

# LOK

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Black clouds cover the night as a sliver of moonlight shines through. Its soft light touches over a once magnificent city. Now, an eerie white glow is cast off debris and dark towers.

A white van blasts through the night with gold letters on the side, which said: REFORM. It hits a hole in the broken pavement, and the vehicle jumps up in the air. Crunching back down onto the road, the van continues to speed through what they now call, Crime City.

Slipping out of the shadows, a man dressed in crimson surveys the area. His yellow eyes move over every inch of the walls that surround him. His gaze settles on graffiti spray painted on a broken bridge nearby. A smile twitches on his lips as his eyes read: Lucky are the dead to not live the future of us.

“Lok?” He does not have to turn around to know who it is. “Lok.”

“What now?”

Turning to look over his shoulder, Lok’s gaze meets a hologram of a woman in a white dress. Her hands are folded together in front of her. Her long, brown hair covers her shoulders, and her soft gaze settles on him. “Welcome back. I knew you couldn’t stay away for too long.”

“I’m back on business.” He walks away from her. “You can have your city once I’m gone.”

“This is your city too.” Lok laughs. “More would have died if it were not for you.” He stops laughing. “You’ve been missed.”

“Really?” He turns to look at the woman. “Well, Raven, if I’ve been missed, then why am I being hunted?” He sees her frown. “Why would my assassin lead me here?” She shrugs in response. “That’s what I thought.” He starts to walk away.

“If you just reformed...”

“No!” He stops walking. “End program.” The hologram vanishes. “I trust my humanity over yours.” He resumes moving through the city.

Further down the road, Lok pauses at a pile of rubble. Flashes of people gathered together, laughing and smiling go through his mind. Images of pictures and furniture decorate a house that has become the rubble. Shaking the past off, he moves away from it.

“It was the bombs.” Lok’s eyes move up to an old man leaning on his cane nearby. “It leveled almost everything in this sector.”

“I’m surprised to see you breathing, Gavin.” The old man shrugs. “You should not be here.”

“Neither should you. There’s a mark on you.” Lok now shrugs. “Why be the fool and come to the endgame?”

“It’s better to come to the enemy than for the enemy to come to you.”

“True, but things won’t go good for you. You left once before, and you have no pass now to get out.”

“What’s your point, old man?” Lok now stands next to him.

“Just that you are like us now unless...”

“Use the R word, and I’ll smack you with that cane.” The two of them look at each other for a moment before bursting out laughing. “I’m serious.” Lok stops laughing.

“I know.” Gavin moves away from him. “You always were.” He gives his friend one last look before disappearing into the night.

“Welcome home.” Raven now stands behind him. “It was a beautiful house.” She looks back at the rubble.

“End program.”

“No, wait a damn minute...” Raven vanishes.

Strolling further down the street, Lok gazes up at one dark tower now fully lit. The word, REFORM appears on one side of the building and then appears on the other side. A spotlight switches on from the roof and moves down toward Lok and remains on him for a moment.

A second later, white vans breach the darkness and surround him. Men in white suits and red glasses hurry out of the vans with their tazers ready. They surround Lok.

Another minute later, a man in black stands before Lok. His eyes are as black as his suit. His gloved hands are positioned behind his back as he studies Lok, who stands in the middle of the other men. “I didn’t think you would come back.”

“I didn’t think you would try to kill me.”

“Come on, Lok. You left. I took over. Yet, I can’t really be in charge, if you are still out there. You understand, don’t you?”

“Of course, I do... Brother.” The man glares at Lok. “How’s the Reform, Kol?”

“Trying to save as many poor souls out there. Will you...”

“Reform? No. The idea of not having my humanity anymore? It doesn’t settle within me.” He glances over his shoulder to see Raven nearby. “She doesn’t tempt me either.”

“I realize that, brother.”

“So?”

“So what, Lok?”

“Kill me, and get it over with.” Kol laughs. “It’s what you want.”

“I don’t want to kill you, Lok. I want you reformed.”

“No.”

“Do you really have a choice? Look around you. We’ll drag you in, if we have to.” Lok moves into a fighting position. “You lost. There are no Saviors left.”

“There’s a few.”

“You’re the last.”

“Do you believe that, Kol?” His brother turns to look at him. “The Reformation is over. I came here to tell you that, and I am going to walk out of this city tonight. But I will be coming back... Soon.”

“Tazer him...”

“You do, and we all go BOOM.”

Pulling up his red shirt, a black device wrapped like a spider around Lok’s body turns red. A yellow eye focuses on Kol. A sound is heard as one leg is extracted back into the body of the device.

“Stop!” Kol motions for his men to step back. “Retreat to the vans.” He looks back at Lok. “You dare start this again! Do you know how many souls were lost in the last war?”

“I do.”

“And you dare do this now!”

“Because mind control isn’t the path to freedom.”

“It’s Reformation!”

“It’s the death to humanity!” Lok pulls his shirt down. “The Savivors are back!” He storms away.

“Your death will be at my feet the next time we face each other!” Kol watches his brother stroll away. “Your death will be my victory!”

“As yours will be mine!” Lok continues to walk back out the city.

Black clouds run from the sliver of moonlight as its arm reaches out toward Lok. Shadows sneak behind him as he reaches the bridge leading from the city to the wilderness outside. An eerie glow hugs to Lok’s shadow as he steps from the light and back into the dark.