

Fresh Water

It was a raining day, I was on my way home. Puddles all around. Dark. Like if it's the end of the world. Although it was only 4:00PM I can feel the dark memories and the pain. Darkness covered up the normal bright sunny blue sky, it makes it not blue, not green but only DARK, black. Memories of life, reminding me every second in my head. Like a bee in my mind thinking so much memories of the dark days. Maybe. But maybe not. I felt extremely heavy, like my head going on and on and on, in to the deep ground. It makes every second in my life now to the underground cities. The darkness, the heaviness and I, looking down to the twist and turns of life.

"I know it wouldn't be easy for them, too," I whispered as I gave a little quick smile to my own, only self. For the minute I stared, just stared, standing still right where I was, like if I was stuck in to the ground by some sort of plants or something, but not even a move, right there...

"It was nothing," I tried to think something good as best as I could, but in my head, I am just a big tornado full of the words that has been said long ago, by my father... After that night, the night of 2050, that changed my family forever, now it seems like it's after a three days hunger game with no water, no food, no brightness, and no place to live. As if we've lost their minds or been poisoned or something but, half alive. Though I, on my own, knew it would hurt, but pain can only get better with time. Every time I am left to make a choice by myself, I would always go out and have a walk beside the river side. That's the only way that I would feel that freedom of life.

"It's dinner time, come and eat everyone!" right, that's Mom. Trying to sound like she had forgotten the dark memories as she slowly sits down on the table chair. She could pretend it's okay to others, but not me. She understands and gives out the love when she would. Also, I know my mother too well. After dinner that night, I went right back to my bedroom immediately, no hesitations, trying to use the studying time on my own to forget all the pain, and memories, to think of the goods, although I knew it wouldn't work. Yet, what I really need is time. Time is the only friend that I could be with. These days.

In my heart I remember every moment from when it all started. No matter everything inside or outside.

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I have a bad feeling, for what? I asked myself in heart. No voice answered. And I know it will, someday but not now. Maybe just a rainy, dark day... But how hard I tried to not think about it, it's no use I told myself. But what if it's very important? But what if it's true? But what if It's---

"Nat? Where is that bee in your mind? What are you staring at? What's so important that you could even let your sandwich get cold in a picnic?" Mom said with a little worried grin and a little funny sly look on her face that makes my mind frozen for a second.

"Um...um, I... I was thinking about school tomorrow," I grin a hard rock smile.

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"MOM! MOM!" I shouted as loud as I could with fear inside my voice, like I could even wake a dead person from their best dream. I was terrified. Will...will it be real? Wha...what's next? But...but why? Thousands and hundreds of questions and possibilities rush through my head like a huge tornado running in full speed.

"What? What is it, Nat?" Mom said as she calmly walks to the bathroom. She looks at the reflections in the mirror. First to my hair medium long brown. The shining blue eyes. The peach pink cheek. Everything is normal, what is it? And then she brightens her eyes, opened them so wide to put in another earth inside.

“Oh no...” she whispered with fear, “Is that true?”

That? What does she mean by ‘that’? What did she just notice? The sudden, she looks like she knows something, but what? People are going through the neighborhoods trying to find out something. Asking if everyone has been through the same. But lastly, finally. ‘WE ARE ALL THE SAME!’ No more water is running through the tap, no more fresh water is available, no one is able just to wash their hands. This is what we got, the payback from our earth. And here it comes. The fights...People are starting to be awake. Water is life. But who cared for it? If no water than no us. Who really thought about that in their minds? Why? Why didn’t we? This is the payback from our one and only earth. This is the payback for our mother nature, our life. Yet, are the behaviors that we showed, is the actions we made, this is what made them mad. And some people even moved away, which I didn’t think it’s necessary for just in a day and think it’s a very fast idea. But at the same time dad was traveling for his work. And he has been there for the past two weeks. We didn’t know what he’s doing there all day, but I can see from mom’s eyes that she’s kind of worried and scared of the time that dad’s been there.

These days, after no more water’s coming out from our tap, the markets are all cleaned up, “The terrifying news!” that’s said by everyone is all over on the news. Well it is not easy for our family too, though. Charlie wasn't feeling as well, and we found out that he gets out of control whenever he felt worried and sensitive. However, I figured that maybe Charlie's just too worried about the future, what will happen later like I do, worried if we must go through wars together. Also, when we notice that dad might not be traveling for “work” this time, would it be the last time that we could see him? Nowadays, mom and I would always be taking care of Charlie but at the same time we are both trying to figure out something, something, just something. I thought it would be the worst time in my life, but who knows what would happen later..... That feeling of sacredness and wariness has been in our minds, made their own home and cities. We’ve been talking about our feelings, just mom and I, we hope to have Charlie and dad beside but too bad we couldn’t. The more we’ve been worrying, the more we’ve been thinking and the more possibilities it could come for us.

