ourselves and develop new skills for the six month long battle to the death. Jay, as the man is really named, dismissed us and we were all set to prepare ourselves. I ran toward one of the areas that had a nice looking katana that I fancied. I picked up the sword, and went over to an area full of targets that swing back with foam swords. I easily took out the targets in a few clean sweeps of this sword. Then I walked over to the section with crossbows, this section had the newer models that I wasn't familiar with.

Chapter 6

The training went the same time for me every day I went. I shot crossbows, swung swords, and lifted weights. But one day, I decided to start training my self to withstand pain. That area was run by a man named Hank. This guy inflected pain so that you could get yourself immune to the pain. He came over to me and punched my face, hard. I was hurt bad and decided to go back to my temporary residence in the gigantic building. Once I entered my large, grey room. I found the freezer and grabbed some ice. I got a cloth and wrapped the ice in it. I placed the sack on my lip, feeling the swollen bruise that Hank left. "I, will, not, go, see, him, AGAIN!" I said as I pressed the bundle on my face. Several days had passed, and the last day of training came, this day is individual so I go alone and do what I want in the Trainer Arena. I go down, and do the usual and try to impress the gamblers watching me through the cameras implanted in the walls and roof. After an hour or so, I got bored and decided to leave, rest, and think about where I would be in about forty eight hours. Yes, The Hunt is in two days and I am not ready for it. "I need to find a way out." I muttered to my self, scanning the room for anyway that could get me out undetectably. I saw that my bathroom window dropped into an alley, but it would kill me if I landed thirteen stories down. "Forget it." I heard a voice in my doorway. I spun around, to see Miles standing there. He bulked up! "Miles, long time no see. You bulked up." "All in the days work in the training center." He said calmly. "What are your thoughts on us going to have to kill people in a few days?" I asked him, eager to know. "I don't want to go. I don't want to kill anyone. This world has messed up, and why are we to blame. These people should be the ones hunting each other down. Not us. Not us." He screamed. "Calm down Miles, as long as we stick together, we have a slight chance of one of us making it out of there alive." "Yeah, only one of us will make it out." There was an awkward silence between us, tension so thick, I couldn't hack through it. After a few minutes of just standing there, Miles left. It was nearly night time, and I needed to rest, we were showing our skills off to all of the states. I fell asleep after three hours of laying on my bed, debating about killing everyone who got in my way. Diiiiiinnnnnnnggggg! I heard my doorbell go off, sending me into panic. "One minute." I yelled so that the person outside my door could hear. I got decent looking, and opened the door. "Complements of State 1." A little boy, the age of 10 held a phone out to me. I grabbed the phone. There was a note on it. "Chris, use this phone to order all the food you want, free of charge. We want a healthy and well fed man fighting for his life tomorrow. Happy Hunting." I read out loud. "Sweet, free food!" I said after I finished reading. I called and ordered as many waffles, pancakes, French toast, cinnamon rolls, and bacon as I could eat (which is ALOT). I went to my closet, and found a nice suit, made for exercise. There was another note. "Wear this tonight, we want you to look good for the crowd. S." I read the note aloud again. "Who the heck is S.?" I kept saying as I put the suit on. It fit me perfectly. "Grumble grumble grumble." I am still hungry after all the food I ate! I picked up the phone, but it no longer worked. I went towards the elevator, and saw the time on a clock by the wall. "5:45, I gotta go." I screamed, knowing all of us were supposed to be at the town square at 6:00. I ditched the elevator, and booked it down tons of stairs, until I was out of breath at the bottom floor. I found a cab parked out front with a man holding my name standing by it. "I'm Chris, go as fast as you can. I am super freaking late." I said to him in a wheezy voice. I got in and he put the pedal to the metal, getting us to the center in three minutes. "Thanks, I still got time. It's only 5:55." I said as I got out of the cab. I ran fast towards the entrance for the hunted. I walked in, and found the man called S. It wasn't that hard, he had nobody in front of him and I assumed he was my guide. "Hi, I'm S." "Hi, I'm Chris. You are my guide huh." "Yes, and I will help you in anyway through The Hunt." "Good, cause I could need all the help I can get." I replied. S. told me to do anything and everything to impress everybody watching me, and he emphasized everybody.

Chapter 7

After S. prepped me, I got ready to go up on stage and show them everything I had. "Now our final presenter, he was the last one picked. Give a hand for Chris Cornall!" A very excited voice said. This voice belonged to a man with yellow hair, and a matching suit. His name was Blaze Jugger. We had a short interview, mostly because I only wanted to strut my stuff. "Time for the physical portion of the show off." Blaze said as he finished his last notecard. He sent me off to an area behind him where all the stuff I was good with was. I picked up the katana I had grown rather partial of and starting hacking the moving mannequins that fought back. All of the attackers were on the ground in pieces in a matter of seconds. Then I walked over to the crossbows and picked up one that I had used in the training center. This one was the best balanced one. I loaded it and prepared to speak. "Can I have the mic?" I asked Blaze. He handed it to me. "Hello everybody. For my target, does anyone have a newspaper? If so, raise it up and I will call one lucky person up." Dozens of people held up the paper, but I saw a young boy and I thought he was the one. I pointed at him. "You, come on up. Now what I will be doing is shooting the paper in half." I heard a few sighs and knew people were bored. The kid came up, and he gave me the paper. "Go over there, and put the paper in your mouth, the long way." I said into the mic. The audience all sat forward and stared intently at me. I loaded my bow and aimed. My finger was on the trigger ready to shoot. I fired, and the bolt had cut the paper in half. I heard thunderous applause and bowed. Then I ran off stage, but before I could go entirely, I gave the kid a crossbow bolt and thanked him. A huge smile came onto his face. That's over with, now tomorrow, I hunt.

Chapter 8

The training period was over, and now onto the stuff the gets people really excited. The Hunt was starting soon, and I am in no way wanting to go. But I had no choice, I have to go, or they will kill me without a chance of saving my self. Two Guards came to my door, and escorted me to the roof and loaded me into a hovercraft that will transport me to S. After a twenty minute flight, we landed and they sent me down a tube sending me like mail to S. I landed on a mat that was laid out. S. was standing I front of it. He helped me up, and gave me a hug and tried to comfort me. "Here you go." He said as he handed me a jacket. I felt something heavy in a side compartment. I opened it up to reveal a long knife. "It will serve you well, use it to get what you want and get out of there." He said calmly. I walked over to the area he motioned me to. "Good luck, I am counting on you to win." That was the last thing everyone said to me before The Hunt. I stepped into a tube, and a bubble formed around me. I tried to poke it, but I just got an electrical shock. That's how they will keep people from stepping off early this year. I thought. The pedestal began to move upward and I was keeping my hands at my sides, trying not to touch the bubble. I was raised into a city of ruins. A whole town, crumbled and destroyed for this, this, this horror show! I looked around, and spied the best weapons, and other people coming up in their bubbles. "Let The Hunt begin!" A robotic voice announced throughout the whole area. Several bings went off, and the bubbles popped. I ran off of my pedestal, looking for Miles, nothing. I unzipped my pocket and grabbed the knife. I pulled it out and went after a black backpack that had food inside. Someone else had the same idea and grabbed it. I tackled the boy, and stabbed him. "Dead, now to find a bigger weapon." I muttered. I never thought of myself as a killer, but I will do anything to stay alive in this crazy game. I saw a machete lying on the ground, and decided to grab it and tuck my knife into my belt. I picked the machete up in time before a psycho girl jumped on me. I slashed her gut, her lifeless body hanging over me. I flung it down, and went searching for Miles. When I crossed the border between start zones, a rock came flying toward my head, I dodged and ran for whoever threw it. I tackled him and sliced his back. He jumped up. "Your strong, and quick. We are evenly matched. Let the duel begin." He pulled out a katana. The one I had loved and used all the time during training. He sliced my left arm. "You strike hard, but lets see how you fair against this." I said as I swung at him with my machete and stabbed at him with my knife. We were locked in heavy combat, dodging and swinging to try to slay the other. Suddenly, the boy sliced my arms, making me lose my grip. "You fought admirably, but your time is..." There was a faint gasp and the boy fell to the ground. There was a throwing knife in his back. I looked up to see Miles looking at me. "This time, I saved your butt." He remarked sarcastically. "Whatever, come on, ten minutes until the hunters are sent in." He picked up the knife, and I grabbed the katana and the sheath. "Let's go." He said as we ran west, hoping to find shelter, water, and food.

