

*Two Brothers, One Sister
The Worst Thing Possible*

LOSS OF REASON



miles a. maxwell



LOSS
OF
REASON
miles a. maxwell

TWO BROTHERS. ONE SISTER. THE WORST THING POSSIBLE

This novel is a fantasy of the future, a work of fiction. Names, characters, businesses, organizations, places, events, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. Great effort has been made, especially regarding those individuals who have recognizable positions with government, or publicly known organizations, mentioned herein, to insure they are not mistaken for past or present individuals in those positions. What the future holds, what possible outside influences may be brought to bear on future participants in those organizations, no one can say.

Copyright © 2015 Miles A. Maxwell FAB LLC

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book or portions thereof in any form whatsoever. Electronic sharing of any part of this book without permission of the publisher, other than for review purposes, is a violation of U.S. Copyright law. For reprint permission contact:

permissions@broadington.com

B B Broadington LLC

Phoenix / Cheyenne

Visit broadington.com

First Printing 2015.

Printed in the United States of America.

Cataloging-in-Publication of Trade Editon
Library of Congress Control Number: 2015934114

ISBN 978-1-943054-02-2

LOSS OF REASON

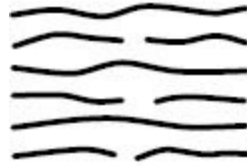
miles a. maxwell



B B BROADINGTON
CHEYENNE / PHOENIX

1

Family



**7 PM Monday Evening,
February 7**

Cynthia Reveal held onto her brother Everon a little longer than usual as they said goodbye. She watched him turn and wave with that ironic smile, then a moment later disappear into the terminal where his jet was parked. Why did she have the strange feeling —

She shook it off. *He'll be fine.*

Cyn slid into the corner of the back seat as her cab pulled away from the curb at Kennedy and tried to ignore the annoying squeal beneath the reggae coming from the radio. A streetlight's sudden illumination reflected her worried bright-blue eyes in the window. Her palm ran across the brown leather briefcase on her lap. *Should have told Everon about the report. But he was so excited, the new jet. Then he was on the phone. And I wasn't sure I wanted to say anything anyway. Maybe he hasn't left yet.* She pulled out her phone —

And hesitated. *No — Franklin! That's who I should talk to about it. I know something terrible's*

going on at the bank. His church —

She frantically dialed her younger brother's number.

A fast busy. She tried again. The phone lay there dead against her ear. She checked to make sure it was working. Cynthia had her boss's home number on Long Island —

She stopped. Put the phone down.

I'm being paranoid. First thing tomorrow morning.

As they turned onto the Belt Parkway, the driver twisted the radio dial back and forth and the squeal just got worse.

“What is *wrong* with your radio?” She couldn't take any more. “What's *with* that sound?”

The radio cut off.

“Thanks.”

She'd be home two hours later than usual tonight and Steve would be waiting. She dialed his number. After a single ring the damn thing disconnected. She tried him again, watching the lighted windows of Brooklyn, the Parkway high-rises set so close together. On their way to the airport, Cyn's older brother had once again suggested they escape “*this claustrophobic mess —*” as Everon put it. *If only I could talk Steve into packing up Melissa, all our stuff — and just get the hell out.* The phone disconnected a third try. She gave up.

Unlike Everon, her own work would have to be near a major city. *Vegas can't be all that much better, can it? The pay would be less.* She'd seen those tract homes on top of one another. The small lots — *your neighbor's late-night trash-to-the-curb excursions waking you up. Just like here in New York. Maybe there's a place for us around Spring Valley. Maybe I should talk with Grandma Del . . .*

She found herself jerked awake in a traffic jam. *What the hell? Central Park South?* They were blocks off the usual route, what she owed on the cab's meter way up — going *east* in front of the New York Plaza.

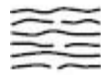
“*Hey!*” Cynthia said. “How'd we get over here?”

“Sorry. I had to go around. Construction.”

Another taxi driver, head out the window, screamed at the car blocking their path, motioning with a hand gesture rude anywhere but New York City. Horns honked uselessly.

Cynthia angled her watch to the light. *Seven-thirty? If we could just go somewhere like the little town where Franklin lives — a quiet place without all the damn traffic and taxes and rules and frustration —*

She sighed and looked up at the flags on the big old hotel waving in the cold winter air, white flakes coming down. Guys in chocolate overcoats escorted blondes and brunettes into other cabs, probably going to restaurants or movies or the ballet at Lincoln Center, Manhattanites feeling the excitement of another Monday evening. The air covered them in giant dandruff, February's first snow. In less than an hour none of it would matter.