What we’ve been worrying about, it finally arrived.

It all started after a few days, about a week a huge boom waked us up. I felt a bit of bad vibes going through my bones. I suddenly jumped of my bed through the living room and saw the world as all black, gray and white, I realized it has come. So, I quickly rush to mom's bedroom. She rushed too as if she notices too. After we have confirmed each other's eyes we run our best to Charlie.

"It came! It came!" that's what he was whispering for the whole time when we got there. We knew it wasn't good but didn't really know how to help.

"I knew it, I knew it would come, and It really did," Charlie said.

"I knew it, I knew it!" he continued as he opened one of his drawers beside his bed, under his desk and took out different drawings and pictures of what was looked like and what he thinks it will happen after the problem of no with fresh water. He predicted it, I knew it. By these drawings from him. That's why he was locking himself in the past few weeks. We knew we would need to do something but the breeze of fear approach closer. Screaming, shouting, crying all around our house we know it's not much time left, the clock is clicking seconds by seconds, minutes after minutes, we're just afraid of the unprepared moments. But in the second of frozen thoughts we heard the huge tank's engine moving fast toward us closer and closer. We hid under Charlie's bed thinking of our last words inside. But at the sudden, the sound stopped right beside the house front door.

"Hello? Anyone home?" a quiet sound appears close and familiar, mixed up with all the screaming sounds outside. I slowly half closed my eyes and took a deep breath, like it's the last only one, shaking my body and gently moving to mom and Charlie. But the familiar voice, I felt it in my heart but not sure if it's really what I've been thinking of.

"Hello?" the voice again.

"Nat? Where are you guys?" a voice that is so familiar but not at the same time. I started to open my eyes, I don't feel as scared, but who is it?

Finally, mom started moving out and said “Take care of Charlie! And always remember I love you, I will never want to leave you, but for this time I need to. I am so sorry!” Tears watered up her eyes. I know what she’s going to do, for us. She knew there’s only one way for her to go. She remembered the last smiles from us; the last time we had a picnic with all our family members; the happy moments when I first got to walk, shaking and struggling but I still did it; and the time when Charlie first learned how to say his first words. Feeling like the same as it was and giving her the confidence to walk through Charlie’s bed room to the living room and then the front door. She walks fast with all the hope and memories with her, trying to be confident or at least seem confident.

“Hello? Who are you?” Mom asked pretending very confidently.

“Diana? Is that you?” Asked the voice. I realized who it is, it is dad, but I still hide there beside Charlie. Mom quickly went out and looked straight into dad's eyes.

“How are you so calm in middle of this?” asked mom with a little anger inside.

“Where were you when we needed you the most for the past few weeks?” she continues without letting dad cut in.

“Calm down, calm down. We can talk about all that later when we get home.” said dad calmly, like he didn’t notice there's a war going on outside.

“Isn't this home? Where? Which home?” mom started giving out these words like starting fights. I know she won’t if she is really in the mood also at this kind of situation. In between a war.....

“Hey, hey, listen, this will be the best surprise that you will ever get,” dad sounded like a child who got an A star on his test.

“This is gonna be great. This is what I've been planning all past years. I control this war. We will be soon wealthy and healthy. We can have water running out our tap again. This is all for our family and you. Our family's going to be happy and we can have picnics in the gard....”

“What? For us? Why? Is this what you want? Us having all the happily ever after but others having all the rough life?” mom said with a little scream as she pointed her figure out the big window in our living room beside the sofa. This almost drove mom crazy, she can't even believe what she's hearing. All the words that's flowing into her ears.

“Hey, Jason listen. I know you did all this because of our family but I still can't believe you did this. We need to have a really serious talk later,” next, is mom and dad coming back like they didn't have that conversation just now outside in the living room. With the smiles that they fake on their face, with the happiness mom fakes on her face. I know something's going to go wrong. I held my breath than took a deep breath like it's deeper than the unknown parts of the ocean, like the figure skaters going on for a jump in a big, important race, composition.