Chapter 9

We ran and ran, not finding any other people who wanted us dead. We ran until we reached the ruin city boundary and saw a luscious green forest. Full of food, water, and hiding spots. "There, Miles, we hide out in there." I said as I pointed at the entrance to our salvation. "Well, don't just look at it, go." He spoke smoothly. For a minute, I thought he was planning on killing me, but the thought was immediately discarded as a crossbow bolt hit my shoulder. "RUN!" I screamed as I saw James Kenth, barreling over rocks and destroyed buildings. Miles bolted into the forest, not giving me a second glance. I grabbed my katana, and tried to size him up. I am big, but this guy was bigger. "James, I thought you would be trying to kill off all the people trying to get the supplies?" I said, trying to find an escape route. I had a plan, James started to talk but I zoned out and tried to execute my plan in my head. I put my hand on my knife, and threw it. The shot missed it's initial mark and hit his arm. He winced and stared at the knife in his arm. I had enough time to sheath my katana, and run into the forest. Knowing Miles wasn't a fast runner, it was easy to catch up with him. "Did you kill him?" The first thing Miles asked me. "No, but I am pretty dang sure I ticked him off. Lets lay low for the next day." I proposed this idea because I needed enough time to figure out how to ditch Miles. There's only one winner, and I want to live.

Chapter 10

Month 2 of The Hunt. Not much has happened, both of the hunters still live, 50 people are still living, and I haven't killed Miles yet. Me and Miles had found a great place to hide, undetectable, and invisible. On this day, we decided to go out and leave our spot, for we feared the people would find us and kill both of us. "Come on Miles, let's move. We need to find a new place to hide." I roused Miles from his sleep, if you are a stranger to Miles, waking him up gives you a death wish. "What, ok." He got up quickly and we were off hiking, trying to find a hiding spot. After thirty minutes of hiking, we noticed something wrong. "Miles, lets check that tree over there." I said as I motioned toward a large willow that had a pair of beautiful blue eyes glaring at us. Before we could take five steps toward it, a bolt came flying at me, I ducked. But Miles reactions weren't as fast as mine. The bolt entered his heart and killed him instantly. "NOOOOO!" I screamed as I watched my life long friend fall into the eternal sleep. I was filled with rage, the wind shook the trees violently, I had gone mad. I picked up my katana and went after the girl that murdered my friend. She had disappeared, but I was a skilled hunter, I used my skills and began to follow her trail. I spent the next month searching for her, killing anyone who got in my way. Let me catch you up. James the hunter was supposedly killed by a group of people, and there are only 40 people left. After I was just about ready to give up, I saw something towards the ruined city. Two figures standing, talking. I walked over there. The girl, she's talking to Sirius, that must be Janie, lets toy with Sirius. I leaped through the trees swiftly, trying to evade detection. I sat in a branch, about five feet from Janie, waiting for the opportune time to put my plan into action. I waited for hours, when I saw the time to strike was now. I leaped down from my tree, ran toward Janie, and put her in a position that could break her neck easily. "Take one step and I kill your daughter." I said, sounding like a mad man. "How did you..." "I'm smart Sirius, don't doubt me." "Listen, we could be aligned." His proposal sounded intriguing, but I knew too well that a hunter never stayed true to his word. "No, you want her, your gonna have to kill me, but if I am dead, my wrists move and kills your daughter." "What do you want, I'll do anything, give you anything, just give me back my daughter." I stood there, thinking about what he said, right when I was about to release the girl, a Native American girl jumped out of a tree, gunning for Sirius' neck. This is my chance, I'll kill her now. I flicked my wrists and the girl dropped. "No, Janie." Sirius screamed. I saw fire in his eyes, he wants me dead for sure. He sliced the attackers neck and screamed at me, I could only make out, "I will find you, I will hunt you, I will kill you using any means necessary. Head my warning!"

Chapter 11

Month 3 1/2 of The Hunt, 30 remain, and I have been laying low, trying to avoid the man who wants to slaughter me. After I ran away from Sirius, I found a nice building that had many crevices for hiding and making a quick getaway. I had no encounters with other people, until today. I decided to leave my building and go hide out in the wilderness. I was starving and needed to get food in my stomach. I saw a small buck and hit it in the eye with a rock, blinding it. Then I attacked it with my knife. After I had cleaned the meat form the bones and skin, I hauled the food into a smaller building with a fire place. In there, I cooked the deer and ate a nice portion of it. Right when I finished what I could eat, I heard a few rocks hit the door of the shack. "Who's there, you have thirty seconds to identify your self or I will kill you." I said smoothly. A short figure walked into the room with her hands up. "I am Sierrah, I bring no harm, I just want food and an alliance." "Then, Sierrah, tell me more about yourself over some fresh deer." We ate and chatted about our lives and how they have been affected by the hunt. "So, Chris, what is your last name, I don't have one." "Cornall, my name is Chris Blaze Cornall." I just made Blaze up because it sound cool. "Cornall, I had family with that name, we are relatives, but how close of relatives?" Our conversation ended and we just sat there, eating what was left of the freshly killed buck. "C'mon, we gotta get a move on. That fire will attract much more than you." I stood up, grabbed my pack, and tossed Sierrah the knife S. gave me. "Just for defense." I spoke cooly. We left the shack, and went looking for a nice place to hide. We found a secluded area way out in the forest, near water, and water means food. Month 4, 20 people are left, and we have two more months of killing Yay! (that yay was sarcastic.) Sierrah and I stayed hidden in our area for a long time, and had no encounters with anybody until the start of the fourth month. I heard a few crackles of leaves, then I turned my head to see a gang of kids whooping and hollering over the person they just killed. "Sierrah, Sierrah, get up we gotta get the heck out of here!" I said, dropping from my tree and drawing my machete and katana. "Hey, over here!" I screamed at the group of six. Then all ten ran towards us and surrounded us. "That was foolish." Sierrah said as we were pushed back to back. "I have a plan, I take out three on this side, and you shoot the other three with your blow dart gun, on my count, one, two, three! NOW!" I screamed as I attacked each and every one of my assigned people, leaving their bodies on the ground. I sprinted toward Sierrah who was fighting off the leader and his two thugs. I stepped in and slashed one of the thugs arms and Sierrah hit the leader in his left eye with a sharp stick, she didn't kill him. "Raul, go!" The thug named Raul ran off into the distance. The leader caught me off guard and slashed my left arm, making me lose my grip on my machete. "Sierrah, go after Raul, I'll take care of these punks." I whispered as she briefly passed my right side. She nodded and ran after the boy who already had a lead on her. I picked my machete back up and slashed the thugs arms off and stabbed his heart, then I went after the leader. I picked up one of the thugs knives and threw it at his leg, trying to distract him. "We've met before, your one of the hunters right, James. Lets finish what we started." I said smoothly. With that, I twirled my swords, deploying the same maneuver I used on his thug. It was deflected and a counter attack was launched towards my heart. I deflected, and I heard a loud, blood curling scream. "SIERRAH!" I screamed, with that I slashed the leaders neck and ran towards the scream. Sierrah was on the ground, a crossbow bolt in her throat. She was dead. "NOOOOO!" I picked up my knife that she dropped and threw it directly into Raul's heart. His body slumped over the branch he was sniping in.