Something passed *Penobscot* — the Coast Guard cutter assigned to break ice and patrol the harbor waters. The sonarman scored a tiny blip on his scope. Recorded electronically for eight seconds, it just as suddenly disappeared. It moved so slowly, the cutter's computer-aided sonar classified the blip as BIOLOGIC — an aquatic vertebrate — and removed it from the screen.

Ever since 9/11, one cutter or another was always on patrol in New York Harbor. Time heals all wounds though, a scab never as motivating as open flesh — and the sonarman too, discounted the blip as the movement of a very large fish. Erased it from his mind.

Penobscot continued north.

The *fish* swam silently past two small private boats, moved beyond the Statue, halfway between Liberty and Governors Island, swung east of the Hudson River. And northeast into Upper New York Bay.

When it reached the triangulated center of three transmitter signals — the fish swam faster, rising upward. As it crested the surface, a valve opened. From a chamber inside, not unlike a long scuba tank, highly compressed air blasted through a nozzle in the fish's tail. It rocketed above the surface.

For every foot gained, its potential was multiplied.

A little girl in a party hat, on her way to celebrate her eighth birthday, a dinner visit to the South Street Seaport, held her mother's hand as they walked along the pier toward the bay.

“Look, Mommy,” she pointed. “*A giant fish!*”

It was the last thing she ever said; the last thought she ever had; the next-to-last sound she ever heard.

As the fish reached the zenith of its arc, opposing charges in its belly imploded toward each other at high velocity. Eighteen nanoseconds and it all became nothing more than a ball of pure expanding energy.



On the Upper East Side, a siren like the lone wail of a coyote echoed through some distant concrete canyon, filtered through Steve Montrose and Cynthia Reveal’s barely open window. Several car horns seemed to blare in answering conversation.

Probably blocks apart, Cyn thought. But she left the window open. She liked a little fresh air getting back to the bedroom at night. The horns, the siren faded, and from the bedroom there was the faint sound of the jazz station she liked. Not clear though. That same annoying squeal all but blotted out George Benson’s light guitar.

“What’s wrong with the radio?” she called softly.

“I don’t know, hon,” Steve’s voice drifted back. “It’s been like that all night, all up and down the dial.” The radio cut off.

“Weird night for electronic stuff. My phone wouldn’t connect. I tried you three times.”

“I know. I tried you too.”

She slid everything in her briefcase into the mess of an open drawer, second from the bottom in a black file cabinet covered with colorful plastic flower stickers. *Out of sight, out of mind*. There was no way she was going to talk about it with Steve tonight. The flowers had been Cynthia’s idea of sprucing up their office-nursery until they could find something bigger.

She turned and leaned over the crib that held their baby daughter and kissed her sleeping girl goodnight. In the dim light she was surprised to see Melissa’s bright-blue eyes looking up at her.

“Guess I’ll get that drawer straightened out when you wake up tomorrow,” she whispered.

“Nighty-night, sweet girl.” She stroked Melissa’s hair as her eyes closed and kissed her again.

Cyn kicked off her walking sneakers, hopped to the bedroom. She loved the feeling of getting out of sweaty socks at the end of a long day.

“Oh, I thought for a minute you were going to bring her in with us,” Steve said. He’d just begun his own three months’ leave as hers ended.

“I can — ”

“No, it’s okay.”

She slid off her pants, laid them over the arm of the chair, removed her jacket, blouse and underwear, laid them neatly with the pants and slid in nude next to Steve in bed. Pulled the sheets, the bright Aztec blanket up to her chin. Fortunately that sound on the cab’s radio didn’t seem to be affecting the TV. Cyn affectionately rubbed the instep of her right foot against the smooth skin of her Stevie’s left ankle. Their favorite comedy was just starting.

“How’s Everon?” he asked. “Did you tell him I said hello?”

“Of course. He said to tell you hi. He seems happy, his plant’s expanding again.”

“You okay?” he asked. “You seem kind of somber tonight.”

“I’m fine,” she lied.

He yawned, his foot traveling playfully up her leg. “I was thinking . . . think we oughta go shopping for a bigger bed?”

“Oh, I don’t know,” she laughed and kissed his neck. “This old double may be small, but there *are* compensations.” She rubbed his left foot again. They’d been lazy about it — putting it off.