“Children come out. It's alright now. And see your fathers' back,” mom faked the smile and the excitements. I know Charlie was holding trying to control himself for the last time. His trying to hold but he knew if he doesn't do something, he will soon lose control. We slowly moved our bodies like if we don't really trust them as our parents. We looked at each other in the eyes and nodded a short and quick one than crawl out under the bed. Charlie breath hard, like he was panicking for something. Mom saw and run as fast as she could to us then hugged Charlie hard as she could. Because this is the only way to let Charlie feel safe and loved, well at least that's what we figured over these few days. It doesn't seem right for dad, so he quickly led us to the tank which was hanging out there in front of our front door, front garden. Mom was carrying Charlie for the whole time. There was gray everywhere I saw, a black and white world out there. People were screaming for help, women were carrying their children running around, it was just like the pictures and drawing of what Charlie showed us earlier. It is all coming really. I said silent in my heart. But looking at these innocent people that got into the fights by no reasons, I felt the sound of my heart saying 'Fighting, wars are only for the power. Power is everything for some of us. It's the 'I wants' that took away our hearts. And everything that's done by someone now is all because of thing happened in the past. What they do now is all depends on what they've been through.' the sound of my heart reminds me 'And love is the most powerful thing in the whole world.' I stopped a second to have a deeper sink in to these words in my head. I looked up at dad, like I can see what he has been through in the past, I've understood everything.

“Quick, quick, Nat,” Dad shouted as he gently but strongly pulled my shirt to remind me that we still not as safe yet. We went on to the tank. Inside, I thought we will be squishing with each other but surprisingly we didn’t it was big and fresh inside, the transparent walls gave us just right for us to see the outside world. Sounds of booms and smashing, houses that had lost their roofs. All around the place. Half hanging trees right in the middle of the blurry rods. I saw it all. I’ve got the feeling of shame building over me. This all made me feel like everything happened is from and because of me. The deep shame covered me, like I’ve just put a label of shame right on my face.

Later that night, we settled down then had this awkward dinner with dad. The meal was nice, but silence is the worst to be in a family dinner. The silence made the warm and delicious dinner ice cold. Everyone is still thinking about the horrible horrific moments that we feel, the distances between on top of life and under. We ate the fanciest dinner we could ever have, from a Michelin chef. Our cold faces made the chef wondering if it’s the problem of the food. After the dinner that night Charlie and I was back in the back-room of our “new house” reading silence looking at each other feeling not safe for all the things around us, don’t know why that we’re still so chillax after all that happened. After we slept that night, mom and dad must have been arguing about the adults only stuff. I knew it will be hard to say the normal “hi” around so I thought I would choose to escape.

The next morning, I woke up in the dark. I thought it wasn't time, but it was already nine. I gently opened the curtain but the next thing I saw made my head drop onto the ground. So many people wear injured and a lot more of them were homeless. Wandering on the street. Some carrying their children; some finding; some struggling for help; and some trying to find their family under the broken pieces of houses. Natalie was shocked, she’d never thought a war will be so cruel. She’d never thought that people can be so cruel to themselves. She had never seen such a grey, black and white world.

After a few months, we lost too much soldiers, we’ve lost too much life for facing this war that happened without warning. Dad was worried for it, but it’s been so long already. He decides to open a party so “we can celebrate for our power and for our success.” The fact that we had won this war. We were like the animals that were locked in the cages in the zoos. We’re not allowed to go anywhere, but stay in the huge, fancy, bright but cold house. Charlie and I read books, draw drawings, play card games and wondered around the house doing nothing, letting time pass. As when dad is busy working out the parties, and mom trying to figure out something, maybe something. Days pass we started felling

bored in this big house, dad was out there in somewhere of this city like waste land working. But one day, after dinner we heard a sound of someone knocking the door. Mom stopped and hesitated of a second thinking for the safety, then slowly raised up her hands, let the door scanner scan her hands to open the door. The door opened, and she saw a man standing looking like he had been like the other once on the street before, homeless, hungry, dust all around. He handed mom dad's favorite glasses that he wears every day, then handed a 10A projector that shows every detail. "I am so sorry," the man gently said. After closing the door, mom opened package of the projector and saw the video, videoed few days ago at dad's place, it is from the security camera. Mom sat down and leaned back. Fear shone through her eyes. She slowly raised her hand with a bit of hesitation then the video started playing. A person with black cloths slowly pulling out a gun of its black uniform and got closer and closer to dad, finally just in a second shot dad, as dad was on his ear phones having a call. That was unbelievable. I wouldn't ever believe what I just saw, but this is the truth. I recognized the man who handed these to us he was the man who drove the tank months ago. During the war. I dropped down, and lay down as mom, stared at the wall, water filled up our eyes.

Days and days passed, we wouldn't do anything and don't know what to do. We stared at the walls. Imagining what would happen. Waiting to go and find dad? He's in another world...

Not long after, mom, Charlie and I are all really tired out because of all that happened now recently. Its's been hard, I know. However, we all made it. I think that perhaps is maybe the time to rest, to come down after all these things that we had been through, perhaps it's enough. Maybe it's a time for us to just sit on the couch and relax. I really wanted to escape this place with all the bad memories, fly, just fly to place that I can feel safe. And yet, just thinking of all these things, it started to rain. The days dark, the sky is gray, like the pain inside of me, everything is going to end now, it's the end of the day...