

Ade Ronke

Bullet Lane

Chapter 2

Edewlogics

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Author's Note

This is the second chapter for Bullet Lane, a story I decided to release in chapters so I can release at least two fictional works this year. This and other works are available free on my website, www.edewlogics.com. To support works like this and others available on my site, please support the free books for life cause. Don't forget to buy EPs and Albums on Bandcamp in order to participate in the Jazz Cloud events. It is the most interesting and exciting thing I am looking forward to. It spells my freedom and the beginning of a new chapter in my life. Please participate by buying an EP or album. Jazzpop and Remixes, the newest EP releases on Friday 08-23-2024. Your support means the world to me, in fact, a revival for my life. Thank you for being here.

BOOK SCHEDULED TO BE PUBLISHED THIS YEAR



Eleven year old Bami Dele is the experimental boy immune to what scientists get to know as the Femuran invasion. He and the chosen bearer of the only artificially engineered artedermal skin protector must get past every formidable detection of the Time Weavers. They must find the game inside a dead cat by a corner, finish the play, find the location of the secret of secret places, make the journey to get the Polarcapper and turn the wheels against their doomed fate.

BAMI& THE TIME WEAVERS EXCERPT

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There is knowing to death as there is consequence to life, chance to accidents, luck to fortune, fate to misfortune—there is no real estate to collateral. To it, there is coincidence, a leveraging of animation without particular states.

The dinginess smelled metallic, like the lingering aftertaste of some apocalyptic endgame, the heaviness was her unfeeling, the numbness of being carried on his shoulder. She was not on a slab or some makeshift bed on the way to the nearest hospital. She was rather hung upside down against shoulder, chest and back at the killer's mercy.

She roused, intentionally, wishing him to put her on her feet.

He didn't put her down.

She tapped the crest of his back gently, "put me down," she said softly.

He neither spoke nor heed her urging.

Her thoughts were in a panic as she began to fully take in her environment. They were in the underway space for the train tracks systems. The place felt constricting, like a crawl space for some spine-chilling, blood-curdling creepy wriggler dragging its way towards the uncertainty of her existential fate. Was he going to kill her? Despite his being a murderer she couldn't imagine killing him or having the guts to do so. Was he going to do more than kill her? Is that why she was being transported someplace against her will?

"Put me down," she said with more brazen necessity from the thought of assault and peril. Could he sense the fear in her voice?

He flinched, stilling completely in the path before he drew her upward and threw her back against the nearest wall to stand her on her feet. His hold on her hardened while he dropped her across his muscled body slowly, bringing her to an intentional stop by his crotch. His deliberation was made evidentiary briefly against her. He retreated, slightly, slowly. His palms encircled her throat, strongly, firmly. "Do you know what graces are?" he whispered in a strong frustrated tone.

There, at the moment, she imagined death not as she had earlier with some level of ease a runaway bullet to the head could have brought—rather, with the more frightfully involving dread of assault before the ease.

"Graces?" she asked in a contained fearful tone.

"Yes," he replied. "Graces."

She closed her eyes slowly, unwilling to know what graces he could offer her. She couldn't care about the definition of faith when she had no hand dealt that could imply luck. "Unless you're deaf and dumb, graces are things you say when you're grateful for your food."

He frowned, wondering in the moment if he had read her correctly when he imagined she was at least of about average intelligence. "Are you freaking kidding me or you're just anxiety-brain-dead at the moment."

She wondered if playing around with his intelligence was worthwhile. "Graces are things dependent upon others and their misperception of power over you."

He narrowed his eyes. "Misperception?"

"Perception," she replied.

He nodded. "That sounds like it. No one outlives their graces, why do you deserve one?"

She considered her credibility in the situation before she spoke. "I'll never tell anyone. I have no reason to."

"Except for the one dead body in the train cart the police will ask you about ofcourse," he replied in a sarcastic tone.

"Since I know you'll be coming back for me I won't dare tell, " she added.

He studied her, wondering what was going on in her mind. "Yet, that's not the answer to the initial question I asked you."

"I'm innocent," she asked in an awkward tone midway between a distant plea and a statement of fact.

"That's irrelevant in my line of work," he replied simply. "Your survival was a matter of tactical pride. He used you as a shield."

"I was never there?" she suggested in a questioning tone.

He pressed his nose closer to hers. "You want me to trust you?"

She engaged his eyes, allowing his proximal assault. "Yes."

He smiled, narrowed his eyes. "That's crazy. And that's not just because we just met."

But she held onto the hope against hope. "Strangers may have more to lose than you think."

He sniffed her. "Can't smell it on you. Uhn. If to say what I have to lose may be equivalent to what you have to lose, just for a second of consideration...let's say...I'm not going to ask you why or how because those are irrelevant. So we both have a deck of cards each. In my deck I must pick a card that ensures you die. And in yours you must pick either the same card I pick or one that ensures you live."