Cynthia turned her head. “Do you hear that?”

Time. Slowed. Down.

Off in the distance, what seemed like somewhere south, two sounds blended into one — both coming at the same time: one low and growling; one high, like the howling whining wind of a hurricane.

They turned — only a confused, beginning fear in each other’s eyes.

Their bedroom faced south. The television sat to the right of the bed on the corner of the dresser. As the first pre-shock hit the building, Steve and Cynthia were drawn to an amazing thing: in the nursery, their three-month-old daughter bouncing high into the air, falling into the open file cabinet

drawer beside her crib.

The fireball dwarfed the brilliance of what had been Broadway, fired the nighttime sky beyond the sun. In the first five seconds the shock wave traveled one mile. By the time it reached East 60th it still moved at the speed of sound.

To those far enough away with time to hear, the maelstrom roared, then sucked all sound to vacuum.

Out *Penobscot's* slanting window — as the sonarman tried desperately to cling to anything, a bulkhead, a doorway — he watched the horizon tilt. The cutter's stern rose like a surfboard on a cliff of water, straight at the George Washington Bridge. And then the nose dropped.

Straight down the face of the cliff.

Of the people in Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, Jersey City, Long Island City, especially Manhattan, no one had time to think about getting their car out of the parking lot to somehow make it across the Brooklyn or Manhattan Bridge and out into Long Island. Those bridges were disintegrated within moments of that sound.

No one had time to consider getting a cab to take them through the Lincoln Tunnel. Giant balls of fire blew through all the tunnels within moments of that sound.

No one had time to take their money out of the bank — or to convert it to gold — or to think about what to wear — or to decide what groceries to buy for their future survival . . .

Within moments of that sound, chunks of building from the other side of 60th blew through Steve and Cynthia's bedroom wall to join those of their neighbors on the north side of the alley, dominoing on uptown toward Harlem —

Such was the final destruction of nearly three hundred years of substantial progress — three hundred years of tearing down and building back up again — three hundred years of fighting over an island three-point-five miles wide and fifteen miles long; one hundred fifty years of planning, zoning and community boards, of racial warfare and welfare, of neighborhood scams, of gang war, corruption and decay; one hundred years of social-climbing parties of the inherited rich and famous, of finding-ways-around-their-squabbles land assemblage, of back room politics; and just over eighty years of building giant structures that reached into the sky, each a living breathing monument to man's greatest achievement.

Though the firestorms would burn on for hours, most of said destruction took place within moments of that sound.

There was worse to come.

2

Turbulence



“*Waaaahoooo!*”

“ . . . I don’t think . . . you’re supposed to do barrel rolls, Everon . . . in . . . a . . . Lear!”

The night sky rolled around the windshield then the sparkled earth was overhead. The blond man’s fingers on the yoke held their assigned altitude perfectly.

“Less than a hundred feet deviation!” he laughed at the end of the corkscrew. You *don’t think?* . . . I’m *supposed* to do barrel rolls in a Learjet? . . . *Wahoooo!*”

And took them over again. *Free of meetings*, Everon Student thought. *Free of traffic — free of the earth, nothing but exhilaration blasting at 300 knots through the air!*

But Everon’s attempt at getting Andréa Buer into the spirit of things wasn’t working. That petulant look seemed to be growing more intense *and* to deny the intimate acts they’d engaged in only minutes before.

“Come on — relax!” he tried with her. “The Lear was developed from a Swiss fighter! These babies are certified to three g’s but they’ll probably take something like six. We’re not even pulling a

g-and-a-half. Enjoy the ride. How often do you get to really let your hair down at thirty thousand feet? — *upside down?*”

And over they went again.

It's perfect! he thought. *Not too big but not all that small either.*

He'd worked very hard to afford the jet. This was the payoff. He was actually going to own it! He'd flown plenty of jets — always for other people. *This one* would be his! *Well, the company's — but I'll be the only one flying it!* And it was time. He felt — *what was the word? Giddy?* He laughed and took it over one more time.

There were actually two things Everon liked about this particular jet. The joy of controlling such incredible strength and agility. And the eight-seater's best-looking female pilot he'd ever seen. He took another look at Andréa as they inverted. Deep brown eyes, long red hair that flew out as they went around . . .

Beautiful!

Granted, she looked better before — without the greenish tinge. *Maybe I better cool it, but this sure beats the hell out of flying commercial. I could get used to this!*

The jet belonged — for the moment — to Hunt Williams, an independent power producer — IPPie for short. Williams Power owned more transmission lines than anyone else in east Pennsylvania and west New Jersey. A fair number of generating plants too.