Chapter 12

Month five, not many are left, only a mere ten, one hunter is alive now and Sirius still has a death wish for me. After Sierrah died, I went On a rampage. The reason, after she died, I looked into her lifeless eyes and saw something I had not seen since, since, my sister, but that was impossible because I had killed her after my mom and dad died. I thought it was impossible, and then I excepted the fact she was now truly dead. After my rampage had ended, I hid in buildings, and killed anybody who dared threaten me. I had found a desert plain, an area where nobody would go because of no protection. So I hid there, collecting hide from animals I killed to build a tent. After three weeks, six were left, my tent was fully constructed, and I had moved my camp into a forest area memorizing the route to my desert land. When I found a secure enough area, a person confronted me. He proposed an alliance, I killed him after I saw him slowly moving for his knife at his belt. "Congratulations for making it to the final five, there will be various natural disasters occurring, attempting to move you into the same area. Happy Hunting." The metallic voice spoke. I ditched my tent, and ran. Feeling the ground shake beneath me. Trees were falling all around me, I remembered the route, and ran towards my desert plain safe zone. After a few minutes of sprinting, I crossed the border and the ground was solid and still. I saw Sirius come onto the other side. "Let's end this." I hollered at him. He saw me and ran back into the forest. "COWARD, COME ON AND FIGHT!" I screamed as I ran at him, my katana drawn ready for action. He quickly disappeared into the brush. I quickly glanced west to see a huge tornado sucking up two other people. Three left, my chances of winning are one in a a third. Several skyscrapers collapsed and destroyed others in its path. "This world is mad!" I muttered. "Three of you guys left, and the disasters are over. Now kill each other. Happy Hunting!" The same robotic voice croaked. I decided to go back into the forest to get my tent. I traced my steps back to the area where I left it. Something was off. It was gone. I saw footprints imprinted into mud and followed them to the city of ruins. "My tent, give it back!" I screamed as I jumped out of the bushes. All I saw was a body in the tent, flattened by a building that was blown away. My tent was ruined and all the skins were beyond salvageable condition for warmth. "Crap, I am gonna be cold. But wait what is this?" I questioned as I saw that the boy had dropped a lighter. "Now were talking warmth." I said as I snatched it up. I slid it into my pocket and got a ton of wood, chopping branches off with my worn down machete. "Man, these past months have been rough. I just hope it's all worth it." I kept muttering to myself. I got back to the camp area, when I noticed a small can where my tent was. There was a note. "Everyone gets a package, and you will use this to build a protective barrier incase Sirius comes back. S." that note had given me the courage of being able to win. I constructed a circle of wood, then pored the can on each of the logs. With the wood and gas I had left, I built a small fire and lit it to keep warm. I was slowly drifting into sleep, when a few rocks were displaced and I heard the movement. Without thinking, I lit the ring of fire around me and drew my katana. "SIRIUS, COME OUT AND FIGHT!" I yelled in his direction. I heard another sword draw behind me. Before I could turn around, a hilt was jammed into my nose. "I told you boy, I would do anything to avenge my daughter. And now she will be." He raised his huge claymore, ready to lop my head off. Without thinking, I grabbed my katana and blocked. "Not quite yet. So that sword was your present?" I asked him, trying to catch him off guard. "Yes and it's the one that will kill YOU!" He finished as he lunged straight for my heart. I turned and he caught my left arm. I felt a sharp pain as I watched my arm fall to the ground. "YOU'LL PAY FOR THAT!" I screamed as I stabbed him with my katana. I got his gut. Now time for the offensive. I swooped down and chopped his legs, forcing him to his knees. Then I chopped his hands off. "Kill me quickly." We're his last words. With all the hatred and rage in me, I thrusted my sword through his heart. "Congratulations, you have won the 100th annual Hunt." (If you would like to stop, here is an alternate ending.) I lifted my sword in triumph, Sirius' dead eyes were looking into me, with hate. Suddenly an aircraft lifted me up into the air. S. was there he congratulated me. Then we flew back to State 1 where my new life would begin. (If you want him to go to The Maze read on.) This is a special one. In ten minutes, you will regain full health. And a maze will form around you. You can run, but you can't hide."

THE MAZE

BOOK TWO

Chapter 1

After I heard that, my heart filled with joy, I will get my arm back, but I have more opportunities to be killed. Pluses and minuses of living in The States. All I know is, there will be a maze, and all of the places I memorized will be gone. "How long will this maze thing be going on?" I hollered at the voice. "Until all are dead, they are all previous victims and hunters from this hunt. Hi, I am James." I turned around to see a boy, who looked to be my age and a little bit shorter than me. "So your the one who is gonna help me through this crazy part two. Is there a way out of the maze?" I asked him. "Yes, there are three ways out. In a body bag, the exit, or if you kill everyone else. Relatively simple huh, except the fact that they will all be gunning to kill you, they will swarm and take you down at any costs." The boy explained. "How many are there?" "Forty eight. Not too bad, but you'll have me to help." He said as he drew a long blade. "Sweet." I spoke suspiciously, not trusting this brainwashed boy who has been taught to kill me in the very end. I knew I shouldn't trust him, but I knew he could help me. So I decided to trust him, for the time being. "So, this maze, who are the people?" I pondered. "A selected random from this previous hunt. Some could be very, how do I put it, sentimental to you. Others will have a bone to pick. If they remember you. These past victims are, brainwashed, except the ones that want revenge." He informed me. "Well that's just fantastic!" I said sarcastically. "Thirty seconds." The metallic voice boomed. "Let's do this." I said, to make it even more dramatic, I pulled out my katana as I said it. My left stub was growing into an arm, not just any arm, but a robotic arm. "Cool, I always wanted one of these." I spoke, very excited by the glimmer of the metal in the mid days sun. "Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one. Let the maze begin. Remember you can run, but you can't hide." The scratchy metal voice spoke coldly. Just as it finished, thirty foot tall hedges destroyed everything in its path. Finally it stopped, ensnaring me and James in the dead center, leaving us to certain doom. "Now would be a good time for you to use your knowledge of the maze and help me find the exit." I said, directed at James. "Ten minutes to run, then others will be sent in to kill you." The voice spoke. "I would, but that knowledge is classified. Only people with my security code can access it. Oh I forgot to tell you, I am a robot." "Cool, I am part robot." I said gesturing to my left robotic arm. "Let's go this way." I said pointing west. "It'll take us out. I hope." Without a second thought, we ran through navigating twists and turns. Making u-turns to avoid dead ends. "The clone hunters are coming." The voice said. "Clone?" I asked my robotic friend. "Oh yeah, these guys aren't the same people from the hunt,they are clones you can kill only them by hitting the brain. This may help you out a little." He said, handing me a very fancy crossbow. "Try it out." He said. I loaded a bolt and fired. In less than five seconds the bolt hit a hedge and exploded. "In the words of The Terminator, Excellent." I quoted.

