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Fire Stream

10% Time Project

One can never predict what their fate might be. Fate is something one cannot change. Every mortal human will die at some point or another. It may be when one is eleven, or twenty eight, forty four, or one hundred and five. One can never tell when grim will come to fetch them. Nobody on Earth actually knows where they are going to end up once they pass on, but what is there to be afraid of? Nobody actually knows. Man fears the unknown. That is why it feels more dangerous to be in the dark, because what lies within the darkness is a mystery to the naked eye. Only brave souls are fearless of dying. That is where faith comes into play. Most people who are not afraid of leaving their mortal life behind have a faith, in which they believe that they will pass on to something better than what is here on this imperfect world. Maybe there are more perfect worlds in the beyond. Some call it heaven, some just call it peace. But how do you get there? How can you be so sure of passing on if there is no person to tell you what there is, there is no guarantee of any life beyond this. This is why only the strong minded are fearless. It takes a strong mind to fully believe that there is something better waiting for them existing somewhere out of this universe. This is why the strong minded did not coward in the face of death during what they call, "The year of demons." It took bravery and skill to survive, not may did. But to the people who believed, many made it. To the people who believed and did not survived, their souls are gratified and now at peace with themselves, along with the world.

The sun's rays were radiating off of the Empire State building, looking at the building's windows up close would hurt the eyes. The large reflective windows shined like the building was lit up, eliminating at the heart of the city. It was scorching hot outside for being so early in the afternoon. A thin woman dressed in a long tattered striped skirt and a teal V-neck was hula hooping at top of 5th Avenue. A large man with a cigar hanging out of his mouth was yelling out, "Get the latest. Get your news during the morning commute! News! News everyone." It was a typical afternoon in New York City. People were engaging in their usual routine, driving or riding their bike to work. Tourists were on every street corner shopping and spending, frivolous waste as usual.

I lived on West 57th St, parallel to central park, in fact it was right across the street from Central Park. I worked at a law firm a few blocks away, going through an internship at Boies, Schiller & Flexner. That day, I awoke at eleven am, four hours later than I should have. I had accidentally set her alarm for 7pm rather than 7am. As soon as my eyes opened I peered at the alarm clock and immediately shot up out of bed. I grabbed my phone off of my night stand whimpering, "oh no, oh no, oh no." I attempted to call my boss and dropped my phone, I quickly swiped it up and put the phone to my ear.

"Hello? Hi, this is Anna Henderson. Yes, y-yes. Reason? I-I over slept, my alarm did not go off."

There was a long pause, my boss was yelling at me.

"I understand sir, it will never happen again. Yes. Ok, I'll be there in twenty minutes, thank you Mr. Moorehouse." I then jet into the shower and quickly got dressed in a white blouse, a black skirt that came down to just about my knees, and black shiny heels. It

was the same old work at the firm, filing papers and listening to Mr. Moorehouse speak. He was one of those people who enjoyed to listen to his own voice.

Finally at five, the work day was over. I went outside and peered up at my work building, I could not see the top. It was still really hot outside, I wasn't looking forward to riding my bike home. On the ride back I stopped at Lola's flower shop to pick up some small sunflowers to put in a vase in the kitchen. Flowers were a comfort to me at the time ever since mom passed away. Sunflowers were her favorite. As I was in line, I examined the handful of flowers. The stems were thick and felt like there was soft prickles coming out. I looked at the petals, long, soft, dark yellow petals. The middle was my favorite, it was heavy for a flower and one of the flowers had a lot of seeds inside of the head. I thought about where I could plant them. Then remembering that I lived in New York City, I realized that there was no place to plant them, I had no backyard or any grass to call my own. I looked up at the ceiling of the small flower shop, there were a lot of cracks up there, looks like from water damage. I let my mind wander, thinking about how much I missed my mom, suddenly I heard, "Ma'm? Ma'm! You're next in line." This awoke me from my daydreams. I paid for the flowers and went home.

That night when I was making dinner, while cutting up some carrots to make beef stew, I looked up into the stars. In the kitchen, there was huge windows where I had a clear view of the sky, I did live on the top floor of the building. Whenever I looked up at the sky, I thought of mom. I thought about where she might be right now, and I could feel that she was happy. Chills ran in my bones whenever I thought about eternal happiness. My mom was a devoted Christian women that lost a battle to breast cancer at age 42. She was too young to leave this world. I like to think that she was too good to

live in this imperfect place we call Earth. God needed her to move on to his kingdom, to be happy forever. I always got lost in these thoughts whenever I looked up into the sky, wondering what else is up too besides stars, planets, and maybe aliens. What is beyond the universe? The thought didn't scare me, it just made me extremely curious. Where ever I do eventually go, I know I will be happy, and I'll get to see my mom again.