Six hours ago they'd had lunch, Hunt with hopes to purchase Everon's two solar power farms — one, west of Las Vegas; the other, south of Phoenix. Everon said he didn't want to sell. But he'd be happy to trade Hunt all the solar panels he wanted. Everon wanted Hunt's jet.

The older executive had already replaced it with a larger model, a Gulfstream. The Lear would be Everon's first.

The flight out from Nevada had been fun — a vague flirtatious sexual tension right from the start while Andréa took him through the jet's systems.

Sometime later, she mentioned she'd seen his picture on the cover of *Entrepreneur* magazine, and some other high-tech rag she couldn't remember the name of. She nearly purred recalling an old story she'd read in *Gliding* about his U.S. sailplane distance record out of San Diego. She said she'd been wanting to meet him for a while. Even asked for his autograph, which he thought was pretty funny.

That was a new one! He'd obliged, scribbling on a napkin from the jet's galley.

She gave him a little peck on the cheek when he handed it to her. *A gorgeous, lithe female pilot with flaming red hair? It was only good manners to kiss her back, wasn't it?* To Everon, she seemed adventurous somehow, provocative.

But that was as far as it went.

Until he left Cyn at JFK for the trip back home. Then, headed west over New York State, they'd cleared the clouds, looked at each other and simply started kissing.

Things escalated. She turned on the autopilot — not the only thing that got turned on, her left knee against his right, a hand between his legs, up his thigh to let him know what she wanted. He returned the move. He felt the moisture building in the crotch of her tightly-knit pants.

The cockpit was tight but instead of going back to use one of the jet's roomier convenient foldout beds, Everon kept his position in the pilot's seat — to retake control if he had to. As she rose from the right seat, Andréa unzipped his fly, slid off her pants and panties in one deft motion, turned her ass sideways and engaged him — sat right down onto his cock, her fingers weaving into his wavy blond hair, taking him inside at twenty-six thousand feet.

Mile High Club? Hell — five miles!

Unbearably romantic, so intense. Linked together — stars above — more alone than two people could ever be on the planet's surface. Andréa Buer proved to be a wild, insatiable, undeniable woman.

A quarter hour later he thought, *Whew!*

Unlike the man who smokes or watches cable TV after sex, Everon needed to recover in his own way. Once every muscle in his body had released its tension, he craved something more to cap things off.

They were over Pennsylvania when he let loose of Andréa and took control of the plane. He decided to take the Lear up to thirty thousand feet, near its altitude of maximum efficiency — see what the damned thing would do.

But her sexual aggression had misled him. Believing she would be more adventurous after such a great lay, Andréa surprised him by becoming a real *whiner*. Now he regretted screwing her, and he was beginning to regret even flying with her too. *Shit! Does sex give all women the emotional*

confidence to whine? He'd never thought so. He leveled out to the tinkling crash of a glass breaking somewhere back in the cabin.

Shit, he frowned at her, "You okay?"

She nodded and gulped, glaring at him, "Please don't do that again — *sir*."

"*Hey!* What's this *sir* stuff?"

Before she could answer, the right wing dipped hard. She shot him an angry glance, thinking *what an asshole* he was for ignoring her feelings. But the yoke was still level. He had a death grip on it and hadn't done a damn thing.

"What the hell!" he said as the plane continued to nose over, bucking violently. Everon twisted, pulled at the yoke, trying to bring the nose up.

It appeared to be completely out of his control.

3

Into The Dirt



His hand beat hers by a second pulling the turbines' power back to zero. The airspeed indicator was already in the red.

Andréa, seeing his reaction, added her strength to his, pulling back on her own yoke from the right seat.

But the controls seemed to have their own idea. Hurling them vertically toward the ground, now down to twenty-eight thousand feet — pulling on the controls face down, hanging against seat straps that cut into her body — only preferable to being thrown against a windshield a foot from her face.

Neither of them said anything as they struggled together against gravity.

“*I think it's coming up!*” she gasped. The plane's nose slowly rose, its violent bucking smoothing out. Five degrees, ten . . .

And then another wave knocked them right over the falls. The jet's nose continuing *past* vertical.

Everon thought the wings would be ripped from the fuselage. The blood rushed to his face. He clamped his teeth against the terror flowing into his skull, pushed it away with one word: *PULL!*

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