Chapter 2

I strapped the highly futuristic and wicked cool cross bow to my back, and got a sheath sent to me from S. the sheath contained so many bolts for this crossbow. There was a note. "Just holler when you need more. Stay alive. S." "Well now I have ammo, now to blow some clone brains out!" I said, pumped with adrenaline. "Not yet, the best strategy is to hide, not seek." "I have no clue what you just said but I am going to guess it was to seek not hide." I said, not paying attention with the thought of my new bow in action. "Fine, have it your way, just don't come crying to me when your dead." He said sarcastically. "C'mon, I think I remember the way back." I said, running back to the start. About five minutes later, I saw a person at the entrance. "Hello, sir, who are you and why are you here. It's not safe." I said once I was close enough. He just looked at me. Then a red fire burned in his eyes. "Sirius?" I said. All he did was run towards me. He was barreling at top speed, ready to strike. I quickly loaded my bow and fired the bolt straight into his eye. He didn't notice until a few seconds later. Boom! His body was gone. "Woooh! Did you see that, I just blew that guys mind. LITERALLY!" I yelled looking at James who seemed very un amused. "Listen, my goal in this crazy game is to get you out alive. Stop going for the obvious attack. Think before doing." He lectured me. "Let's find a different path, this one doesn't lead out." James said. I walked over to one that had a small white blossom planted at the entrance. "Here, we follow this path." I said, sure it would lead to an exit. Boy did I know what torture this path would bring me.

Chapter 3

We jogged through the twists and turns only to find a dead end. "I can't believe this. Ten minutes and squat!" I was infuriated. "Chris, load your bow. Here comes a huge swarm." James said right before a swarm of ten came around the corner. "One down, forty seven to go." I said, encouraging my self that I could destroy them. "NOW!" My robotic guide said as he drew his long sword. I fired three bolts out of my bow, each one finding a mark and wiping out another with the shock wave. The bodies turned to dust. "So that's what happens to them." I said, finally getting the last piece of a puzzle. I swung my bow to my back and drew my favorite sword. I swung at the remaining two, slicing off limbs that just crumbled. Finally I hit once I the skull, I got the brain. Making it turn to dust instantly. I then swung my sword in circles to taunt the other creature. I turned around to go and find James. Instead I found a person that resembled the daughter of Sirius. She was charging fast. Right before she had tackled me, my friend's blade pierced through the back of her head and coming inches away from my face. "Dude, be more careful!" James screamed at me. "Sorry." I said back, feeling guilty. I was truly disappointed in myself for my adrenaline pumping screw-up. I just didn't want my friend to know. "Uhh, thanks, for saving my life back there." "No problem, I haven't had that much of an adrenaline rush since I was trained for this maze." James said, sounding just as pumped as I was. "Well, lets get out, and find another path." I said, wanting out of this SO BAD. We walked back to the only entrance to this trap. "Well, where do we go?" I asked James. "Well, we know this one is a dead end." James said as he pointed to the one we just got out of. "Let's try this one." I said gesturing to one that had a bird of paradise plant outside of it. "I guess the good ones have plants outside of it." I told James.

Chapter 4

After about ten minute walk, James and I reached a fork in the road. "Which way do we go?" I asked James. "I don't know, but either way, the hunters will find us." "How?" "Well, I am a robot, correct, and you have a robotic arm." "What does that have to do with anything?" I interrupted. "Let me finish, they put a tracer in your arm, and the hunters can find them, it is a special system that is developed into their brain." "We're screwed." Then I decided to take a left, because if nothing goes right, go left. We walked and walked and walked, until we saw a bright light at the end of the walkway. "There it is, there's the way out! C'mon James, move it move it move it!" I screamed as I sprinted toward the end of the tunnel, I was about five feet away, when the hedge closed. "Crap, that was all a trick, this is a dead end, the remaining thirty or so hunters will be here any minute, c'mon James. We gotta go now!" I yelled as I started running, knowing that the hunters would be here any minute. "Run to the end! Then take a right." I heard James yell as the hunters started coming out of the bushes. "How is that even possible!" I screamed as I ran past at least a dozen. "Keep going, don't stop!" I yelled at James. We were about thirty feet from the exit, before the exit hedge closed. "Did they tell you about this?" I pondered James. "No, not really." He said as we were forced back to back, blocked by hunters, and the closed hedge. "I'll use my sword, you use your sword also, take out as many as you can, I'll handle the rest." I heard James whisper into my ear. I drew my katana and instantly sliced the head off of one, but the body was standing. "The brain, stab the brain!" James screamed during the heat of battle. I ran toward the head and plunged my sword into the fore head, hitting the brain. The body instantly disintegrated. "This is fun, I already got one!" I screamed at James as I turned around to see none of the bodies left. "Well, one for you, eleven for me." He said, bragging to me about his skills. "Let's get out of here." I said right as the hedge opened up.

Chapter 5

We went to the right path, because we knew the left one was a dead end that will kill us both in the end. We were only a month into this maze and we had wiped out more than half, only thirteen more to go, the I have to kill James I guess. "So, how could I access the information to get us out of this nightmare?" "It would take a long time to hack, and the password is nearly impossible to guess." "Worth a shot." I said as I walked over to his back, I found his control panel. I rerouted some wires, and pushed a couple of buttons. When I stepped out I front, I expected to see green lasers shooting out of his eyes projecting a map, no what I saw was a map, on his shirt. "Well, it takes a robot to know a robot." I said, closing his panel and studying the map. "If we are here, then this is the exit!" I yelled as I picked up my pack and ran toward the exit. "Uh-oh, we found a cheater in the game. The exit is now being re-located." "So much for that technique." I said after the metallic voice was done with it's message. "Well, now we have to find the hunters." I told James not expecting to find the exit now that its been moved. "Only thirteen left, then I can go home." I told James. "Ok, let's kill some hunters!" James said.

Chapter 6

We were running through the whole maze, making as much noise as possible. Screaming, banging our swords together, and no hunters were coming. "How is this not working!" I screamed in frustration. "Well, maybe they just come on their own." James said, trying to be optimistic. "No James, their just trying to extend their show! Is that what you guys want, you want a longer show, well give me some hunters and I can do the rest!" I yelled, thinking I had gone a little crazy. "Ask and you shall receive." James said, looking at the straightaway. "The remaining hunters, go now!" James screamed. "No, I have to, they want a show, I'll give them one." I said, walking towards the hunters. "Count me in." I heard James mutter. I drew my sword and ran towards the hoard. I gave a battle cry and slashed two brains in one swipe. "Is that all you got?" I asked, mocking the hunters. I swung and slashed, until only two remained. I looked at them. "Miles, Sierrah?" I questioned as I stared at them. They started to charge at me, I didn't know what to do. But luckily, James did. He stabbed them both, disintegrating their bodies instantly. "What is wrong with you. You just drew a blank." "Sorry, they looked like two of my allies in The Hunt." I said. "Don't let that happen again. Or we'll both be dead." He said. "Congratulations, you are the only people left, and the robot, James has been programmed to kill you. You have ten minutes before he goes on the offensive. Remember, you can run, but you can't hide!" The voice said. I sheathed my sword and ran. "I knew this would happen, why did I trust him!" I muttered to myself repeatedly. As I ran away. "Five minutes!" The voice boomed.

Chapter 7

After I felt I was a safe distance from James, I stopped to catch my breath, eat a small cracker, and drink some water. "This game keeps getting more and more fun! Now my ally is trying to kill me." I muttered. I thought I was going totally insane. "So I know that I can get out by the exit, dead, or kill James. " I said to myself, calculating my odds. "I need to find the exit, or kill James, but it's not a guarantee that I will get out by killing James, so I need to find the exit then kill James. But how do I kill him?" I muttered. "James has been released, you can run, but you can't hide!" I guess that last line is their motto or something. I got up, and started walking various paths that all lead to dead ends. "Oh yeah, the exit is temporarily sealed. You said you would give us a show, and here's your time to shine!" The voice boomed. "Well, ow I have to kill James, and then find the exit?" I asked the voice. No answer. "Well how will I put on a show if I don't have any pre-stage advice?" I yelled. "My answer is yes." I heard a familiar voice behind me. "Sirius, why are you here?" I asked him. "They revived me, after you killed me, they trained me to be a human ally, if you can get out, I stay alive and you can live." He said in his cold English accent. "Ok, that's a cause worth fighting for, one question, how does it feel to die?" I asked him, expecting the worst from the man who was hunting me down only a few weeks ago. "It is painful, then it's all over." He said, remembering it clear as day.

