

PIECES OF ME

by

Jean-Pierre Chapoteau

(Previously titled: My Last Ace)

Jean-Pierre Chapoteau
4299 E Sewaha st Apt. 10
Tampa, FL 33617
301-266-6002
Jeanpierre_4_25@msn.com

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INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

KALEB, 14, eyes closed. His dirty face embraces a light breeze as it flows through his grimy dread locks.

The room has been destroyed. Maybe a hurricane.

The gun to Kaleb's head is the real concern.

KALEB (V.O.)

We no longer belong here. Man. A dying breed.

EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

ELIZA, Kaleb's emaciated Pit Bull companion, trots through a mass of dry leaves on the shoulder of a deserted road.

An engine rumbles. Tail stiff in the air, Eliza has already stopped. She exerts a throaty snarl. Kaleb calms her.

A military truck emerges from over a hill crest.

The truck slows. In the back, a group of rowdy KIDS strapped with ammunition. The driver, GARY, 17, nods his head.

GARY

Nice mutt.

Kaleb scrutinizes the passengers.

GARY (CONT'D)

Hop in. Ain't much to eat, but we got protection. I heard there's food, maybe 30, 40 miles from here.

KALEB

Food? No. You'll catch plentiful bandits residing not five miles down, though.

The kids hoot and let off a couple of rounds in the air.

GARY

Too bad for them. Good luck, buddy.

The truck rumbles down the road. Kaleb proceeds in his direction. He stops. Kaleb examines his weathered boots.

Kaleb turns and heads toward the inevitable trouble.

EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

Smoke puffs out of the engine. The military truck sits on its side. A scorched hole is blown through the bottom.

Gary's corpse, stripped naked, lies on the battered road. Kaleb passes by several disrobed bodies.

KALEB (V.O.)
Adaptation was the only way to
survive. But should a man fight to
live, merely for self preservation?

Kaleb stops at a corpse his age and scans over its fresh attire.

EXT. SPIKE MOUNTAIN - DAY

New boots ease Kaleb's hike up the steep and jagged hill.

His hand comes down on a flat surface. Eliza clamps her teeth on his backpack to aid him to the top.

She runs off when Kaleb stabilizes himself. A faint BABY'S cry startles him. Kaleb jerks his attention toward Eliza.

KALEB
Eliza! Eliza, no!

EXT. SPIKE MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Bundled in covers, the baby lies beside a tree.

Eliza sprints closer. Yellow teeth bared. Saliva dripping. She opens her massive jaws inches from the child's head...

...and BARKS. Ever ferocious as barking can get.

Worry still plagues Kaleb's face as he takes cover behind a fallen tree, yards away. He breaks out a 9mm silencer.

Kaleb puts a dog whistle to his lips. He eyes the dark bushes and towering trees as he embraces his returning companion.

EXT. SPIKE MOUNTAIN - EVENING

Strands of sun spill through the leaves. The woods are quiet.

With his trigger finger still on edge, Kaleb glares forward.

He finally stands. Kaleb gives the area one last look over before trotting toward the sleeping baby.

EXT. SPIKE MOUNTAIN - CAVE - EVENING

The baby's cry echoes throughout the cave. Shadows dance along the rock walls.

'The Davinci Code' and 'Moby Dick' lie beside a backpack.

Kaleb warms one hand over a fire. His attempts to shush the baby are futile as he cradles the infant close to his chest.

KALEB (V.O.)

Some of us try to hold on to our
sanity by reverting back to old
morals... even if it kills us.

Kaleb's stomach fights with him. He takes a sip of his canteen then stares at the wailing child. Eliza whimpers.

EXT. SPIKE MOUNTAIN - CAVE - NIGHT

Moonlight soaks the cave in a serene blue. The fire has gone out. Kaleb sleeps. Eliza snores in a dark corner.

Her eyes punch open. Kaleb whips out his pistol and lets off a shot, missing JACK's, 30s, stringy wet hair by inches.