I actually woke up on time the next morning. New day, the same routine, I thought. I always thanked God for the new day, even if I knew I was going to do the same thing as I did yesterday. It was still a new day that was given to me and it was a blessing. On the way to work, I remember almost getting hit by a bus. Worked sucked, as usual. All day, I thought about finally finishing up my night classes, becoming an actual lawyer and not listening to the ramble of the boss. I was planning to call my good friend Tyne later and planning a trip to the beach. I got home and flicked on the T.V. The news came on. "And in other news new discovery in the science field." This immediately caught my interest, I walked back to the T.V. The news caster talked about a new drug that was discovered that may be linked to cure of brain cancer. The drug had a chemical reaction with neuron receptors. This drug today was tested on ten people who suffered from brain cancer. In a week, scientists planned to study the results.

The week passed on, nothing has changed in life. After the next few weeks after that, things started to get weird. The government and media tried to keep the action out of the public eye. They didn't want to scares us, they thought they had it under control. What really happened was, the patients who suffered from brain cancer that received this new treatment, went home, cancer free. But they went crazy, so crazy that all ten of them left their houses, never to return home, their intensions were evil. This new drug

didn't turn them into zombies, although they were flesh eating monsters. I guess you could say these subjects were "smart zombies". The first report of this happening, happened in Philadelphia, ten days after the patient was admitted from the hospital. The patient was found on 21st street, smashing a business man with a sledge hammer, then attempting to eat him. This all lasted about ten minutes before the police showed up and shot the zombie. The zombie was shot in the arm, and ran away. The police attempted to chase after him, but the zombie had disappeared. The next day in Philadelphia, the zombie attacked 23 new people, but this time the people were bitten on the neck. They were admitted into the hospital for treatment. That night, the story appeared on the news, it had a headline of "The Philadelphia Biter". People believed it was just some lunatic attacking people.

The other nine patients who were treated with this new medication were attacking people as well. In ten different states throughout the country, there were reports of attacks. A few days later, scientists linked these attacks to the ten test subjects who were treated with this new drug. The scientists contacted the government with this information, every attack was pulled from the news and any other kind.

At the time, that little bit of news that I saw on T.V didn't scare me at all. The only report that was broadcasted in New York was about the Philadelphia biter. New York had no idea about the other nine states yet since all this news was pulled from the media. Everything seemed normal, as usual. It was a Tuesday evening and I had just returned home from work. I flopped off my shoes and walked into the kitchen. I started to slice a tomato for my B.L.T I was going to make myself. I took out the cutting board from underneath my sink and placed it on my counter in front of the big window. I saw a

clear summer night sky, sprinkled with a few bright stars here or there. My mind started to wander, I could picture my mother and I sitting at my kitchen table like we used to, drinking our coffee and talking about how someday we would have everything we wanted. Then I thought to myself, "well mom, now I know you have everything you've ever wanted." An unexpected smile came upon my face. I then realized I had cut up the entire tomato when I only wanted a third of it.

The next day, it was a Sunday and I had off from work. I needed a new swim suit so I decided to walk up to Times Square to H&M and purchase a bikini since Tyne and I finally planned our beach trip. It was around two in the afternoon when I reached the store. I grabbed a purple and pink tie-dyed bikini and was on my way. I reached 37W St and that's when it happened. I noticed a few feet ahead of me a strange looking woman who was lurking in the crowds of people, she kept stepping forward and stepping back, looking over people's shoulders as they passed. I moved to the far side of the sidewalk and studied her some more. This tall guy passed by her on his cell phone and she jumped on top of him! He let out a grunt and put his arms up, trying to get this woman off of his back. She then attempted to bite his neck area. By this time, a swarm of people gathered around, and two other men tried to pull this woman off of him, but she was latched on, using her legs as leverage. Finally she bit through his flesh and he screamed. Then one of the men helping to get her off punched her in the face, and she let out a horrifying laugh. She jumped off of the one man and flung herself onto the man that struck her. This woman had long wiry brown hair and appeared to be in her forties. She had reddish eyes and a frail looking body. The one man that she bit was on his hands and knees, bleeding profusely from his neck. He took his hand and covered the

wound, screaming “Help, Help! Someone call an ambulance, I’ve been attacked.” The women bit the other man who struck her and ran away, again laughing hysterically like a mad women. I guess people were too afraid to stop her from running off, in fear that they might be bitten next. I wanted to stay and watch what was going on, as so did about a hundred other people, the swarm kept getting larger as the ambulance showed up. The two bleeding men were placed in a stretcher and carried off to the hospital.

That night I flicked on the news in hopes of an update on what happened earlier that day. Nothing. I was confused by this because the dumbest of things is on the news every night, but someone getting attacked and bitten on the neck doesn’t make a big story? It then occurred to me that there was a Philadelphia biter just a few days ago. Could they have traveled to New York to bite more people? Then I remembered that the Philadelphia biter was a man. This was a scary thought for me because I wondered why all of the sudden people are not getting attacked with guns, they are getting attacked with other people’s mouths.

After three days, New York was in complete chaos. Rumors had gotten out that other cities are over run with attackers, these zombies. Family members phoned people here and told them, New Yorkers tried to go to Philadelphia, and it was blocked off completely due to the attackers. I sat by my television for days, listening to the news. The news finally told America what was going on. We needed to evacuate. The president appeared on the channel and described this as a new virus due to the scientific studies that had to do with brain cancer. The ten test subjects that were given this new drug, became cancer free and returned to their homes. This new drug altered their being and their minds. It took about three days and all of the patients became mad

and began to attack people on the streets. Scientists are running tests now, their guess is that the drug triggered a neuron deficiency and caused the patient to lose themselves. This deficiency turned off the brain receptor in which is a part of the brain that holds one's personality and personal thoughts. It was almost like any traces of the person's normalities were wiped out completely. This receptor made a switch, and controlled the patients. It caused them to become completely mad and have an urge to bite other humans. The horrific thing with this is, somehow this madness is passed through the saliva. Once an infected person bites you, and you have their saliva in your blood stream, you will become infected as well, you have approximately three days until your receptors change. Then the regular news came back on, the casters commented on the information the president just disclosed. Then they gave out several safe areas you can go if you live in the suburban part of New York, then the safe areas to go to if you lived in the city.

I turned off my television after I found all of this new information out. A million and one thoughts were racing through my head. I knew that I had to evacuate but where was the government going to send us? Freaking out wasn't going to make this better so I packed a bag. A simple bag, I packed a few outfits, water, some snacks, my bible, and a picture of me and my mother. It was a mad house out on the streets. Luckily, I only had to travel one block to the safe area. It was actually right near where I worked, another office building with about ten stories to it. When I entered the building I had to give all of my information and I was assigned a room. I had a million questions to ask but I remained silent because I doubt this short fat lady at the desk knew anything about what was going to happen next. She looked just as scared as everyone else.

There were crowds of people everywhere. Some people were sobbing, some people were talking, and some people remained completely silent, as I did. That night, everyone in my safe area was given a blanket to sleep on the floors. All of the doors were securely locked with a guard at each opening, armed with a gun. The next morning, the guards gathered all of us into the main room of the building to tell us what was going to happen next. We had to evacuate New York. There has been thousands of attacks, and a scary number of people are infected at this very moment in time. We were all going to have to go to the New York airport and leave for Arizona. Arizona had the lowest ratio of infected people and there was a containment area set up. In order to get admitted into the containment area, everyone had to get mouth swabbed to make sure there were no traces of the infection. They told us that the infected are getting smarter and they are blending in with humans better. How? Nobody knows now. We only knew that we needed to get to Arizona to be safe.

Each safe place had its own containment area some place throughout the United States. The next day, our safe area would fly out to Arizona. It was stressful sleeping because when I closed my eyes, I pictured myself getting bit, that's all people would talk about, was dying or going mad. I didn't think of it that way. I prayed to God and asked him to keep me safe. I also asked him to end this madness because it was getting way too out of control. I walked over to the window of the office and looked up into the sky. I wondered why I haven't heard a single solution to this problem. Scientists are studying the infected people, but there has been no solutions on how this is going to end, just how it's getting worse. This terrified me because I realized that many people don't have faith anymore. People are so afraid to just accept what is coming and only think about

how bad it is. Me, I'm trying to stay positive, yes this is happening and it is terrifying but there is only one thing that I can physically do at the moment. The only thing I could do is to have faith in myself and pray to survive.

The next morning, we boarded a bus that was going to take us to the airport. The traffic was horrendous because a lot of people didn't trust the government and chose not to trust going to the safe areas. By the time we got to the airport, the plane was ready to be boarded. It was upsetting to leave everything behind like that but it was necessary to do, New York was way too populated with the infected. The military was going to go into the heavily populated areas first and try to kill every single infected. If there were no people around, then the infected would starve to death because it was believed that they only feasted on people.

It was two in the morning when the plane reached Arizona. As we left the plane, I saw the large bus that was going to take the group to the containment area. I got my bag and boarded the bus. As we drove to the containment area, I peered out the window and noticed how many stars there were in the sky. I don't think I've ever seen that many stars before. I never really left New York, my whole life was there and I never had a reason to venture out. But that sky out in Arizona was absolutely beautiful. I could feel my heart warm up, then I knew that my mother was watching over me. She wasn't going to let anything bad happen to me. Then I remembered what she always said to me whenever we talked about passing on. "Only the strong minded are fearless. It takes a strong mind to fully believe that there is something better waiting for them existing somewhere out of this universe. This is why the strong minded did not coward in the face of death. She used to say. That's when I had a feeling that I was going to survive

what I like to call, 'the year of the demons.' Then I thought, if I didn't, then I would be okay with that because I am fearless and strong. I would not fear the unknown. I would have faith that I would then journey to a perfect world, and see my mother there.

It took an entire year to clear out the infected. Over one third of America's population was gone. This meant major changes for us. But eventually, people started to and start anew.