



S.W.A.

Copyright © 2013 by James K.B. Brough

*Warning: this novel contains strong violence
and sexual references.*

*All characters and events in this publication, other
than those clearly in the public domain, are fictitious
and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead,
is purely coincidental.*

This paperback edition 2013

1

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any
means, without the prior permission in writing of the publisher, nor be
otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in
which it is published and without a similar condition including
this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

Typeset in Times New Roman
Printed and bound in the United Kingdom

ISBN 978-1-291-31236-2

Cover Artwork Copyright © 2013 James K.B. Brough

For the fans.

Other titles by James K.B. Brough:

Save the World Academy Series:

Part I: The Sword of Steel

Part II: The Crocodile's Smile

Part III: The Watch Suicides

Save the World Academy
Part IV:

The BROTHERHOOD Of
The RABBIT

By

James K.B. Brough

THE RABBIT

Dorian was a snow white rabbit with ruby red eyes.

His brows were furrowed and his mouth slightly crooked giving him an almost human quality.

Indeed, there was some deeper thought beneath the rabbit's long pinkish ears and large fore teeth.

'Here's a new friend for you, Dorian,' Cameron Papillon said as he lowered a patchy brown and white bunny in with his faithful pet.

While Dorian's ears were more erect and prominent, this new addition was floppy-eared and timid looking.

'Be nice to little Matty,' Cam closed the steel cage and wiped the sawdust that had collected on his knuckles.

Cameron could watch his pet rabbit for hours; the wave of Dorian's fur when his limbs moved, the pink, blue and purple veins that stood out when the light shone through his ears, the perfectly rose-tinted nose, the fiery red eyes like medieval gems. Yes, Dorian was a beautiful specimen.

The rabbit pounced on his new neighbour, slamming the surprised creature's neck down with both his paws while smothering its furry face with his body.

The little bunny named Matty kicked and struggled, the cage thrashing as woodchips and sawdust floated wildly in the air.

The metal enclosure banged twice before a calm took the room. The water bowl settled, and then Cameron anticipated his movement.

The spiky-haired boy laughed, 'we are not supposed to kill Matty.' He rested his hands on the roof of the small pen, 'not yet anyway.'

Dorian was the most aggressive domestic animal Cameron had ever seen. The rabbit detested being touched by anyone other than him.

Cam wasted little time opening the cage and removing the still warm cadaver, 'perhaps we can make a nice stew out of this one.'

This had been the seventh kill in one year from the murderous pet. Cameron gained a hint of sadistic excitement from each, as he termed it, "bunny-cide."

'It is almost eleven o'clock, Cameron,' said his watch, Cassius.

The boy nodded for his timepiece's favour, picking up a black rucksack and making an exit with the dead animal in his right hand.

Bear Valley was quiet with only fourth and fifth years barely lingering in the corridors.

The weather had turned cold and Groundskeeper Fergus was hard at work rolling the field.

What a crap job, thought Cameron making his way past the classrooms.

Mr Magyer's door remained open, the irritating little teacher chatting idly away into some poor student's ear while pointing to his wall of cheaply printed certificates.

The psych session earlier in the year with the self-proclaimed professor proved most informative;

'Tell me what you see,' Magyer held up the Rorschach test.

'A rabbit,' Cameron didn't hesitate.

The short, round man gave a little laugh, looking at the paper, 'oh yeah, it does look a bit like a rabbit. Didn't notice that one before. Things going alright with your lot then, young Cameron?'

'Eager to do my final year, Professor.'

'Aren't we all, 'ey? Not easy being a bit older and wiser. You shouldn't be in such a mad rush to get out into the real world. It's a nightmare, let me tell you. When the first person you love takes advantage of you, you'll be wishing you were back here, safe inside these walls.'

'You think we are safe in Bear Valley?' snorted Cameron.

'Of course we are,' Magyer smiled, then completely altered his mood in concern, 'what have you heard?'

'A darkness is coming. One who is forgotten shall rise again. The legends of old will haunt these bear caves as they once did and devour all that stand in its way.'

