



By Ahnyah:

It was the year 2078. It has been 5 days since the great Covid 19 2.0 happened and killed all the women in the world...all except me. This illness has taken everything from me, most of my family and friends are gone. I'm all alone, no more sleepovers, no more family makeovers, or shopping with my best friends. I now finally understand the saying, "You don't know what you got until it's gone." I didn't think that it was possible to feel this many emotions all at once. One moment I want to scream and shout, and the next I want to lock myself in my room and cry myself to sleep. Wishing this is all just one big nightmare, but I know it's not and that's what hurts the most.

It has been a couple of days now since the world lost all females. I started to get used to my new life and learn how to survive. Every day when I wake up, I do my morning routine and eat breakfast. As I'm getting dressed I look at myself in the mirror, "Ok Eba. You are a 22-year-old woman all alone with only men left and you need to protect yourself so they don't find you." I start to get myself ready to go out and hopefully no one sees me. I walk down the stairs and out the door. I lock my door behind me and start to make my way to the grocery store to get more food after ... I ate most of it from stress eating. As I'm walking to the supermarket I see a group of men laughing and talking. I slow down and quickly hide, "Just breathe Eba nothing is going to happen to you. Just turn around and take the long way to the market." I stand back up and turn around. "Hey, you!" I stop walking and look back. I now see the group of men all looking at me, with one talk guy in front who I assume is the one that called me. "Oh! You're a female!?!?" another guy said, they all looked shocked and confused. I could see them slowly walking closer to see if I was real or not. 'I don't like this, I better make a run for it, 1...2...3!!' I turned back around and ran back towards my house. I could hear the guys behind me chasing after me. "Hey Stop!" "Stop running!" "STOP!" I heard them shouting at me but I didn't stop running, slowly losing them when I turned a corner. I ran all the way back to my house and locked the door behind me. 'Oh my god... I can't believe that happened.' I looked down at my hands and saw them shaking like crazy and I could hear my heart thumping in my chest.

'Ba-doom ... Ba-doom ...' I slowly slid down to the floor, just sitting there for what felt like forever. After what seemed like hours I got up and looked around, being alone makes everything seem dull and colorless. 'I feel like I'm floating. ...I can feel my whole body working, my blood pumping through my veins, my heart thumping, and my brain active. It's weird that my arms and legs feel heavy but I can still move them around.' I make my way back to my room and fall face-first onto the bed, slowly closing my eyes.

I don't know when or how I fell asleep, but when I opened my eyes the clock on my dresser said it was 3 in the afternoon. I sit up and motivate myself to go back outside and go to the supermarket. 'I got this. I just have to take it slow and easy. ...Just make a quick run to the store and be back before anyone could see me.' I grab my keys, lock the door behind me and start making my way to the grocery store...again. This time I didn't see the group of men and safely got to the market. I grabbed everything I needed to last at least a month and a half. I leave the store using a shopping cart to hold all my bags and make my way back home, but of course, I don't have any luck today. I see two teenage boys talking with each other walking toward me. I hurriedly made my way around a corner and hid. "Hey did you hear something?" One of the boys asked. "No, maybe you're just hearing things," replied the other. I stay hidden until I can't hear them anymore and start walking back toward my home. '...Well that went better than I thought!' I safely made my way back home without anyone seeing me. After a few minutes of struggling to get the shopping cart in my house I went to the kitchen and started to put all the food, plus some other necessities, away in their rightful places. By the time I was done it was 7:30pm. I decided to spend the rest of the night binge watching movies.

4 Hours Later...

I was sitting in my room still emotional after watching a classic from the 20's *Wakanda Forever*. I finally got out of bed, changing my clothes and doing my night routine. *Yawns* 'Welp time to go to bed and sleep!' As I lay down I looked at the clock and saw it was now 5:05 in the morning. 'I definitely am going to be sleeping in tomorrow.' By the time I woke up the next day it was 1:45 in the afternoon. I had been

planning on exploring to see the new changes that have happened since the illness. I got ready and ate brunch, then headed out the door. I decided I wasn't going to hide anymore and just act normal. 'Yeah, like that's going to work Eba.' I had made sure I grabbed a book and my phone before I left. As I walked around I came across a park that I came to when I was younger and could see some kids and teens walking and playing around.