In one hand is Kaleb's belongings. In the other... the baby.

KALEB

Put that baby down.

JACK

Don't be hasty, boy. I --

KALEB

Do I look like someone who repeats
himself?

DEBRA (O.S.)

Honey, what was that sound? Did you
find her?

KALEB

I strongly advise you tell that lady
not to come up here.

JACK

'Dis is my little girl.

KALEB

...Shut your lying mouth. You'll
say anything for a meal.

JACK

I'm being honest. Me and my wife
placed 'er down to wash up. We was
chased away by 'dem bandits. Promise.

KALEB

And you happen to find us and head
away with my stuff?! I should put
you down, right here!

Kaleb stands up and juts the gun forward. Eliza growls.

DEBRA (O.S.)

Jack? What's going on up there?

JACK

'Dis is my baby girl. And your things... y-you would'a done da same.

KALEB

Put - the baby - down - you, ANIMAL!

Jack does what the fuming boy says, then raises his hands.

JACK

On her foot, 'der is a big birthmark. It's as bright as day, just come ova here and look. Promis-- AH!

Eliza lunges for his neck. Jack's screams drown out in blood. Kaleb doesn't flinch. His young eyes have seen this before.

The baby cries as Kaleb hovers over her. Kaleb removes the blanket from her lower half.

His brow crinkles. Kaleb looks away. Slowly exhales.

Kaleb strolls to Jack and lets off two shots in his corpse.

Rapid footsteps approach. Kaleb picks up the baby boy, rewraps the blanket over his soft pink feet, and bolts away.

EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

Eliza sniffs the ground as Kaleb trots after her with the baby in hand.

KALEB (V.O.)

Con artist's are king. The average like myself are pawns in their game. So we rely heavily on others like ourselves. Even if they're not aware.

Eliza stops at a pile of leaves. She sniffs uncontrollably.

Kaleb shoves her out the way. He finds a beetle. No hesitation, it goes down the hatch. But the baby comes first.

Kaleb spits out the mush onto his fingers and feeds the child.

Kaleb's stomach growls. He takes a swig from his canteen. He bends down and kisses Eliza on her head.

KALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)

That's when our morals begin to slip, and self preservation consumes us.

INT. WOODED AREA - NIGHT

A fire is lit. The baby sleeps on a pile of leaves. Sitting on a log, Kaleb weeps. He holds something in his hands.

Eliza's collar. Roasted meat crackles over the fire.

Kaleb's cries fade out into the night.

EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

A suburban neighborhood lies ahead. Eyes red and baby in hand, Kaleb approaches. No companion by his side.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The front door sits creaked open. The baby sleeps on a couch.

Kaleb examines an elementary scholar award. His name's engraved on it.

Several intellectual awards, and photos of his family cloth the walls.

He selects a picture with Eliza in it, drags his feet to a table and curls underneath. A sniffle escapes him.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

A faint RATTLE. Kaleb jolts awake. He scuffles from under the table. The door is wide open. The couch is empty.

Kaleb sprints to a window overlooking the front yard. He aims his gun at DEBRA, 30s, bloody clothes, sprinting away.

Kaleb lets off a shot. He strikes her shoulder. She turns around, baby in one hand. Ak-47 in the other.

She tears chunks out the wall as she opens fire. Kaleb takes cover behind the couch. He listens to the cry of the baby.

DEBRA (O.S.)

Honey, don't you ever fuck wit me!

More chunks of wood blow through the home, then the sound of footsteps hastily depart. The baby's cry fades away.

The house is eerily quiet. Whistling wind flows through the large bullet holes, breezing through Kaleb's dread locks.

Kaleb's eyes are lost in space as he crawls to his knees.

Kaleb slowly exhales as he closes them. He lifts his pistol. Places it to his skull.

KALEB (V.O.)
With lost morals and sanity, what
reasons should one go on?
(beat)
We no longer belong here.

The shot goes off. Blood splatters on the couch.

BLACK.

KALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Man. A dying breed.