'You haven't been eating the chef's meatballs, have you? They do terrible things to my guts as well.'

The silly teacher doesn't know, Cameron spat as he now made his way towards the rocky caves.

The caves were a bending and twisting maze, a labyrinth that one could easily get lost in without a watch's guidance. Many old stories of Bear Valley involved students going missing in the tunnels, pupils making out in the dark of the rocky routes, or teens falling to their deaths in the fissures.

The first hundred metres of the passages were lit here and there by torches, the light eventually dying out the further one travelled into the caverns.

Self-exploration of the fissures was only permitted to fifth years, and only with a teacher's permission.

There was a sound of water trickling. Dripping was omnipresent from above and the sides.

A strong smell of copper and damp soil filled his nostrils as he made his way to the predetermined location, the blue light of his watch taking over once the final glow of the white bulbs gave in.

After many minutes of walking, the caves began to shrink in certain parts as if squeezed together, then opening into grand sections that, more often than not, had been used privately by students for all means of skulduggery. Beyond this space was a thin slice in the rocky wall which forced him to breathe in deeply.

The squeeze was so awkward Cameron had to remove his backpack to shimmy through the crack. Not too far ahead was the faint cloud of carrot-coloured light.

A slow, throaty incantation was echoing from the candlelit source, '*Germanitatem Leporis. Germanitatem Leporis.*'

When Cameron emerged from the scraping stone, he blinked to clear his eyes at the scene before him;

Two brown-robed figures stood motionless in a circle of candles, their faces hidden in the minimal light.

The chanting ceased.

'Welcome, brother,' Jonathon pulled back his cowl.

Cam and Jon performed their secret handshake; right hands clapping one another, then the two index fingers sliding over followed by a click of the fingers.

Simon turned and copied the gesture, 'welcome, brother. Did you bring your robes?'

He nodded, throwing the carcass of the little dead bunny to the ground, 'do you have the book, brothers?'

Simon pointed a sharp fingernail to the floor, an old leather-bound book open in the centre of the circle.

'And the other item for our ritual?' Cameron pulled out his robe from the backpack, lifting it over his head and letting the heavy material fall quickly over him. Without a second thought he removed Cassius from his wrist and stowed the watch away in the bag.

Simon nodded slowly, pointing to a figure tied up nearby, bound and unconscious.

'The time draws near,' Cam fastened an old yellowing rope about his waist as though it were a belt, 'soon, brothers, we will have our sacred night. When the moon is full blue, the gay virgin will be offered up to the altar...'

‘...His throat will be slit, the blood given to the sacred one,’ the other two completed.

Cameron pulled the cowl of his robe over his spiky hair.

As the ancient text demanded, Cameron had to light four candles; one for each of his brothers, one for himself, and the final candle for Leporis.

Jonathon handed over a blank box of matches.

‘Grant us the wisdom, Leporis. Grant us the strength, Leporis. Grant us the power. Germanitatem Leporis.’

The tied up boy began rousing.

‘He’s awake,’ Simon was smiling.

‘Was it difficult to get him here?’ Cameron perched over the wriggling, gagged teen, not withdrawing from the familiar eyes that now stared up at him in fright.

‘Tricked him. Told him we would give him some of our alcohol. The catch was he had to keep it a secret and then we would lead him through the caves.’

‘He believed you?’

Simon chuckled.

‘Definitely getting dumber by the year,’ Jonathon adjusted a stuffed rabbit that overlooked the scene. The fur was black and greying, the glazed eyes like charcoal marble. ‘What’s with the dead bunny?’

‘Dorian didn’t take a liking to this one either,’ he looked upon the stuffed animal close to the dead offering, ‘did you have to bring that feral thing?’ Cam clicked his tongue.

‘You have Dorian,’ Jon defended, ‘I have Brer. Besides, it is good fortune to have many rabbits at our rituals.’

‘Dorian is a real rabbit. Not a malting, pawnshop castaway.’

‘Hello... a stuffed rabbit was once a real rabbit.’

‘Hello... it’s a flea magnet.’