I kept walking and the people at the park slowly started to notice me, looking at me like I just killed a puppy. I tried to ignore all the stares I got as I sat down at a picnic table. *Whisper* "Hey...is that a girl over there?" "Woah!?!?" "One of them is still alive!?!?" I could hear them talking and whispering to their friends and others around them. In the corner of my eye, I could see a man walking in my direction. He stands behind me, I ignore him and continue reading my book. After a couple of minutes, he moves and sits in front of me. I close my book and look up at him. We made eye contact and stared at each other for what seemed like hours. "Hey," he finally said. "...Hi..." I said back. Instead of asking how I'm still alive, like I had expected, he doesn't. "How has your day been going?" "Surprisingly good." "That's good to hear." He didn't say anything else and I didn't try to continue the conversation. He stared at me a little longer before standing up and walking away. As he walked away he looked at me one last time before leaving the park. 'Well that was weird... I wonder why he came over to me in the first place? Surely not to just ask me how my day was going.' I decided to forget what happened and continue my book.

After I finally finished my book without any interruptions, I looked at my phone and noticed that I had been here for 3 hours. I stood up on my sore legs and stretched, getting my stuff and walking away. When I looked around I noticed there were more people hanging around, sometimes taking glances at me but looking away after noticing I saw them looking at me. I started walking towards my house as it had gotten colder, deciding to call it a day. As I was walking out the park I noticed a limo parked across the street. A man, who I'm guessing is a bodyguard, got out of the car walking towards me. 'Ugh why can't I just be left alone for one day, without someone talking to me?! Who am I kidding, I know why.' The man stopped in

front of me, staring at me for a few minutes, all while holding eye contact with me. 'Okay... this is starting to get creepy. Like I get why he's staring, but I feel like I'm being analyzed.' "Hello I am the head bodyguard for the new king, King Henry," The man says, still staring at me. "Hello, nice to meet you. May I help you with something?" I replied back. "Yes, I have been sent here on the king's behalf requesting that you move into the palace." "No." "I apologize, but I was ordered that if you refused, I would have to use force." 'Ugh he's not gonna let me leave unless I accept and come with him.' "Fine I will come with you, but I need to get some stuff from my house." "Very well, follow me." He walks me towards the limo and lets me get in first before him. When we get to my house I pack up a good amount of clothes and other necessities. 'How can all this happen to me in one day and living in a castle no less. I hope I am making the right choice and won't regret it later.'

By Luke:

...4 months after living with King Henry... My life is a paradise now, everyone loves me, for doing nothing. I get awoken by Henry's assistant Perry, and he tells me today's agenda. "Hello Eba, I hope you slept well, today your agenda is to talk to King Henry about repopulating the earth, then talk to the scientist, then the compensation you will get for your heroic deeds."

"Thank you Perry" I try to act genuinely like I want this role, but this seems still so sudden, I mean do they even realize this daunting task they are telling me to do? At the same time, is it selfish to not want to repopulate the earth? Is it selfish to want to live a normal life? Is this even about me? I'm not saying King Henry has not treated me well, but am I ready? I say out loud, "Ok Eba, so every woman is dead and now the population has no future unless I do something about it."

"Precisely Eba!" said King Henry, scaring me half to death.

"I wanted you to meet Jake, he is like the son I never had."

"Hey, Eba," said Jake in a friendly tone.

'Jake looks nice, I guess. Nice frame with wavy black hair and keeps good hygiene. I mean he doesn't look that good, just has beautiful eyes, is taller than me but not too much, about 5.10ft, and works out and looks genuinely interested in seeing me.'

"Eba, are you good?" Jake says again in a kind voice.

"Yeah I'm fine, so anyways what did you want to say, King Henry?"

"Ah yes, as you know I want you to repopulate the earth, and Jake would be the first father of many." King Henry says a little too cheerfully.

I then stammer, not sure what to say, should I feel honored? Disgusted? Terrified? Just go with the flow?

