

## **then I must be reinvented**

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# then I must be reinvented

by [haipollai](#)

## Summary

*There's a radio, trying to trick him into thinking he's not alone. He listens for a second because everything's wrong and there's nothing else.*

*For a half second he smiles until it sinks in.*

*The radio's wrong too.*

## Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

He wakes up and he's cold.

No.

He wakes up and he's alone. Which is worse than cold. Cold is physical, it can be fixed with a blanket. But he's alone and that's mental. He doesn't know how to fix that.

There's a radio, trying to trick him into thinking he's not alone. He listens for a second because everything's wrong and there's nothing else.

For a half second he smiles until it sinks in.

The radio's wrong too.

He pushes up because there's nothing else and everything's wrong and someone must know. Maybe it's all a bad dream, maybe everything from the game has been a dream. He's back in the cot, the one two men could squeeze on because one was too tiny. Except he doesn't even need to look to know he's lying to himself. He's never been good with lies, could never keep them straight so never bothered.

The woman's smile is tight and he feels the anger twist and bubble as if it's happening to someone else. As if coming through the radio like the distant scratching of the game.

The running is simple. He's done this before, he can do it all over again. All day. The words echo like a memory or a fragment. Like something from another life that he can't quite grasp or remember. The world flashes around him and the bubble starts to crack, bombarded with lights and sounds and *foreign foreign foreign*.

He hides himself away, surrounds himself in browns and greys and as long as the world stays flat, he's ok. He tells himself he'll be ok because there's no one else to. But in the end there was only one lie he could say and believe because the only one who heard it knew it for what it was. There's no one to hear him now.

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They find him again only it's not him. They tell him not to hold out hope, the Russians knew what they were doing. But he came back from the dead and he has to believe that he won't be alone. But their words get to him and he wraps himself tighter in his browns and greys. Just in case. He hates having to think like that. He's never gotten used to protecting himself, much as he wanted to say he did. There was someone else to rely on, to pull him up and out.

The thought hurts as soon as it forms and he tries to push it away, forcing it back with each punch to the bag. Over and over. The repetition is something, he's familiar with the thump thump of fists. On the bag. On flesh.

Think it's dead, Cap.

He doesn't turn because he's not always sure what's in his head these days, not with a familiar face unconscious in Medical, taunting him with possibilities.

Like really dead.

A hand touches his shoulder and it's cold and hard and he twitches. His memories are warm and soft and this is an illusion, a twisted fragment to remind him of what he's lost. The hand leaves him and he sighs softly not sure if it's relief or sadness or some other emotion he's never had to name. Some deep burning agony of alone and pain that he's managed to suppress out of some weak sense of self-preservation.

Steve.

Another hand touches him and this time it's real. It's warm and it burns, burns the browns and turns them red and orange. It turns him roughly and there are dark eyes and darker hair and a smirk that's familiar. There are no greys in his face.

“Hi.”

## End Notes

Lanyon told me to post this and I do whatever she says basically <3  
Title from Twisted and Broken by Abney Park

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