

BOUND

As the boy slowly came into consciousness, the first thing he felt was a light breeze coursing through his hair and the hard wooden plank he lay on. Blinded at first by the bright light, the boy rubbed his eyes and sat up. His ears filled with the sounds of the water lapping against the dock. Groggy from his troubled sleep, the boy struggled to stand. He slowly took in his surroundings. He was standing on a dock of an island. The first thing that fixated the boy was the partially submerged ship to the right of the dock. Directly ahead at the end of the dock were stone steps leading further inland.

“Where am I?” he thought. The boy was trying to comprehend where he was, but he had no reasonable answers. He seemed to be unable to recall anything.

“Xavier.” He whispered after a moment. “Yeah... My name is Xavier.” he repeated a little more confidently. Saying his name aloud gave him a mental grip that reassured him a little. He walked across the dock towards the steps. The path he followed led to a dome shaped building. The door, slightly ajar, seemed to invite him inside. It was empty save for what looked like a dentist’s chair directly in the center of the room. Xavier noticed a panel that hung above the chair and decided sitting down was the only way to see what it was. Curious, Xavier climbed into the chair and lowered the panel. It had a small screen that seemed to depict stars. Below the screen read: **JAN. 1, 1, 12:00AM**. Xavier played with the four sliders that changed the date. Each slider corresponded to the month, day, year, and time. It led him to wonder what day it was. Or even what year. The stars on the screen moved as Xavier messed with the date. The building was some sort of observatory. Wanting to see the rest of this new land, Xavier left the room.

His next destination was only a few strides away. Sitting in the center of a path was a circular bath. A model ship sat just under the water with only a little bit of its mast breaking the surface of the water. Xavier tried to retrieve the model ship, but his efforts were in vain, as the tiny ship would not budge from its watery grave. Giving up, Xavier turned around to enter the second structure on the Island, a marble temple with stark white pillars. It had the makings of a library, though small. Through the door, Xavier found two landscape paintings on either side of a bookshelf, a fireplace with no wood in it, a red book and a blue book. Closer inspection of the book shelf revealed that most of the books were blackened by fire. Pages disintegrated at his touch. The ones that didn't turn to ash were completely illegible. Turning back to the other oddities in the room, Xavier approached the two colored books. Opening the blue, Xavier was given a start.

The page sprung to life with the roar of static. He saw glimpses of a man's face in between moments of static. He spoke erratically with a crazed smile.

"Sirrus! Is that you? ... Who are you?"

Shocked Xavier said nothing.

"Help me!" the man pleaded. "Bring... blue pages!"

Xavier slammed the book shut. "What the hell was that?" he exclaimed. Recollecting himself, Xavier took a deep breath and opened the book once more.

"You ... not Sirrus. Who are you?" The man asked once more.

"My name is Xavier," the boy replied nervously.

"... can't see you... Blue pages!" The man continued to cut in and out of the static. Only fragments of his sentences were heard by Xavier.

"Who are you?" asked Xavier.

"I must ha- ... pages"

Before Xavier could ask again the book silenced, it was as if the connection went out. Looking at the red book he wondered if there was also someone inside. Carefully, Xavier lifted the worn red cover to reveal the book's contents. The man looked similar but a little thinner. He spoke in a calm calculated tone.

"Rise! ... Bring me a red page!"

"What are you talking about?" Xavier inquired.

"I can't... I can't see you."

"Who are you?" Xavier tried.

"I am Sirrus... Please, I beg of you ... " The man was cut off and the page lay to rest.

"Well at least I got one answer." Xavier whispered facetiously to himself. "I guess I need to find some pages from, wait, other pages from where?" Xavier started searching the room for any sign of these so called pages. None of the burned books contained any colored pages. With a new sense of purpose Xavier set out.

Find out what happens next in the full release of *Bound* by Max Raschke.