

Makers

part one

Merry late Christmas :)

Sam Lofgran

Hey, Annelise Publishing



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returned to them. She twisted it around her wrist, the brief touch somehow calming her. She then pulled out the little soldier from the pocket of her dress. It hadn't left her side since they'd found out that he was gone.

Emma walked over to the large headstone that read,

David Larsan
Husband, Father, General
48 R.E.—85 R.E.

She placed the soldier next to his name that would remain in stone for the rest of time. She traced the word *Father* with her fingers, her chest constricting again, making her breath come too quick. She stood up before it could get too bad and made her feel lightheaded like she'd already felt that week.

Now that she was alone, she finally felt the tears flow, releasing some of the pressure on her chest ever so slightly. Tears falling onto her trembling lips, she raised her hand in a silent salute to him. "Goodbye, Dad."

Chapter One

EMMA HAD PASSED by the capitol building in Kel-lenban multiple times, but had never gone very close, much less inside. Today, though, she had an assignment—she was to collect a message from Prime Minister Evander and take it back to the city camp. It was the lamest of assignments, true, but it was something other than the routine she'd been stuck in for the past month.

It somehow felt even more useless for her to be doing such a chore when generally there were delivery people that could do this, but as it was an Altar Day, many people in the city weren't required to work so they'd be allowed to observe the day.

Emma's commanding officer in the city camp, Major Serin, had asked her to deliver the message, as Emma didn't usually observe Altar Day. Emma was always keen to get out of the camp when she could, so she'd happily consented. She was also hoping for a bit of a detour after, too, if she could get this assignment done quick enough, even

basking in the music, she knew he felt something she didn't. But he'd always felt more than the rest of them when it came to the Guardians. So she ate peaches until they were all gone, letting the music surround them as they took in the view as the concert went on.

The valley that their orchard was in was surrounded by all kinds of farms—Emma's best friend, Leah, was her across-the-field neighbor, her family's miles and miles of wheat separating them. Emma hoped it was just her imagination that their looked to be a trail through it, from her house to Leah's. They'd traversed it many times, though Leah's parents had told to go around so they didn't ruin the crop. It looked like there rule-breaking had left a mark.

The other farms all created a beautiful patchwork below them, irrigation canals cutting through them, though even the fields were turning more yellow and less green as the summer baked along. It meant harvest was coming soon, though, which meant a peaceful winter for Emma and her family as the work slowed.

Emma was properly worn out, so she laid back down on the ground, smiling at her father one last time as he looked out over the valley, and shut her eyes.



It was getting dark by the time Emma woke up to the sound of her father packing things up. Emma yawned and sat up.

"You must have been exhausted," he laughed. "Or just very tired of my music."

"Maybe some of both," she said through a second yawn.

"I can't believe my daughter could possibly sleep through Kellenar's finest orchestra playing one of the best pieces of music ever created."

"I have to be disappointing in some way to you," she said. "And as I'm basically a model child in every other way, it had to be this. Anyways, is Mom going to kill us for getting back so late?"

"Maybe," he said, tossing his backpack back over his shoulder. "Won't take nearly this long to get back down though. Ready?" He stuck out a hand to help her up.



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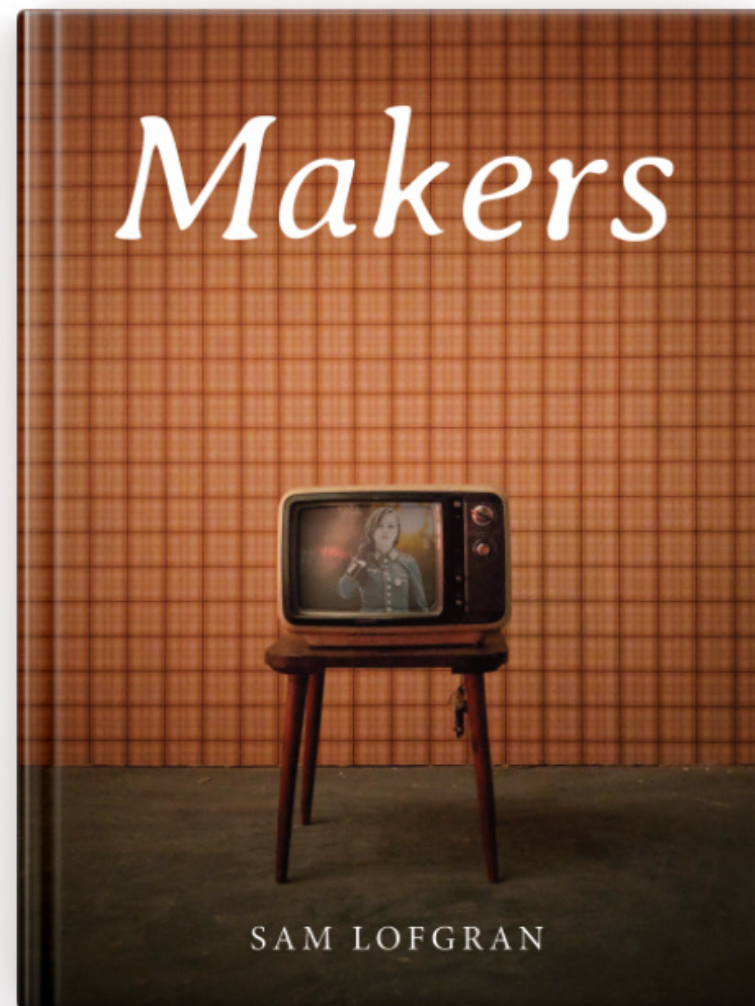
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