"I have two choices," she stated, wondering if her fate could come up to a roll of the dice. She wasn't willing to pass up that opportunity. Yet, if his intent was to kill her, his demeanor had no assurance of it. Was he this psychopathic or was she a well-wisher ignorant of being on the brink of death?

He nodded. "Yes, but your choices depend on whatever I pick, die or live."

"What are the odds, fifty fifty?"

He narrowed his gaze as she steadied her. "What does it matter?"

She didn't give a response.

He continued. "What are the odds we pick the same exact card that isn't an odd one? What are the odds you pick a card that says you survive?"

Her voice quivered as she spoke. "We don't have the same odds."

He twisted his mouth. "No, we don't. We don't even exist in the same event space. You crashed mine and now you must play the game of chance. What do you say about luck and chances? What happens if you turn your back on something you can't face?"

She hesitated briefly thinking. "You're a worthless piece of shit?"

He shook his head, smiling briefly with the knowledge he wouldn't try to shut her up even if he could. "Worse, your problem is beyond your solution. You deserve the assured death coming your way."

"Choices and chances cannot happen if no one exists or existence cancels one another. On that, I absolutely agree. But here you are, a clown."

He nodded. "True, the clownish cover is up for crimes, a camouflage for the event space you barged in on."

She studied him briefly. "Definitely, that evil couldn't be mine. What event space? The killing spree?"

He shook his head. "Incorrect. It's a bullet lane. I had a single target until your nerdship highness showed up at midnight and disturbed the pathway."

She was . "You should have waited for my daylight return to meet me. So whatever could make you think the event space is yours showing up in a single parallel target lane in a camouflaged clown suit?"

He shrugged. "An assassin killing an assassin? What does it matter what I wear? The means justifies the means."

"Except for the collateral damage," she replied harshly.

His tone was restrained, softening when he spoke. "A rarity of its kind, it warrants chances and choices."

Was he getting to like her?

He took himself out of the moment by speaking in a harsher tone. "Either way you're an alibi for bullshit, so do you survive?"

She dreaded the possibility of prompting him towards her very own damnation if on some phantom hope for some salvageable ending, he wasn't envisaging such.

He redirected his questioning. "Why do you think I brought you with me?"

She shrugged. "You're a lonely evil criminal who decided you needed a woman to be with..."

He drew his head backward, studied her and frowned. "Are you kidding me?"

"I don't know..." she relented.

He smiled at her attempt at awkwardness. "I know you don't know...I want to know what you thought...nothing but the truth...now that you are on your feet..." He pushed himself further into her form. "...for your very own sake."

The thought of some forceful carnal invasion filled her with instant dread despite the understanding that such was possible in her predicament. She felt feeble at the thought. "I will rather death befall me."

He moved his face close to hers, his lips touching the edge of hers.

She wondered if his closeness was supposed to intimidate her.

He sniffed into her. "You speak crazy language when you're fearful. Let me guess, you're a book reading nerd?"

She shook her head. "No, I'm an ordinary person going to work."

"Going to work as a...?"

"Pharmacist at a twenty four hour pharmacy," she replied simply.

He released her neck slowly before encircling it again. "You make drugs everyday. Some people deal drugs to survive everyday. I reiterate. Wake up. I officially declare you a nerd although you're living in some cocoon not being aware of the fact. I am certain you do know what you would have done if I had left you back there. I couldn't afford the risk of having you blabbing this and that you saw or didn't see."

She exhaled, studied him briefly and threw a shot at luck. "So you're going to let me go and I won't blab anything to anyone?"

He shrugged. "Potato, Potato, ah, besides, you have my blood on your clothing after you allowed yourself to be used as a shield by a dead man. There's no possible world I left you behind back there without knowledge of why or if you deserve to live."

She closed her eyes, pained at the thought she could have afforded being late to work the particular day.

"You can still let me go, strip me naked, take my clothes. I won't cry rape," she offered.

He shook his head, conveniently going along with her line of thought. "That wouldn't be adequate I must say. I must strip you naked and bathe you," he replied.

She narrowed her eyes. "So, this is a mercy trip?"

He hesitated briefly. "More like a necessity on an acid trip. I—"

He stiffened suddenly, retrieved his hands from her neck, not for any reason she could decipher, covered her mouth with his palms and whispered, "Not a peep or you'll be caught in the crossfires again. This time, you may not survive it."

She heard it then, deliberate and carefree footsteps, as if looking for a killer in the area was more or less a waste of time. A cop?

He took his hand off her mouth.

"Please, no one else dies tonight," she pleaded in a whisper

"Event spaces are subject to chances without absolution," he whispered back.

