

The Wrong Choice

Stephen

He floated in a nothingness that surrounded all. In the swirling blackness, he could hear cries of hatred, pain; pleas for mercy. Memory had left him and no idea of the meaning floated in him. In the blackness, visions swirled of long-forgotten people.

Nausea overtook him and the screams amplified his insanity. The mass of people appeared, screaming for his death. He saw a hand—*his* hand—reach out . . . the guns around him exploded into blinding fury. The screams turned to panic and then . . .

Silence. His insides ached. Before him floated an endless line of people he had known, before the . . . the . . . *end*. They begged him to stop, to turn back. Their pleadings became screams, and then faded away, into a light that banished all shadows.

The light was coming towards him, and joy welled within him, but it coldly turned away, a whisper wafting towards him. *Depart from me, you who are cursed* . . . It disappeared, and it continued.

People stared blankly up at him, looking, hoping for something he could not remember, and he remembered . . .

The man pointed it at him, and he fell back, while they all rejoiced. They came and trod upon him, spitting and mocking his feeble movements. It shifted again, and he saw a new sight.

You must have faith the boy will take the right path . . . He saw the parents, smiling at him, but he felt (heard?) a slight breath, and they disappeared.

He was holding a weapon, the kind he could not forget, but the name . . . that escaped him. It spewed fire upon the ambassador, and the guards sprang at him, but he knew it was futile . . .

You must have faith the boy will take the right path . . . Yes, but again, *All is well. Nothing has been lost* . . .

A figure stepped forward; drew a small tube from his belt. With a sharp *crack*, it flowed from his hand; exploded into being. *I wish I didn't have to do this* . . . Slowly, in a daze, it drew back, and swung through him, but he floated away from this scene.

The figure changed into one of the rebels, pointing a gun at him. It fired, and the man emptied the chamber into him, but he floated away from the scene.

Look! The Lamb of God . . . takes away . . . of the world. The insanity seemed to be dissolving, going away. But then it came . . .

Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels . . . For I was hungry, and you did not feed me, I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink.