

The sun rose over the glorious Cheaha Mountain in the wonderful state of Alabama. I stayed up all night gazing at the stars wondering if there's other life forms living in paradise on another planet thousands of light years away.

My good friend, Remi Cabello, and I have been traveling for two days trying to find sources of water and other resources that are valuable to the means of survival. All the rivers, lakes, and creeks are nearly dried out. The air was getting hotter and denser as the grueling summer raged on.

Life's been different ever since the World Crash in 2048. Starvation and crime rule this mad world. The human race have been trying to adapt for the past fifty-two years. However, the Midwest Pandemic of 2050 caused a roadblock towards adaptation. It's every man, woman, and child for themselves here in the year of 2100.

"You think we should head back? There's nothing out here." Remi mentioned.

"No, we've got to find something."

"Chase, we've been out here trying planning new routes to absolutely nothing."

I turned to Remi and raised my finger. "But, that nothing could turn into something. And do you really want that something not to be found?"

"It probably was found by another lucky bastard," Remi snarled.

"Keep moving. We have plenty of supplies with us."

Remi gave me a stern look. "We should be saving those for another trip."

"We'll head out by noon today," I said.

“Fine,” Remi mumbled. Remi packed up his sleeping bag and other belongings before we headed out into the mountain.

We ventured our way into the peach orchard that cascaded across the mountainside.

“You think we could pick some?” Remi asked.

“None of them look good. And anyways, it’s too dangerous here. United States Preservation Army (USPA) soldier could come around.”

“Well if soldiers come along we can ambush them and take their stuff,” Remi mentioned.

“And if all goes wrong?”

“We’re dead,” Remi replied.

I smirked. “Exactly, so let’s try and avoid that.”

“Why? We have a bow and arrow, ” Remi insisted.

“I said no. Maybe some other time when we have an actu -”

Remi brought his finger to my lips and mouthed, “Get down.”

As I did so, I could see three broad men wearing their camouflage trousers and jackets. I heard them litter the Earth with their foul language. “The preservation army,” I whispered.

“Shhh!” Remi shushed.

In 2072, a group of men devised a branch in which they murder the weak and helpless. They hunt down scavengers, like Remi and I, to preserve Earth’s natural resources until everyone perishes someday.

“Darrell!” the commander yelled.

“Yes, sir!”

“Go check the premises,” the commander ordered.

“Well sir, after yelling you might’ve scared someone off,” the soldier chuckled.

The commander glared at Darrell. “Just do as you’re told.”

Darrell marched off in the opposite direction of which Remi and I were located while the other two stayed in the same spot. Remi and I needed to act quick. They had bags full of fresh food, water, gasoline, and weaponry.

“We need that,” Remi whispered. The look of desperation plastered itself across Remi’s grimy face.

“Remi, I don’t know. It’s three against two.”

“But we have a bow, some arrows and a very good archer.”

“And they have guns,” I pointed out.

Remi ignored me and proceeded to slowly take the bow off of his back and place a smooth arrow on the bowstring. He crouched low behind a peach tree, positioning himself and raised the bow to his lip. “Two birds with one stone,” he said. He aimed for just a second more before releasing the arrow. It missed.

The commander looked over at where Remi was once kneeling. However, Remi was already aiming another arrow at the commander, hiding behind a peach tree just a few yards from where he was before. I swiftly moved to another location before the Commander could catch a glimpse of me. Remi’s target eased closer and closer with a Glock-17 in his shaky hands.

THUD. The commander’s body dropped lifelessly to the dry ground with an arrow shot right in the temple of his head.

“Sir?” the soldier that stayed asked. I saw him raise his handgun, spinning in circles trying to see where Remi was. But he was no match for Remi’s quick, silent movement. He too got shot in the head and fell to the ground.

“Now let’s take their stuff and go,” Remi demanded.

We started gathering their supplies when I felt a large hand grasp my neck and pull me up.

The remaining soldier came up from behind me and held me in a choke hold with his gun against my head. My hands started to tremble, beads of sweat dripped down dirty face into my green eyes, my vision became blurry as my breathing became shallow.

Hand over the bags!” the soldier ordered.

“First, let my friend go.”

“I’ll kill your friend if you don’t hand over the bags,” the soldier bluffed.

Remi stared into the soldier’s close-set eyes. “No you won’t.”

My voice managed to quiver, “Remi, what are you doing?”

“Just hand over the bags!” the soldier shouted.

Remi’s face relaxed. He set his eyes down upon me and said, “No.”

The soldier pushed me to the ground and leveled his gun at Remi’s head.

Remi looked back up, cocked his head to the left and pointed back down at me. “Big mistake,” he stated.

The soldier then scanned his eyes from Remi to me, and Remi shot an arrow right through his skull. The soldier grunted and fell onto his back.

“You good, Chase?” Remi asked.

I stared at him. “Thank you.”

Remi waved his hand. “I’ve always got your back.”

“Yeah, but what if I don’t have your back?”

“What do you mean?” Remi furrowed his brow.

“I-I was useless in that whole situation.”

“You had a gun up against your head. What were you supposed to do?” Remi replied.

“No, no. Before that. You did everything and I did nothing but watch.”

“Look, you didn’t know what was going through my mind. I had a plan and it worked. I know you know how to take charge of thing, Chase. You did the same thing last week with the one USPA soldier,” Remi said.

I nodded my head and Remi yanked me up off of the ground. I turned my head and examined the soldier’s lifeless body on the ground. “It’s time to head back. We got supplies,” I stated.

Remi smiled at me, “I guess we’re the lucky bastards this time.”

We started our way back home. Home, as Remi and I like to call it is this little farm ranch where we’ve tried to grow crops and raise cattle, chickens, and pigs. But, it’s been difficult trying to raise our food ever since the The Midwest Pandemic spread through different regions of the United States. It’s started in 2048 and settled in 2063. There’s not many people left due to the pandemic. Some committed suicide because they couldn’t handle the fact the world was slowly but surely coming to an end; or maybe it was that they were too afraid of facing a rogue world.

There are still a few outbreaks here and there. When that occurs, those people are quarantined by the USPA until they die. There is no vaccine for this bacteria and there may never be one if people keep on dropping like flies. The plague didn't affect just humans, but cattle and other livestock too. It got into water streams which also affected the world's agriculture. Remi and I sterilize our stored water once a week to make sure everything is safe; crops, cattle, livestock.

My parents passed away from the Midwestern Pandemic as did Remi's. We met two years ago, both of us running from USPA soldiers. We teamed up and made it to safety in the farm ranch where we hid for days. Once we were sure that we lost the USPA soldiers, we started transforming the barn into a shelter for our food and made a field where we grew our crops. Once we got our home situated and we gathered enough supplies, we started to train one another for combat. Luckily, I knew a few things from self-defense training; therefore, I taught Remi everything I knew. We've been on trips to strip malls, meandered around in forestry and crop fields until we and other scavengers have depleted most of the resources.

Remi and I have talked about moving to less populated state; however, several problems could occur: we could run into more USPA soldiers, run out of food and water along the trip or find a place where there has been no resources for years. It's hard to say because communications have been down for years. The correct repercussions towards saving the Earth were not taken because political parties could not decide on solutions. Another factor that caused problems was that people stopped believing in global warming. For ten years, New England as well as the southern states experienced the coldest winters ever recorded. In 2050, 70% of people didn't believe in climate change. Those votes were accounted for and no one did anything to help

save the planet. Back in 2018, the Trump Administration abolished their way out of the Paris Agreement as did other countries. The Paris Agreement ensured no more than a 1.5 degree celsius increase in world temperature, but look where the people in 2100 are now. Temperatures have increased by 2.7 degree celsius since 2018. Certain species of animals and plants have gone extinct and soon, humans may too.