"And absolute probabilistic event spaces must have no actual lives in them, please," she pleaded.

He held her eyes with a spark in his, as if she was the most beautiful thing he ever, as if her words were some distant message his alien animalistic self was foreign yet attentive to. "Then do as I say."

He rested her, face first, against the wall closest to the narrow exit. "Don't move," he said behind her as the sounds of the footsteps got very close to them.

The police officer approached her with a gun-drawn. "Let me see your hands," he commanded after his discovery of her presence was made possible faster by the slight movement she intentionally made, casting a small shadow in the dimly lit artificial lights leading towards the underused pathway of the parking lot.

The quick gunshot discharges behind her deafened and confused her. She became fully aware of her underestimation of the clown killer's expertise. By intentionally signaling the officer, she had endangered the officer more by allowing the clown killer to be in and out of view conveniently to disorient and access the officer. The Clown Killer's in and out operation was a true absolution of existence, a terrible disaster for all involved—an event without a foreseeable future or perceivable horizon event for any phasic corner of life. It was dead bent to destroy all traces of life around it except the illusion of some perfected probabilistic event space belonging strictly to him. Truly an alibi worse than bullshit, she thought.

The expertise of the killer beside her raced her heart towards a chosen objective silence, a pseudo effective means to maintaining her chances of survival. Otherwise, she felt as if her heart was going to simply stop by the mere thought of inevitable death. Should her dying heart pray for

time, for hope? Or submerge itself in the desolate scream in coordination with the expectation of death.

There wasn't a chance for the officer to trigger. The first bullet went into his feet, pulling him towards an inevitable fall. The second, on an incline, she reasoned, came too fast after the first because the trigger happy clown must have realized he couldn't keep his promise to her. Was it the betrayal in the movement?

The second lodged itself in his neck. He fell with a thud.

The Clown killer pulled her by the arm, this time in a rush. They exited. A few steps and a few steps later, they heard the unmistakable sound. The officer wasn't dead. He was rather drowning in his own blood. He pulled her backward towards the dying officer.

He released her. "If you make any stupid move, you're dead."

She contemplated risking death to stake the possibility of another officer nearby, but she caught her throat at the thought of another death caused by her survival initiative.

He knelt behind the dying man, pulled him upward, one hand encircling his neck, moving it in one direction, the other twisting his head in the other.

She heard the neck snap. The poor officer—an unfortunate victim of being in the event space. If he wasn't dead before, he was dead at the moment.

She was more weakened than she was earlier—hope escaping her fate faster than she could think. With everyone she had encountered since meeting him dying, she was scrounging in the wind aimlessly being pulled towards some inescapable velocity going nowhere. Was she going to survive his probabilistic event space?

He pushed her towards a jalopy looking car she was certain was stolen before he pushed her towards the driver's side. "Get in."

She did.

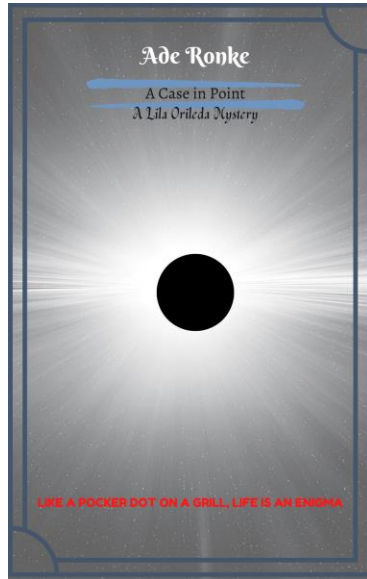
He pressed the keys into her hands when they were both seated. "Drive! And if you try anything funny, a bullet goes diagonally into your head."

She traced the path of the gun downward and found it angularly inclined towards her. An indirect bullet lane, she thought, certainly a probabilistic one. "You promised if I behaved as you wanted you wouldn't kill anyone else."

He raised his eyebrows. "You must factor in your betrayal, signaling him, thereby breaking the contractual accord we agreed upon. And your betrayal was despite the fact the terms were to kill or get killed. Disabling him was out of the question. No more talking. Drive!"

She felt a wave of self-pity, an emergence she knew would disable her ability to properly preserve her strength and chance of survival. The sanctity of her life, she was reassured in that moment, was deterministic on a path which held no regard for her life. On the thought, she put the car in reverse.

SCHEDULED FOR NEXT YEAR



Five people are dead in the swimming pool of a high end resort hotel. Only one of them, a fame-hungry politician, is the suspected target. Three people are dead at a roof party on a high rise luxury building. The target is unidentifiable. The killer's calling card is a single black point on a blank. Lila Orilede is hired to find out who killed one of the random targets as the police run out of viable clues and suspects.

A Case in Point Excerpt

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