

"Turn here!" I shouted at you, breathing heavy as we turned the corner. It was a long dark alley way that cut to the next street over. The morning sun shone piercing rays through the cracks and broken concrete of the surrounding buildings. We tread carefully but quickly, dodging broken glass, wood pilings and general garbage. It was quiet and we were both exhausted.

We passed through to the other side, glancing around the corners before deeming it safe to continue onward.

"Over here," you whispered to me and pulled at my arm. I turned and saw the place you were mentioning. A grocery store! We dash over to it and hurry inside. Like most others, it was almost completely depleted. Some things were spilled out onto the floor and covered in mold and bugs. We split up, each going down the aisles looking for any scrap. Random boxes filled us with hope only to discover that they were empty.

Then, I saw it. Behind some trash lay a bag of rice. We had struck gold! It would feed us for a few days at least. After scavenging through trash bins and broken freezers we both headed into the back. I saw you yawn as you threw aside cardboard box after cardboard box. We had been up at least a full days straight. I didn't blame you, though this store was no place to sleep. We had to move fast, find what we could then get out. I heard you cry from the other side and I dashed over.

"Water!" you yelled silently, holding back moistless tears. Wouldn't you know it? A full unopened package of 24 bottles. I almost cried myself wanting to collapse in happiness right then and there. But I knew better. We both did. It was dangerous to have all this water. We would have to be extra careful now. We opened up ourselves to being a target. Was it worth it? We didn't know, but we were damn thirsty and this water would save our lives. At least for a little while longer.

I took off my backpack and placed a few inside. I didn't want my bag looking too heavy else it might attract interest. You did the same. There were leftovers though. We tucked one or two in our pockets. They had to be completely concealed. We gulped down a bottle each and placed the empty ones in our bags then decided to head out the back. You never want to backtrack. Always believe you're being followed. That has kept us alive so far.

You pushed open the back door just slightly to peek out. The coast was clear and we moved out. The sun was rising higher and higher which would make seeing us easier. We needed to find a place to camp out and soon.

I saw a small shack-like building just a few blocks down and pointed to it. You nodded accepting it and we headed towards it. The silence filled my ears. My heart raced. It always seemed like your adrenaline never went down nowadays. We were always on edge. Always scared. I glanced over at you. You, whom I had never met before not too long ago, yet I trusted no one else as much. You were my lifeline and I was yours.

We snuck around back to enter in a more closed off area. The building was two stories. We headed for the stairs, sleeping on the first floor could get you killed. The stairs creaked which would help if any intruders came. My senses were on edge as I lead the way. We were blind to the second story until we made it all the way up. For all we knew, this could be someone else's home already, making us the intruders.

You grabbed my side and I turned to look at you. You held your hand up to your ear. You heard something. I turned back to look upstairs, eyes wide. My breathing was broken and uneven. I felt sick. I reached for my knife in my front pocket and held it tight. I motioned for you to stay behind. If I looked like I was alone, you could easily surprise and attack them. I walked slowly taking each step with purpose.

I reached the top, then I heard it too. A creak, a step, another person. Before I could do anything, they screamed insanely and were on top of me. I was knocked to the ground, they had stabbed me in the leg. I shouted in pain. You leaped onto them, pulling them off then shoved them against the wall. I tossed you my knife and you stabbed them. They fell to the ground - lifeless. You ran back over to me.

"I'm okay," I said, biting back the pain as I grit my teeth. Damn that hurt. You pulled out an old cloth and wrapped my wound before going off and rummaging through their stuff. The person had a few slices of bread, a little water, some rats and newspaper. Perfect. We both smiled at each other. It was a good find.

This place would make a good home, at least for a little while.