Chapter 8

Sirius and I were wondering around, looking for the hunter robot. "Listen, I'm sorry about your daughter, during The Hunt. It was my only way to live." "I still want to kill you for that, but I want to make it out of this maze and live just as bad as you do." He said, obviously trying to control his emotions. We went back to where I last left my robotic guide. He wasn't there. "I don't understand, this is where I left him, I had tampered with his system to keep him idle. This is impossible." "Maybe they hacked the system, I have seen their technology, they can bring people back from the dead. Do not mess with them." Sirius lectured me. "Attention Sirius and Chris, the stakes have just been raised, if both of you live, your best friend and your daughter, Miles and Janie will be brought back from the dead. You can run, but you can't hide!" The robotic voice boomed. "Ok, now we have even more of a reason to work together, so what do you say, we won't kill each other because we want to live and others to also live." I told him. "Deal." Sirius said, offering me out a handshake. I put mine out and gave a firm shake. "Now lets go destroy that robot, but we need a plan, these guys are smart they could very come up with an easy counter, but I have an idea." Sirius said as he leaned in close. "Ok, so here it goes, you ask S. for more ammo for your crossbow, dump that all into a hole in the ground, but save one. I will run out, and lure James in. Once he is on top of the hole, fire the bolt and the whole thing will go boom! Sound like a plan." "Yeah, lets do it." I said, Sirius ran stood up and left me alone to execute my part of the plan. I started to dig a hole with my hands, it took me twenty minutes, but I dug a large enough hole for the amount of bolts I am packing in there. I then dumped my whole sheath of arrows into the whole, being extremely careful not to make them explode. "S. I need more ammo, send some now!" I hollered, five minutes later, two sheaths were falling down from the sky. There was a classic note from S. giving me a life saving tip. "Use your plan, save ten arrows instead of one. You'll need it." I don't understand the second part of the card but I did get the first part. I then dumped one sheath into the hole when I heard a scream from Sirius. "Ten minutes away hurry up!" I then pulled out ten arrows and dumped the rest of the other sheath into the hole. I then scooped all the dirt into the hole. "We're ready!" I screamed at the top of my lungs. I got no reply. Just as I started to think Sirius was dead, I saw him run around the corner like a mad man. James the robot followed closely behind him. "FIRE NOW FIRE NOW!" He screamed. I loaded my bow and waited for the opportune moment. Just as Sirius jumped over the hole, I fired. "Why aren't you running?" James asked. I just stood there, waiting for the boom. As soon as one arrow went off, I ran around the corner to hide behind the invincible hedge. The explosion was huge, nothing could've survived. "Sirius, I think we did it." I said as we walked around the corner to check out the damage. I pulled out my sword and Sirius pulled his out, seeing a light in James' eye. "Fools, do you think a small explosion could really kill me?"James said as he popped up with two swords in hand. "Clearly we did." Sirius spoke, looking at me with ready eyes. "NOW!" I screamed as I lunged forward at James, whose cover skin was all gone, revealing a white robot with dirt and scrapes on it. "You look better with your skin on!" I screamed, attempting to catch him off guard. Sirius chimed into the fight and we were all deep in combat when suddenly, James shut down.

Chapter 9

At closer inspection, there was a small knife in his panel. "Sirius, who did that?" I asked as we both looked confused. "I did." Said a voice I had only heard before once. "Janie, your alive!" Sirius exclaimed on the verge of tears. "Chris, good job." "Miles, it is you!" I said running toward him in excitement. We had not seen each other since The Hunt. "Congratulations, all enemies have been defeated. The tricky part now is how do you get out?" The voice boomed. "Great, that will take forever." Miles said. "Would you rather be dead?" I asked him sarcastically. "I'd rather find a way out." He said. "Well, how much food do we have?" Sirius asked, wanting to ration our supplies. "Only a few biscuits and some water, I've eaten he rest while I've been stuck in this death trap." "Have you seen any signs of wild life anything at all?" Janie pondered. "Nothing, I have an idea. Hey S. do you wanna send in some food, we could use it!" I screamed at the sky. "And throw in some bacon and a map." Miles screamed. "Miles, he isn't your mentor, he only sends me stuff." Just as I was done, packages of food were coming down to us. Miles got is bacon, Sirius got scones, Janie got granola bars, and I also got granola bars. "Thank you S.!" Miles screamed with a mouth full of bacon. "S. why did you send him bacon?" I said. "Well this is the first bacon I have had since I've been resurrected and its good bacon!" Miles countered. "Good point." I said, coming up with ZERO snappy comebacks. "We should keep moving, the robot has a GPS, and we are implanted with tracers so we gotta move." Sirius explained. "Alright, get your stuff lets move out." I said, wanting to sound like the leader. We lifted our packs onto our back and started walking through the maze, navigating twists and turns to look for James. Sirius and Miles started walking ahead, talking strategy of how we could kill James. I fell back with Janie. "Hey, Janie, right?" I asked her. "Yeah, I still remember how you killed me, and once we are out of here, I'm going to kill you like you killed me." "O.k then, well my name is Chris, and I wanted to apologize for killing you, I was very upset with my self after the deed was done, but you killed Miles, I wanted revenge." "Touché." She countered. "So tell me more about you." I told her, needing something to pass the time. "Well, I've lived in State 1 all my life, my mom died when I was very young, and I am an expert with a bow." "Wow, not much to tell, but your life seems interesting. Now about me, I've lived in State 13, Miles is my room mate, I am good at hunting, and all my family died when I was ten years old." I told her, really feeling empathy for her and the life she has lived. She gave me a hug when I finished. "I'm sorry about your family." She whispered into my ear. "And I'm sorry about your mom." I whispered back. Then she grabbed my hand in hers and we walked side by side following my best friend and her dad. "I hate to brake up the romance, but looks as we have company." Miles said, alarmed as James landed behind us.

Chapter 10

I drew my katana just before everyone else drew their weapons. Janie had a broadsword, Miles had two short swords, and Sirius had a huge claymore drawn. "Looks like your outnumbered." Miles said taunting the robotic traitor. "But my skill greatly surpasses yours." "Wait a minute, I thought we deactivated you." Sirius said. "Oh no, there is one way to kill me, and that wasn't it." "We'll let's finish this." I said, getting ready to spring into action. His arms morphed into two separate swords. "I have a plan, but its difficult." I said, telling my allies the plan. Janie and I charged for the left while Miles and Sirius went for the left, all of us attempting to slice off his limbs. I succeeded in cutting his left leg off while Janie was still struggling with the arm. "One down, three to go." I said, motivating my self. Then I went to the back side of him, hoping to kill him by decapitation. Five seconds after it fell off, it grew back. "Why won't you die?" I asked him, truly questioning our chances of killing him. While the other three were deep in combat, I decided to take my own plan of action. I ripped open his back panel, and jammed all of my remaining crossbow bolts into the small space. All but one bolt was inside of him. "Bye bye James." I said as I shot his motherboard, creating a huge explosion of sparks. Then all the arrows detonated, destroying the body. "A little warning next time you do something stupid." Sirius said as he swiped dirt off his leather jacket. "Sorry, if I told you my new plan, he would've known, besides it got the job done. "I see you got our little James replica, we just need some ways to entertain ourselves." The voice boomed. "Ok, lets get back to the center, I have a feeling someone is there and it can help us." Miles said. "Ok, lets go with that idea." I said, not trying to doubt my best friend. We walked for ages, and after what I think to be two days we arrived back at the center of this living nightmare. "There it is. Look guys, it's a map, we can get out, c'mon!" Miles screamed as he ran into the force field surrounding the scroll. "Miles, it's a trap, if you hit that force field any harder, you would've died. Now how do we get it out?" I questioned. But before I could come up with a plan, Janie had already retrieved it. "I'm also VERY agile." Janie said, rubbing her victory in my face.

