

A Short Dystopian Novel

# *High into Sky*



*Course: Utopian Literature*

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*Date: 2012/6/17*

# 1.

Escaping was never easy, especially when you were escaping for life. It seemed so easy for a rabbit chased by a lion to slip into a hole, like none of them will be caught. But when it came to Theo, he realized that running for life was nothing fun to do. He was the poor rabbit now, exhausted and almost thirsts to death. Ironically, he was the one who tried to kill himself during his daily routine this morning. And now running for life? He had figured out the monitored area and bypassed it, where his action of knocking his head with the shovel might be scanned. But how could he imagine that one early-wakened elder saw him and stopped him? It seems that the stranger had saved him, but then reported to the priests? That was killing him!

“Which law will they apply onto my condition?” wondered Theo.

“SUICIDE: THOSE WHO TAKES ONE’S OWN LIFE WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF THE PRIESTS AND THE SENATORS, IS CONSIDERED UNWORTHY, AND HIS BODY, UNBURIED AND DISGRACED, SHOULD BE THROWN INTO THE NEAREST BOG.”—written on page 32 of the civil law handbook, or was it the one written on the following page “IF THE SLAVES REBEL AGAINST THEIR CONDITION, THEY ARE PUT INSTANTLY TO DEATH”?

Being a slave was far worse than death; that was why he decided to end his life this morning. And now? Hunted by the senators, there was something roaring inside his body, telling him to refuse yielding to the sentence. Yes, he tried to kill himself, but that was because he owns his life, *not* the senators! Besides, he has a dream, a dream of a secret, a dream unfulfilled, a dream he never tells, a DREAM—that’s what propels him to live.

Thinking of his dream, Theo fell into sleep in the night breeze under an olive tree.

He’ll find a place to hide tomorrow, just let him close his eyes first....

## 2.

“Ahh... Where am I?” Theo blinked his eyes several times but still couldn’t see a thing in the dark. Then, noticing the smell, the feeling of cold metal, both were so familiar, Theo knew where he was lying on—the awful iron bed in the prison, where he stayed a night over when being caught because of stealing materials for *manufacturing his dream*. He gave out a sigh. He must have been fallen into a coma and caught by the guards. His ankles, neck, and wrists were again chained with heavy gold, which he had successfully unlocked some of them during run-away.

“Hey, you!” Theo searched for the hoarse voice.

“Yes, you, new-coming boy....I live in the opposite can. Come to the bars so you can see me,” said the hoarse-voiced man. Theo staggered to the cold iron bars of his can, his “criminal’s icons” rubbed and made clear noise while he walked; through the dim light, he could gradually see now. Surprisingly, there were three of them: the man talking to him with knotted beard was in his middle-age, a skinny tall kid seventeen years old at most, and an artistic-like man with a pony tail, whom Theo could not tell his age from his hollow eyes.

“Who are you?” asked Theo.

“I’m Teddy, I’m a carpenter, this is my son Bubble, and that’s Vincent.” The kid smiled a bit (or did he?), and Vincent the pony-tail man nodded his head for HI.

“What’s your name? ‘Plen’ boy?”

“Call me Theo, Theo Revolude, and wait, *what* did you call me?”

“Plen. Heard you murmuring something about your dream of flying in the sky. No offense. But that’s a pretty ridiculous dream,” said Teddy.

Theo did not answer, how could a carpenter understand a great dream like this?

“It’s none of your business, by the way it’s *plane* with a long A sound, not *plen*,” answered Theo.

“Well, that’s not important; it is after all a stupid dream. How can humans fly in the sky? We are not birds, eagles, or...,” laughed Teddy.

“Don’t you ever despise my dream! The whole society is already despising my dream! And I don’t need one more person telling me my dream won’t come true. No one really understands me.” Theo was irritated, though he didn’t mean to yell at a stranger.

“Hey, watch your words,” intervened Vincent.

“I’m...I’m so...sorry, I didn’t mean to yell, it’s just, I’m so tired, and now being caught again,” said Theo.

“I accept your apology, kid. Why are you here?” said Teddy softly.

“Well...I stole things to make a plane because they won’t allow me to have more metals,” said Theo, “and you?”

Teddy said his family was the fifty-seventh place of the excess population to move to the other city since the country had become overpopulated this summer. But they did not want to move because Bubble’s grandma was too old for moving, and family members agreed to stay with grandma here at Dymtown.

