My Hero

I ran as fast as I could through the forest, the small needles on the branches of the tall pine trees scratching me through my thin blue shirt, the cold white snow dampening my old worn running shoes. I have to get away; I have to do what I have always done – run.

If they catch me it is over; if they catch me my mother gave her life for nothing.

***‘Too alarming now to talk about***

***Take your pictures down and shake it out***

***Truth or consequence, say it out loud***

***Use that evidence, race it around’***

Mum never liked lullabies; she thought that they were not real music and that even kids should listen to great artists like Foo Fighters. That was her favorite band. I never really liked them and preferred other bands like Green Day and Led Zeppelin. Mum always tried to get me to like them, by singing me to sleep every night with her favorite song – My Hero.

Mum loved music…and games.

*“It’s just a game Carrie, like when we played tag around the park when you were a kid, but this time if they catch you it’s game over. This backpack has all you’ll need. You have to leave. Run as fast as you can and don’t look back. Now go! Run!”*

I started running as fast as my legs could take me out the back door, but just before I lost sight of her I took one look back. As my mother was mouthing I love you, a bullet embedded itself in her skull.

From then on I ran and never stopped.

***‘There goes my hero***

***Watch him as he falls***

***There goes my hero***

***He’s ordinary’***

After Mother was killed I sang myself to sleep with My Hero every night.

I am seventeen now and have been running since my mother was killed. The only times I stop are to eat and sleep. Several times they have found me, but I have always gotten away.

***‘Don’t the best of them bleed it out***

***While the rest of them peter out***

***Truth or consequence say it aloud***

***Use that evidence race it around’***

I can still remember the slight pinch as the needle penetrated my skin, the feel of the cool liquid racing through my veins desperate to hit its target – my heart. I remember the feel as the liquid mixed with blood sending a painful, yet somehow pleasurable feeling echoing throughout my whole body. Then came a surge of…power as they mixed together as one.

I remember my mother’s sad eyes as she removed the needle from my arm, her warm embrace as she tried to silently soothe me.

*“Carrie listen to me. What I just injected you with was an experimental project I worked on in my early years as a genetic scientist.*

*This experiment was a mix of cheetah DNA that when inserted into the bloodstream of a human would give the human the abilities of a cheetah. The only abilities we were actually able to harness was the ability of super speed, but unlike the cheetah the human is able to run over long distances without stopping. I don’t have enough time to explain more and it would be better if you didn’t know much about it, but what I can tell you is who the agents surrounding the house work for. They work for a company that specialize in genetic mutations called Signal Fire. Once they find out that you are now the carrier of the formula they will try and catch you. You can’t let them catch you Carrie. If they get their hands on the formula all hell will break loose. They will either use you, or get rid of you if you prove to be no use. These people are not good people, they will do whatever possible to get what they want – even kill.”* She whispered into my ear whilst caressing me ever so gently.

*“I understand mum, I won’t get caught. I’ll have you.”*

She smiled sadly and shook her head.

*“I would just slow you down,”* she whispered, so quietly that if I wasn’t paying attention I wouldn’t have heard it. “*This is your task and you must do it alone.”*

Once I heard that she wasn’t coming with me a sense of dread filled me and an uneasy feeling entered my stomach. Tears rolled down my cheeks and silent sobs wracked through my body as I realized that after today nothing would ever be the same.

***‘There goes my hero***

***Watch him as he falls***

***There goes my hero***

***He’s ordinary’***

My entire life changed in one day and I had to adapt to a life of loneliness and continuous running.

I’ve run through every terrain you could ever think of: forests, cities, deserts, jungles and so much more. I’ve run over four continents and through more than forty countries. They continuously chase me, so that I won’t go and tell the government, or some newspaper about their plans, but they can never catch up long enough to actually kill me. I have however had very close calls and escaped death over two dozen times.

It’s strange that they have never caught me considering I am one person and they are a multimillion dollar company with many agents around the world. Sometimes I wonder whether they’re actually trying to catch me. I haven’t thought too much about it and have tried to avoid the thought, but one can only turn a blind eye to reality for, so long. They have chased after me many times even cornered me, but have never actually caught me once and even with my cheetah abilities I don’t believe I can outrun a company with so very many people and tools at their disposal, but I try to remain hopeful that the cheetah is what keeps me alive.

The cheetah is very powerful and sometimes the cheetah in me takes over and I end up blacking out five miles past where I want to be, or in another country.

Most of the time I hate not being able to control myself and have worked hard to make sure I’m in control even when it fights to take over, but it’s never enough, the cheetah is almost able to take over.

Other times I am grateful to have the cheetah at my disposal as it is what gets me out of such dire and dangerous situations that are a given when being chased by Signal Fire agents.

The cheetah is always dominant and will fight its way to the surface when threatened.

***‘Kudos my hero***

***Leaving all the best***

***You got my hero***

***One that’s on’***

*I felt the heat of the Sahara sun as it seeped through the fabric of my thin black shirt. I ran as fast as I could over the hills of pure hot beige sand, relishing the feel of the wind whipping through my hair and face while my legs did the work. I was hot and thirsty, but the tranquility of the desert was too alluring for me to bother stopping to take a sip from my water bottle.*

*All of a sudden I heard the harsh sound of blades whipping through the air coming from the distance. My head whipped around and behind me gliding through the air I saw a black chopper heading my way. I had seen it before, so I already knew that there are Signal Fire agents inside of it. As the chopper got closer I tried to will my legs to run faster, but to no avail as they would not run faster at my command. The chopper got even closer and as it started lowering to the ground I felt the cheetah trying to take over.*

*I fought it as I like to have control over myself in situations like this and be able to think with a clear head, but much like how I tried to run faster it was to no avail and the cheetah took over. When it relinquished its control over to me once again and I found no chopper’s in sight I – for the first time in two years – laughed and let my legs take me as far away from here as possible.*

***‘There goes my hero***

***Watch him as he falls***

***There goes my hero***

***He’s ordinary’***

As I run through the forest my stomach starts to twist and turn so vehemently that I have to slow my speed down a millisecond. My instincts tell me to turn back, but I can’t as there is a large number of agents chasing me and if I turn back they’ll surely catch me.

As the number of trees starts to lessen a green wall is revealed that looks eerily like much of the scenery. Stationed at that wall is well over forty armed agents all wearing camouflage. Behind me there are about thirty agents that look just about ready to close in on me.

It’s a dead end and I don’t just mean the forest.

My mind starts working immediately, eyes darting around looking for an escape route, heart beating a million miles a minute, all while my mother’s words echo through my head. *“It’s just a game Carrie…”*

All of a sudden I come to a revelation of the truth hidden in her words.

I never truly did understand till now why I was always able to outrun, or escape them, but now I realize that it was what my mother said – a game. One where I can run all I want, but in the end when it comes down to it…they are the Queen and I am a mere Pawn.

I slow down to a stop and look around to find that every single agent has their gun out and they are all pointed at me. Out of the sea of agents emerges a woman. This woman is tall, slim, fair skinned, blue eyed, with a long pointed nose and thin lips pulled into a sadistic smirk of sorts. Her hair is white-blonde, as straight as a pin and cascades down to her shoulders. Her outfit consists of a black suit, so tight it looks like a second skin and black combat boots. She holds a black rifle at her side.

“Game over,” she says in a thick Russian accent, voice as smooth as silk.

My heart starts fluttering like a butterfly as I watch her take off the safety and aim it at me. At that moment the cheetah tries to take over, so I smirk at the woman close my eyes and think to myself *‘No it’s not.’* I hear the trigger pulled and at that moment, I let the cheetah go.

Word Count: 1800