Chapter 11

I took the scroll out of Janie's hand, and opened it. "It's empty?!" I questioned. "What, do, you, mean, it's, empty?" My three comrades asked me. "There is nothing on this map, we've been brought into the center for something. I don't know what, but something bad is about to happen." I responded. Janie snatched the map back from me and paced between entrances to different sections. "Hey guys, I think I figured out how to work this thing." Janie said. "Look, each time you approach a pathway, it lights up into a different color, green means good, and red means bad." She explained. "That is incredible. Now which one is green?" Miles asked. "This one over here." Janie said pointing at a path we had not been through yet. "It's worth a shot. C'mon guys, but be careful, I wouldn't trust anything these guys give us." Sirius said as he picked up his pack and started walking. "No way I'm going through there. We're gonna die wal....." "Miles bacon!" Sirius screamed from around the corner. "Coming!" He hollered as he ran. "Janie, that was some brilliant thinking there, I almost thought they were going to seal all the exits and blow us up or something." I told her. "Thanks, but there shouldn't be a huge feeling of relief, something's wrong, they wouldn't just GIVE us a map to the way out." "Maybe it's not a way out, maybe it's a..." SSSHHHUUUNNNKKK! A hedge burst out of the walls separating our groups in half. "Miles! Sirius! We'll get back to you, but from now on, just keep walking. I'll think of something soon!" I hollered through the hedge. I heard footsteps walking away from us. "What are we gonna do now!" Janie screamed in frustration. "Relax, we'll. find them eventually. Lets just focus on our own safety for the time being." I told my ally. "It's no use, they're gonna be killed then us!" Janie hollered. "Listen.... Wait did you hear that, they're in trouble!" I interrupted in my sentence. We heard growling, and screams. "How do we get to them?" I asked Janie. "Here I'll try to boost you over." Janie said as she threw me in the air, not high enough to get over but just enough to see what was going on. And it wasn't a pretty sight.

Chapter 12

Sirius' perspective. "Miles, there's too many." I screamed as I saw the wolf like figures. "We can take them, draw your swords.... NOW!" Miles screamed as he started slaughtering the easily seven foot tall wolf man creatures. "They don't go down easily, aim for the right chest." Miles hollered during the heat of killing multiple mutants. My claymore could easily lop heads, but decapitation wasn't an essential asset that could kill these werewolf things. "Listen, there are more on the other side of the hedge, they're trying to force us together and kill us together." I screamed. Stabbing as many of those creatures as I could.

Miles perspective. "Sirius, it's been an honor fighting with you!" I screamed as I killed another mutant. "Don't think like that, you'll get yourself killed that way!" He hollered as he skewered three of those animals in a row. My two short blades were weakening, until I stabbed one and the blade stuck inside it. "Great!" I screamed as I threw the remainder of the sword into the right chest of another wolf hybrid. "One sword down, and the other one isn't doing so good either!" I screamed at Sirius. "Don't worry, I'll save you, he said as he threw a sword, an exact replica of the one I lost over to me. "Thanks a lot, now lets kill the freaks."

Chris' perspective. "Janie, there's too many, we need a new plan!" I hollered at the girl who was ten feet in front of me. "No! We can take them, just keep fighting!" She screamed back as she destroyed another mutt. I drew my crossbow and loaded five bolts. Then I fired, pinning all five bolts into the right chest of the wolves. Three seconds later, they exploded, taking three out in collateral damage. "Eight down, ten to go!" I screamed. Then I swung my bow onto my back and drew my katana. I slashed several in half, then stabbed their right chest. "Only a few left..." "AHHH!" I heard Janie scream. I looked over and saw a werewolf eating her left leg. I threw a knife from her belt that fell off, and hit the creature right in the chest. It's grip released and left her leg, bloody, and broken. One more creature jumped and landed between me and her. He picked up her leg and snapped it just to ensure that it was broken. She screamed loud, it was blood curling. It fueled me with rage, I put on the knife belt, and attacked. His back was turned so I jumped up onto its head. He was thrashing around trying to get me off, but I wouldn't let go until I avenged my girl. I pulled out two small knives and stuck them into his eyes. He couldn't see, so now I jumped in front of him, pulling out a crossbow bolt. I ran toward him and stabbed it into his heart. He collapsed on me and I couldn't escape. I heard the beeps, then BOOM!

Chapter 13

Janie's perspective. I heard the boom, then I immediately covered my head. I saw the wolf limbs being flung everywhere, but I didn't see Chris standing there with his crossbow. "Chris! CHRIS! CHRIS YOU FOOL WHERE THE HECK ARE YOU!" I screamed looking for him. I heard a slight moan. I looked I that direction and saw him covered in dirt. "Oh thank God your alive!" I screamed as I ran toward him. He looked up at me with his gorgeous eyes. I had never been happier in my whole life. My excitement just bubbled up until, POP! I found my lips on his. He didn't try to resist, so there we sat, looking like two idiots who will die soon and their love will die with them.

Chris' perspective. After Janie was done kissing me, I looked at her, she was so happy. "Janie, it's good to be alive. That explosion wasn't strong enough to kill me, only the creature it was lodged into." I told her, reassuring her. "I don't care if it wasn't powerful enough, I'm just so glad your alive!" She told me blissfully. As soon as we got up, the hedge opened up, revealing wolf man corpses all over the place, and two bruised and scraped guys. "Oh, thank God you two are alive!" Janie screamed as she ran toward her father. Then me and Miles came toward each other and hugged. "Those creatures, what were they?" "Mutts, sent to destroy us." I told Miles. "We're all lucky to be alive. Especially Chris, he took a nasty explosion." Janie said, balancing between me and Sirius with her broken leg elevated. "I can't deny, you're all great fighters, and we are together until the very end." Sirius said, giving more and more confidence to all of us. "Now how the heck will we get out of here? We've tried so many ways, and those mutants destroyed the map, we have no hope!" Janie said. "There's always hope, we just haven't found it yet." I told her reassuringly. "Our best bet would be to keep going on this section, then trust our instincts." Sirius said, mapping out our plan. Janie leaned over on my shoulder, and I stared into her eyes. "Janie and Chris sitting in a tree..." "Miles shut up or I will kill you on the spot!" I threatened. "Ok, just being a best friend!" He said. "He's an idiot." Janie said, limping beside me. "I've had to live with him for the past few years, I know he's an idiot." I explained to her. "Well he seems like he's your friend, and I respect that, but if he wasn't, I'd kill him in three seconds." She said cheerfully. "That's my girl."

