

The Endless Winter

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I can't feel my hands. The winter has not been helping recently because of how cold it has been getting. A few years ago it wasn't that bad, sure it was in the negatives but barely in them. Now it's -50 degrees outside and I need wood to keep the fire going or I will die, as well as my little brother. There is also barely any food, I have so much to do and I have to try to survive at the same time, but I'll do anything to keep us. Everything is abandoned because everyone has been frozen to death. The last living thing I saw was roughly 3 years ago. While I was walking towards a bunch of trees trying to find some wood and food then all of a sudden I saw a black figure surprisingly appear out of nowhere with glowing yellow eyes, just staring at me. I couldn't make out any other details because they were so far away, I didn't feel safe, but then it just faded away, right before my eyes it was so bizarre but it could've been me hallucinating due to below freezing temperature. As the fire is nearly burning out I hear the rustling of my brother's sleeping bag as he awakens.

"Good morning Audrey," as he says while trembling from the cold

"Morning Jayden." I reply

We've been wearing the same clothes for so long now because we cannot bare the arctic temperature. So that means we have to sleep with them no matter what. My brother sat next to me with his hands reaching out to the dying flame trying to get the last of its heat. It's sad to see him like this. He's only 14 years old, he should be playing with friends and have his own life. Instead we do what we must to try to find heat to survive.

"It looks like it's getting worse outside." Jayden says while looking out the window

"Yeah I don't think it will get any better anytime soon." I reply

Jayden gets up from the fire then walks over to the window. It has been snowing for days and it doesn't look like it is letting up.

"Audrey?" He says while looking out the window.

"Yeah."

"Do you think things will get back to normal?" He asks

"I... Don't know anymore."

Then the fire died in front of me.

"Damn, fire's out." I said

"What do we do now?" He asked

"Well, we go out." I respond

I walk to the door, look down and found the axe that I left there, the scarf, the goggles, and some leftover food. I pick up the axe, put on the scarf, then put on the goggles. Jayden put on his goggles and his scarf. I turn around and kneel down to him.

"You ready?" I ask

"Yeah." He responds

I stand up, turn back to the door, and open it. The snow was covering half of the door but there was a small gap that we could climb on top of. I climb on top of the snow and reach my hand out to Jayden to help him up. He jumps, grabs my hand, and I pull him up. He stands next to me with his hands crossed to help warm

his cold hands. I take a deep breath of the freezing cold air and exhale. We both walk forward to try to at least find something to eat or burn. We kept walking until we saw this huge, old, abandoned house which was an hour away from our home. The top half of the house was completely untouched by the snow with windows to see through, the other half was buried in it. I walk to one of the windows to try to see if anyone or anything is in there. I didn't see movement.

"Is it safe?" He asks

"I don't see anyone... I think it's safe." I respond to his question

So I took the axe and broke the window with the handle. It made a huge sound from the shattering glass. I step in and so does my brother. It was quiet, no noise except the sound of our footsteps as we walked around to salvage supplies. We found some food, water, and some wood but not enough to survive.

"We should split up to cover more ground." Jayden says

"That's a good idea." I respond

I pull out my axe and hand it to him.

"Here, for protection."

He looks at me, then looks at the axe. He slowly grabs the axe from my hands, then looks at me one last time.

"Thank you." He said

Then walks away from me and goes upstairs. That was our dad's axe, he used to cut down trees for winter, before all of this. He was a great man, when mom left us, our dad took good care of us, he did his best to give us a good life but when the endless winter showed up, he died 2 years later due to the freezing temperature. I saw him die right in front of my eyes, I will never forget his smile. His smile was like the sun

came back up from this winter, he smiled through everything, even in the hardest of times. I walk the other way, to try to salvage more food until I stumble upon a locked old door. I don't know why but it piques my interest. I look at the lock and it seemed pretty simple to unlock. I reach in my pockets to find my makeshift lock picking set. I've picked many locks but this one was by far the easiest

"Nice." I whisper to myself.

I open the door where the steps lead into a void, pull my lighter out my pocket and try to light it but it barely works anymore. I put the lighter to my ear and shook it. I heard a little bit of fuel so I gave it one last chance. The orange flame came out of the lighter.

"What a miracle!" I say to myself

I slowly go down each step with my lighter raised high so I can see through this void. It was pitch black, the only source of light was my lighter. I try to feel my way in the dark to get an idea of where I'm at. I touch the wall and start walking forward then my hip hits something. I look to where I got hit and put my lighter over it and there was a work table with tools on it. All of a sudden I hear a terrible scraping metal behind me.

"Food....I....need....food." A mysterious raspy voice says.

I look behind me and see a person come out of the shadows with an old rusty combat knife in his hands. He was old, like in his late 70's, shirtless, has camo pants and old military boots, bald, and had this crazy desperate look in his eyes.

"I....need-."

The man cuts his sentence as he raises the rusty old knife in his hands.

"FOOD!"

The man charges at me with his knife. He lunging his knife to my neck to try to stab me but I grab his hand and try to push the knife away from me. He was strong. I'm doing everything that I can to get him off of me but it's not working. I look around and see the table behind me, I pull him in and move to the side, the knife stabs the table. I run up the steps and shut the door on him, put my head on the door and hear him pull the knife from the table and him going up the steps. The knife goes through the door and nearly stabs me, I get off of the door and run upstairs to try to find Jayden.

"JAYDEN!" I scream his name.

One of the doors opens and I see Jayden with the axe in his hand.

"What's wrong?" Jayden says with confusion

"GIVE ME THE AXE!" I scream

Jayden throws the axe to me and I catch it, turn to the stairs and see the man running up the stairs with the knife. I kick the man and he rolls down the stairs and lands on his back. He motionless, I slowly went down the steps with the axe still in my hands. As soon as I hit the last step the man grabs my ankle and pulls it and makes me fall onto the floor. The axe falls out of my hand and the man gets on top of me, the man tries to stab me again but I grab his hand and push away from me. At the corner of my eye something picks up the axe. Then I hear a stab but it wasn't from me. The man is gasping for air and is looking pale, he rolls off of me and there stood Jayden with the axe painted red. Jayden walks over to the dying man laying on the floor, raises the axe high and charges it to the man's chest as he screams for mercy. Then I hear his last breath. Jayden is heavily breathing as his face is covered in the man's blood. I race to my feet and run over to my brother to make sure he is okay. Jayden falls to his knees and tears fall out from his eyes. I also fall to my knees and wrap my arms around him. He starts crying, I don't know what to do, I hug him and pull him close as he balls his eyes out. I realize that he has now seen the reality of our new world and I need to teach him how to survive it.