“So we technically missed the ship heading new city, and broke into pairs so we moved faster. We hid everywhere, including gardens, barns, ports, etc. We scheduled dates to meet at grandma’s house, and then left in less than an hour,” said Teddy sadly.

“One day, we two got caught, and were sent here,” said Bubble.

“Oh...Sorry to hear that,” said Theo. “And you, Vincent?”

“It’s a long story,” said Vincent.

Theo sat on the floor, resting his chin on his hands, ready to listen to another sad story.

### 3.

Vincent started, “I was waiting for the approval for transferring to another household of art. Because no matter how hard I’ve tried, I can’t do the weaving craft as well as my father did. The only thing I can do is to paint,” Vincent stopped, and then continued.

“However, I had been waiting so long, but no Syphogrant, one who manage our work, was willing to tell me the result. They said ‘Just wait.’ I couldn’t wait, because as it is known, the very last household of painting as occupation in this country is dying out. There left only one old granny with no offspring, but she was so sick and weak that she might pass away anytime. So I sneaked into the granny’s house every night, to see her paint beautiful pictures that she wished to left to the country....until I was caught by the Syphogrants,” he signed.

“Unfortunately, granny died two days ago, which meant the occupation—painter—vanished forever, because I wasn’t able to inherit the skills in time. Now, I’m merely a painter without spirit, because my only hope died,” said Vincent, almost crying.

Theo thought about it and said, “Though there’s no proof, I strongly doubt that the authorities put off your application, and let go the skill of art craft deliberately. As I’ve heard, annually, they evaluate and control the amount of people doing each craft.

Then they decide what kind of craft is valuable to the society, and is worth being left. I think they see no value in crafts of art....”

“No matter what, I should wait for the approval. I’m guilty and I confess that,” said Vincent.

“I guess we’re all waiting for death,” said Teddy, “I heard that we’re the first family to refuse moving, and we ought to die for offending the law.”

“As long as I died with Dad, I don’t mind,” Bubble murmured.

“At least I make friends like you before I die,” Vincent smiled bitterly.

“No, don’t say that, you’re just doing what you have to, loving your family isn’t crime at all, and Vincent, you’re merely pursuing your beginner’s spirit of becoming a painter; that’s not a crime,” said Theo.

“Hush, how dare you say that, we’re criminals undoubtedly,” said Teddy shivering. Out of patience, Theo said, “Stop acting so cowardly! I can’t listen to your excuses anymore! People out there, including you who have this kind of negative thoughts, all think that we’ve come to the highest realm of development in society form; in fact, you’re merely restraining yourself from advancement. There are possibilities lying out there, lying in your sub consciousness, but the whole society, or say, the authorities, the education shape you into men without dreams, without hope, and without thinking ability. You are born to accept the environment you’re in, yes, many people live happily indeed, just like cockroaches.”

The three criminals did not utter a word. Theo continued his lecture.

“Think about it. Who enact the law? Why are they the dominants rather than us? Why do they decide what we should learn during classes? Why do they stop us from intelligence, imaginations, and innovations? Have you ever thought about why? What kind of nature we human beings have? Have you ever thought of a good idea but quickly denied it just because doing it is violating the law, *because simply thinking it is a crime*? Moreover, why are we sharing properties if someone is acting earnestly when siphogrants walk by, but idling around when nobody sees them? There are crimes they ignore. They don’t want to admit that there are so many crimes underground.”

Theo drank some water from his bowl at the corner.

“I’m not saying that the ancestors who build this country and made these rules are stupid, but the modern authorities are lazy enough! They change some rules so they

can better manage us. They restrain us from letting out our potentials. And then educate us to be content with what we have. That's not educating. Education should be teaching us critical thinking, so that we see disadvantages to improve. The society is marking at the same place. They do not have the wisdom of the ancestors."

"Hmm....you've got a point," said Vincent, his eyes shine with sparkles for the first time.

"Of course I've got a point; these thoughts have been in my minds for decades!" Theo felt so excited to speak out his mind.

"Decades? How old are you, honestly?" wondered Teddy.

"Err....just exaggerating, I'm twenty-seven, not as old as you I suppose," said Theo.

"You are an interesting man, Theo, and a talkative one," said Vincent.

They all burst into laughter.

"But you said you tried to die....," said Bubble.

"Oh, yes, I admit I was insane. I should take the initiative of revolution. I've read a banned book indicating that a society should become more advance and civilized through the process of revolutions. Yes, I'll do it, I'll be the initiator. Luckily, we still hold courage in us. We've got little expectation from the society and the laws enacted by unknown people, we should rebel against it! There is nothing I can lose now; I'm a man waiting for execution. I'm going to escape again. I've been caught once, but I won't make the same mistake this time. Are you in?"

The three criminals looked at each other, there was a long silence, and no one dared to speak.

"Well, in fact, the plane I mentioned," said Theo, in a very slow mode.

The three criminals looked at him.

"It is accomplished!" Theo said happily.

"But....but you said...."

“Yes I know....I escaped....because, honestly, to meet my lover, Pandora,” Theo blushed, “I was persuading her to come with me, but she refused because it was too risky, so....so I thought I’d better die without her.”

“Haha, so the whole story of your presence here in prison derives from your blind passion?” said Vincent.

“If you really have to say that, yes, I admit,” said Theo.

“Hey, there’s nothing wrong with it, are you going to marry her?” asked Teddy.

“I desire, but have no idea whether she wants to elope with me or not,” said Theo.

“Have you finished the ““required procedure””?” asked Teddy.

“You mean the examination? No, I don’t think I should, because no matter how Pandora looks when naked, I love her, and I accept all defects. No one is perfect, I think the tradition is quite stupid,” said Theo.

“Okay then, since your love story reminds me of my youth, I’m in!” said Teddy, “are you fine with my decision, Son?”

“Yes, of course. I’d like to help Theo,” smiled Bubble.

“I guess I’ve no choice, friends ought to help each other,” said Vincent without hesitation.

“Oh my god! Thank you! Thank all of you!” said Theo joyfully.

“Thank me later,” Vincent went back to his bed, finding something at the corner,

“Here, I’ve stolen the keys from the guard,” Vincent held the keys high.

“Wow! You’ve been hiding that?” asked Teddy.

“Sorry, man,” apologized Vincent, smiling.

“Let’s provide leverage!” said Theo.

“Cooooool! We’re the vanguards, eel-ha!” said Bubble.



## 4.

Thanks to the lazy prison guard, they had successfully sneaked out of the prison. The fresh air lured with excitement. They came to Theo's place. The thing called *plane* was hidden under a big canvas cloth in the barn, where it is filled with strange tools.

"Wow, I didn't know a machinist can make such thing," said Vincent.

"I'm a genius, just for reference," giggled Theo.

Bubble was touching the plane lightly, as if afraid to hurt the giant machine.

Theo asked the others to wait in the barn, and he ran to Pandora's house two blocks away. He climbed up the low balcony, and came to Pandora's room at the first floor.

He knocked on the window slightly, and heard someone walking near the window.

"Oh gosh, Theo, it's you! I've been thinking about you. I miss you soooooo much!

Wait! Aren't you in the prison?" Pandora was as pretty as Theo remembered.

"It's a long story," answered Theo.

"Oh, come on in and be careful," Pandora opened the window.

"So, you know why I'm here, my love," said Theo, watching Pandora in her beautiful eyes.

"Yes, I know, but..." Pandora avoided him.

"Oh, honey, please, I beg you, don't you know that I can't live without you? You are my Pandora, you are my hope. Give yourself a hope too. You know you don't belong here. Please don't waste the kindness of God, come with me!" said Theo hopefully.

"These two days, I've thought of a lot of things. I guess I can't live without you too, dear. Alright! Wait for me," Pandora ran in and out of the room packing her stuffs, but she did not know what to take, so at last, she grabbed her outer coat only and climbed out of the balcony with Theo.

They ran and ran back to Theo's place.

The three criminals were waiting for them. Theo sat on the cockpit, and started the engine. The machine gave out a loud roar, and then the propeller at the very front started to move. They were in the garden, rising up slowly in the night sky. All of them were so excited but no one wanted to say anything at this significant moment; their feelings were beyond description. Deep in their heart, they knew to people in Dymtown, they are criminals today, but after decades, they'll realize that Theo and the others had set up a milestone for them.

*The End*