Chapter 14

Sirius guided us through the section, leading us to several dead ends, it felt like several days passed by, but who really knows. "I'm tired, I'm hungry, my feet hurt." Miles complained. "Quit your whining or I'll have to kill you." Sirius countered. "He's right, we need food. Hey S. wanna give us some food?" I screamed at my mentor. Three minutes later, a bread basket fell from the sky, giving us a several weeks food ration. "Thanks S." Miles screamed with his mouth full of sourdough. We put the bread into our packs, and started walking. "Sirius, what's your life like, outside of the maze?" Miles asked. "Well, I live in a huge mansion with Janie, and I loved my life until this nightmare came and chose me." He said. "Short, sweet, and to the point." I said. Trying to break the awkward tension. Suddenly, the hedges began to swirl and shift. The walls moved, and shifted, new passages opened up, and our group was almost separated once more. A gap opened between Miles and Sirius, leaving me and Janie on a side with either of them. "Jump over!" I screamed at Janie. "No, the hedge is ensnaring your side, you guys jump!" She hollered back. "Miles, go first. I'll be right behind you." I told my best friend. He walked backward, and took a running start. He landed on his side, rolling toward our friends. "Chris! Now!" All three screamed simultaneously. I took a running start and leaped over the abyss. My hands landed on the platform, the rest of my body was dangling. "I'm slipping!" I screamed. My left hand had fallen, and my right followed. But suddenly, I felt a cold hand on mine. "You're not dead yet!" Sirius told me as he struggled to pull me up. Eventually, he pulled me to safety. "Your alright!" Janie said just before she kissed me. "Great show. Wonderful." Miles said from behind Janie, scaring us both separating our kiss. "Stop or I will throw you down and you will never be seen again." I joked. "You'll try." He said. "Guys, they're not gonna give us the chance to get out until they're satisfied with the show. Our only way out is to defeat any challenge that comes to us." Sirius said, snapping us back to our senses. "You're right, there is no chance of us getting out until they're happy." I said

Chapter 15

"Lets keep moving, this show has to end sometime, and then we can get out." Sirius said after moments of thinking. I picked up my pack and got moving in the direction I thought we should go in. "No, not that way." Miles said. "Why not, we've tried every other way before the split. We should start a new trail." I told him, trying to convince him. "Yeah, that's why we should go this way instead of that way." He defended. "Well all in favor in going in that way say I. All who disagree don't speak." Nobody spoke. Everybody wants to go into my direction. "Well if that's what you guys want, I guess this is goodbye." Miles said as he started wandering away through the walls he wants to travel through. "See guys, nothing bad her....." A loud snap and the hedges collapsed on him, killing him instantly. "MILES!" I screamed as the hedges were folding up. His body was sinking into the walls. "NO, let him go, that way is a trap, don't go after him." Sirius said, holding me back. "No, he's practically my brother. I need him alive. He was my only friend!" I said, bursting into tears. Sirius gripped my neck and squeezed. In ten seconds, I was knocked out. Pitch black, darkness, you can't think you can't speak, and can't control your actions. "Huh, what is going on." I screamed suddenly jolting awake on Sirius' shoulders. "Well I knocked you out and then put you on my shoulders. You've been out for quite sometime, we're way far away from Miles now." He said, discouraging me. "But, I need something of his to remember him." "Janie got that for you. Janie, give the man whatever you got." She came over to me and put Miles' necklace in my hand, this was a very special thing to me. I had made this necklace out of wood and my bare hands, plus some rocks. "Thank you, now Sirius, put me down." He then dropped me onto a rock that stabbed my arm. "Ow, Sirius, why'd you drop me onto the rock." All you said was drop you." "Well at least it's a robotic arm."I said, feeling relieved. "Let's keep moving, we need to satay away from the traps." I said, getting up we began walking when I heard something behind us. I looked back to see a huge creature, that looked like it could kill me in a heart beat. "Guys, RUN!" I screamed.

Chapter 16

The creature heard our quick paced steps, he smelled our sweat and blood. He was hungry. The creature chased after us, on its back legs, it looked ten to fifteen feet tall. It ran faster than anything we've fought before. "Guys, don't stop running!" I screamed. "Chris, get your bow, holler for S. to give you more bolts then take out the eyes. Then the nose, and finally the heart. He won't be able to track us after those senses are destroyed." Janie screamed. "Worth a shot! S. We need some ammo, pronto!" In thirteen seconds, an ammo pouch floated down and I grabbed two bolts. I loaded one into the bow and fired, and right before the explosion, another bolt was fired into the left eye. "Chris, how many bolts did you fire?" "One." "Then where did the other bolt come from?" "There." Sirius said, pointing at a bravely dressed Miles holding another bow like mine. "Did you really think I was dead?" He screamed as he loaded another bolt and fired into the nose. "Miles, it's good to see you alive, how did you get back?" "The gamekeepers, they did something, I guess I'm not done in this game after all." He said as the nose exploded. "Great shot, only one last shot, then he's dead." Sirius hollered. The creature was getting closer. I loaded my bow, and suddenly, the creatures arm grabbed me by my legs and picked me up. I was flailing around, trying to reach my sword. "Janie grab the bow and fire at the heart." I heard Sirius say. I finally grabbed my katana, and sliced his fingers off. I was slowly dropping, not knowing what my next move would be. I did several forward flips, to move towards the heart. I dived forward, and my sword plunged into his heart, just as I was pulling my sword out, a bolt was fired into the heart. I had three seconds. I ditched my sword and jumped. Three, two, one, BOOM! The bolt exploded and I was falling trying to land on my back. I fell hard onto my back and heard a loud crack. I tried to get up, but my ankle was broken. I was staring up, and I saw a piece of debris falling straight toward my head. I saw that it was my katana. I tried to move, but I was stunned. It was a few feet from my head, when I saw it was going toward the side of my head. I guess it did the old sword falling toward your head then plunging into the ground next to you. "Chris, your all right, that was a scary show." Janie said. "Well I'm alright now. Nice shot." I said.

Chapter 17

Miles came over and I gave him his necklace. "I think this belongs to you." "Thanks." He said. "Where did you get it anyway?" He asked, bewildered how I got the one item Miles values most (besides bacon). "Janie got it, I thought you were dead, so I needed something to remember you by." I explained. "I realize that this is an emotional moment for both of you, but we aren't safe yet. Lets get a move on." Sirius butted in. "You're right, c'mon guys, we gotta keep moving, there might be more of those things." Miles said. I grabbed my bow and sheath of ammo and Miles did the same. "Lets go this way." I said as I motioned toward the left path. "Ok. Get moving." Janie said. We were walking slowly, we had run low on food supplies, and we had no clue how many days, weeks, or even months we were in this crazy death trap. I was thinking that we would never make it out, when suddenly I was snapped back to my senses. "Chris, Chris, CHRIS!" Miles screamed. "What?" I responded. "Look." He said, pointing at the end of our path, a lighted doorway little more than ten meters in front of us. "We're out!" I screamed as I began to run. I felt a hand grab my pack and jolt me back. "It's not that simple." Sirius said, being the skeptic that he is. "Fine, I'll throw a rock and if anything happens, we'll have to find another way out." I said. I picked up a rock and threw it into the area. Nothing happened. "Alright guys, were out let's go!" I screamed as I sprinted toward the exit. I opened the glowing white door and bam, the suns rays nearly blinded me. We all stepped into the room . The ceiling was made of glass, and the walls were titanium. "Congratulations, you have found a way out! Now the final test. We call it the arena. All the opponents you have fought will now be resurrected one by one until all are dead." The voice cut off. "I guess there's no motto for this new death trap." I said, finding a way to joke about this. "Ok, so who have we fought. The re-animated people from the hunt, James, the dog creatures, and the creature. Nothing that hard." I said, listing all of our fears from the psycho event. The dirt ground we were standing on was jolted, then we were slowly raised up. Into a colosseum type area with a glass roof. Outside the glass dome, were rows of spectators. "Lets do this thing." I said, whirling my katana around. Janie drew her dual swords just as Miles did. Then Sirius drew his claymore off of the sheath strapped onto his back. When we were fully stable on the platform, a small gate opened, and ten of the first threat came out. I went over and started stabbing them like crazy, and before you knew it they were all dead. "James is next." I said, a medium sized gate opened up and the robot I trusted walked out with his arm swords. "So we meet again, I know I've asked this before, but WHY WON'T YOU DIE?!" I said distracting him as I lunged forward to stab his panel. He grabbed my left robot arm, and twisted. SNAP! It was gone, my new limb was broken like a twig. "Now I'm mad." I said.

Chapter 18

Sirius came from behind and slashed one of James' arms off. "Now we're even." I told him. Janie threw a knife from her belt and she drew her swords and charged with a blood curling war cry. She hacked and slashed at his panel until he was a pile of scrap metal. "Two down, two to go." Miles said, wanting to get in on the action. A larger gate opened, and five mutants limped out. The crowd went wild as they saw the ability to kill from those creatures. "Let me kill some." Miles said as he chopped ones head off. "You are killing some." I snapped back as I snapped ones neck. There were only a few left, and Janie was taking care of them easily. "One more!" I screamed as the largest gate opened, containing the very creature that almost killed me. I sheathed my katana, and loaded my crossbow. Miles and I lined up in our own little firing squad. "Now!" I said as we both targeted the eyes. Three seconds later, the creature lost sight. Then we aimed for the nose, and just before we were about to fire, it grabbed Janie. "NO!" I screamed as I dropped my bow and drew my sword. I charged toward the creature, trying to get his huge claws off of my girlfriend. I sliced and diced at his legs trying to hack them off but it was no use. Then one of Janie's knives came loose and fell into the ground. I picked it up and got a fair distance away. Then I held the blade and released. I was praying that it found its mark. It did. The creature dropped and the crowd didn't applaud yet, Janie was thrown high into the air. I ran toward her and dived. I caught her just as she was about to fall and die. "You saved me." She said, still stunned from the experience. "Of course, did you really think I would let you fall." Just as I finished she kissed me, not the little peck she gave me before, but a full on kiss. The crowd absolutely flipped, the glass dome was retracted and we were escorted to a hover craft that will take us back to State 1.

Chapter 19

So after we got back to the Capitol of this "great land" S. and the other stylists congratulated us and we were taken back into our rooms and were treated for the parade of victors. I guess you could call it a way of displaying an award of their land. Several hours past and we were all ready for the parade. I was dressed in a gold suit of armor, Janie was wearing the matching set. Miles was wearing a silver set, and Sirius had chainmail. They loaded Janie and I onto the same chariot. And Miles and Sirius were on separate ones. Our chariot was a solid gold. Towed by horses wearing gold armor. I'm starting to sense a theme. "We did it. We finally found our way outside of that death trap." I told Janie. "I know, and we can finally be together." Janie said, grabbing my hand. I felt a warm feeling go through my body. Our horses lined up in a straight line. A huge red curtain opened up to reveal a straight away full of long lines of stands of people. And there was a huge stage at the end with four stands for us. The carriages pulled forward, and the crowd was flipping out. They were hooting and hollering. They were throwing roses at us and Janie caught one with her right hand. "I'm a good catch." She said. We were almost to the stage when Janie started kissing me. The crowd flipped out. They were going nuts. When she stopped, I saw the stage right in front of us. We dismounted the chariot and walked up onto the pedestals. The ruler of this land, Lord Lemington walked onto a platform behind us. "Welcome guests, thank you for coming. This past year was an entertaining one. And these four survived. So now they are treated like us. Their bravery serves as the reminder of the collapse. And now, Chris, would you like to say a few words?" He asked me. I jumped off, and walked toward the microphone. "Thank you all for coming, and I didn't prepare a speech but I'm gonna wing it. This past year has been a hard one. I'm pretty sure most people lost family, friends, and loved ones. But that, is in the past, all of us now turn over a new leaf. After The Hunt, I was destroyed about my arm, and the loss of my best friend Miles. But when the maze started, I was thrilled that I got all of those back. And now I have a little bit more. Janie, will you come up here." I said as she walked toward me. I picked up the mic and kneeled. Janie, we've been together in the maze, and I know I killed you before, but that doesn't matter now. I fell in love in the maze, and I just want to ask you this one thing. Will you marry me?" I finished. "Yes." She responded, close to tears, the crowd flipped out and we kissed.

Chapter 20: Epilogue

3 years later. After the Hunt and Maze combo, Janie and I settled down and got married. Miles still loves bacon, and Sirius, well he is now attempting to cancel the Hunt. It's not a rebellion, more a petition to end the terrible event. "Sirius, after your long and hard petition. The government of The States has agreed to your terms. The Hunt will be no more." "What... I won... I won my case. WOOHOO!" Sirius cheered as he looked happily onto the rest of the quartet, Janie, Miles, and I.

After the case, Sirius treated us all to a nice lunch in celebration. "Order anything you want, it's my treat." Sirius said, getting our mouths watering. "Hi, are you ready to order?" A perky brunette waitress asked. "Yeah, I'll have the double bacon cheeseburger, extra bacon." Miles said. "I'll have a whole rack of your ribs with honey glaze sauce." I told her. "I'll have the same as him." Janie said, pointing to me. "I didn't know you liked ribs." I told her. "There's a lot you don't know about me." She responded. "I'll have a T-bone steak." Sirius said, sounding even more fancy than he already is. "Ok, is that all?" She asked. "Yup." Miles said. A while later, the waitress brought our food back and Janie and I devoured our ribs quickly, and Sirius ate his steak like a proper gentleman. Miles on the other hand, chomped and chewed any thing off of his plate. "Miles, slow down, it's not going to run away." Janie told him, trying to get him to stop being so loud, but by the time he was about to talk, all of his food was gone. "Well, it's been a pleasure dining with you guys, Sirius, your covering this?" I asked. "Yeah, some of my victory money goes toward it." He responded, sounding important. Janie and I got up, and started our walk to our new home in State 1. A victory mansion sort of. When we walked in, our two month old golden retriever puppy, Doug, jumped up and down and spazzed out because he was so happy we were home. "Hi puppy, did you miss us?" I asked him lifting him up into my arms. Doug was a Surprise from Janie to me. We sat down on our couch and watched the news. "Sirius Wilhome had fought in The Hunt years back, and now he fought to end it. In honor of the End of The Hunt, we will be holding a huge get together for family members of victims of the Hunts from previous years. "Can we go to that, I want to honor Sierrah." I told my wife, hoping that I could get one last goodbye to her. "Alright, but only for her." She said. Hours later, we were in the town square, and went to Sierrah's memorial area. I kneeled down and apologized for not saving her, for not protecting her. I looked up into her face, and felt only sorrow, her picture, that image will be in my mind, it will always be there.

About the author:

Blake Jeffreys is an eight grade student in the i.D.R.E.A.M program at JMMS. He loves to play paintball, play video games, read, and write stories. This is his longest story yet, he really got his start in writing short stories over summer break of 2012. His first story is called Time Stands Still. It is about three friends who struggle to un freeze time itself. He then continued and continued writing stories, and when NA.NO.WRI.MO. was introduced, one of his soon to be short stories turned into a novel of heroics, love, and revenge. Blake aspires to be a director, and if he is, he will direct each and every one of the stories and books he writes. He tells me, every day, a new story idea comes into his mind, all the main characters are based off of him, and the supporting characters are based off of his friends, or people he knows. "The inspirations for my stories, just come to me, I will be thinking of a scenario in my mind, and then, BAM! It turns into a story. And this story, has turned into my longest one yet, and my favorite one at that." Quote from Blake. So as you see, story inspirations can come from everywhere, anytime, and anyplace. So keep your eyes and mind open, and always let new ideas in, even if they're stupid.