‘Brothers,’ Simon interrupted, ‘a rabbit in any form is a good omen. Let us deal with the matters at hand. This is the first boy we are going to kill this year. It is time to sacrifice to Leporis.’

‘Are you ready?’ Cam could feel his adrenalin surging, ‘we’ve only ever killed small animals in his name before.’

It was true; the group had sacrificed over twenty birds, ten cats, five woodland squirrels, two dogs and a goldfish.

‘Trust me, I am glad we are doing this,’ Simon retrieved a knife from his rope belt and began sharpening it on a thin piece of whetstone. ‘Unless you want to do the honours?’

‘Be my guest,’ said Jon.

‘Once we do this there is no going back,’ Cam stared his two comrades deep in their glimmering eyes, looking more for reassuring agreement than wavering confusion.

Simon placed his dagger on the book, making his way to the mumbling prisoner. He dragged the struggling boy along the floor, ‘help me lift him over the candles. I don’t want to break the sacred circle.’

Cam and Jon obliged, the three of them stepping carefully over the candles. The victim shook and fought with his body, but to no avail. Soon he was in the centre of the circle.

‘Think he’s a virgin?’ wondered Simon.

‘Has to be,’ Jon sneered, ‘who would sleep with someone this heartless?’

Cam had to agree with the boys. This guy was a real piece of work. Cameron left the circle to stand next to the stuffed rabbit, Brer, clutching the leather-bound book in his sweating palms, ‘doesn’t matter if he is a virgin or not at this point, but the last one has to be.’

This first human sacrifice was an essential offering to Leporis. It was part of the ritual of Eternal Gain from the sacred book; it started with the offering of small creatures, getting larger until only human sacrifices remained. One would be of wicked heart, cruel and unkind. The rule was he had to like women, too. The next sacrifice would have to be kind of heart, a virgin and only attracted to men.

To Cameron and Jonathon’s surprise, Simon wasted no time to slit the boy’s throat and turn away, carefully stepping over the lit candles to join the other two.

Blood was pooling in the circle as the boy began to die.

‘*Germanitatem Leporis. Germanitatem Leporis,*’ Simon and Jon chanted as Cameron read from the ancient book.

Tall, thin, short and fat candles sweated their wax on the hard ground.

Directly ahead of them was a large rabbit skeleton decorated in slivers of fur and trinkets of gold and beaded leather, watching the loyal acolytes, the gagged boy and the many rabbit tokens strewn about the ground through hollow sockets.

‘Hear us, Leporis; We offer you the soul of the wicked to cleanse our hearts,’ Cam’s throat was close to running dry.

‘*Germanitatem Leporis. Germanitatem Leporis.*’

‘See true intentions in our actions and bless us. Guide us with your powerful knowledge. Take this boy, David Plummer. Take him with you to the hallowed rabbit hole.’

The boy, David, stopped wriggling on the ground, finally dead.

‘*Germanitatem Leporis. Germanitatem Leporis.*’

‘Taste this offering. When the moon is full and blue the ritual will be complete, Leporis, the pure gay virgin will be yours. With this offering grant us the wisdom, Leporis. Grant us the strength. Grant us the power.’

‘Germanitatem Leporis. Germanitatem Leporis.’

‘For we are your Brotherhood. The Brotherhood of the Rabbit.’

THE AUTHOR

James K.B. Brough was born in Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire, England and raised in Witbank, South Africa where his parents moved when he was three.

He started writing short stories and poetry from a young age, winning four silver and two gold certificates in local literary competitions. James has nurtured his passion throughout the years whilst studying Art and 3D Animation.

Currently a 3D Visualiser in a London-based Architect firm, James published his first book in Spring 2012, *The Sword of Steel*, part I of V in the Save the World Academy series.

His influences are Michael Crichton, J.R.R. Tolkien, Joss Whedon, Clive Cussler and David Gemmell.

You can follow on Twitter @S_W_Academy

To find out more about Save the World Academy join the Facebook page at facebook/SavetheWorldAcademy and get the details for the next release.

Also visit www.jamesbrough.com and subscribe to get the latest news for upcoming releases.