"I know you must be scared," Jake puts his hand on my shoulder. "but everyone is relying on you. You may not be the hero everyone wants, but you are the hero we need." I still am listless, and still, what if I say no? What will they see me as? What will I see myself as? How long can I keep up this will I won't I charade?

"How long do I have to decide?" They look at each other in agreement.

"As soon as possible, because at some point you will not be able to have children," Henry replied, "To be honest Eba, I don't know why you are on the fence, don't you care about humanity and its well-being? We will give you 3 weeks, but then you need to make your decision." King Henry said.

"King Henry, maybe Eba would feel more comfortable with me talking to her. Alone."

"What a wonderful idea Jake, I knew you were the right guy," said Henry. King Henry leaves my bedroom and it's now just me and Jake, alone. Jake sits next to me and we just sit for a minute, not a word is said to each other, it's so quiet you could hear a needle drop across the castle. Jake turns to my side, holds my hand, and looks at me and nothing else, and now I feel a bit safer than the loud Henry.

"I'm not going to try and convince you anymore today, I just have a question, are you scared of me or afraid of having a baby? Jake said in a very sincere tone.

“To be honest, both, I mean you seem nice but I don’t know you or any of the other fathers I know for a fact Henry has lined up, and also yeah even under normal circumstances having a kid is terrifying.”

“Ok, Eba, then get to know me, I’ll be here, and I’ll make you feel safe. We need to go to the scientist in about an hour, so get yourself ready and we can start our journey.” Jake does a small wave goodbye and as he opens the door I see King Henry walk with Jake.

‘This decision I will make would be much easier if I had my sister with me, she was my rock. She was the only one I could trust. Well, I guess I need to see the scientist, whoever the hell that guy is. Hopefully, he is not as weirdly cheerful as Henry is.’

40 minutes later...

‘I go down the elevator, it’s about 40 floors down for some reason, maybe it’s a way so people don’t go in as easily. Or go out.’ I see Doctor Nefario, somehow shorter than me yet quite plump, his goggles are so tinted I can’t even tell he has eyes. It looks like he is hammering something. Dr. Nefario’s lab coat looks like it was never washed and neither was he. I hear the elevator open again and see Jake coming out from it.’

“Hey, Jake!” I said

“Hey Eba”

“Well, well if it isn’t the heroes of the Earth if you decide to of course Eba.” Dr. Nefario said in an unnecessarily snarky tone.

“I actually have decided,” I replied. “I’ll have the child, it is my duty after all”

Jake and Dr. Nefario look like they just won the lottery, listless but overwhelmingly happy. Bang! The Hammer Dr. Nefario’s hammer had just fallen on his foot but it looked like he was numbed by his gleefulness.

“That’s great Eba, are you positive though, I just want to make sure you want to do this, without a doubt,” Jake says in his always calm tone while he puts his hand on my shoulder. I feel my heart pounding out of my chest. “

“Yes, I’m positive.” We just stand still and say nothing.

“Oh, get a room! We need to talk about the logistics of this now!” Dr. Nefario says in a joking tone.

“So, anyways we are planning to start the procreation in about a week, but will run tests to make sure Jake, specifically is fit to be a father”

“But Dr. Nefario, what if I am not ready to be a mother?” I ask.

“Mature, wise does not matter, the best possible nurses will be with that child, If you are not medical wise, then humanity will die a slow and painful death,” Dr. Nefario says in a very ominous and deep tone. After complete silence.

.....

“But you’ll probably be fine! Ha!”

A week later...

Today is the day where I agree to something against what I want, but I’m too chicken to say what I think, I’ll just go with the flow I guess. At least Jake has grown on me, I mean it really does not matter what I think of him, all of these men I will procreate with will eventually all be the same. Kind of depressing, but so is this world.

“Eba! Today is the day!” King Henry shouts out, with Jake on his side. Yes it is, I go down to Dr. Nefario’s lab, with Jake next to me in the elevator and I feel his hand trying to hold mine, but I just look laser-focused at the door, not pushing him away but also not giving him any attention. This is business, and that’s all we are. I’m just not sure if Jake knows that yet.

“Hi Dr. Nefario” Jake and I say simultaneously.

“Hello, my two lovebirds, so today the process will be simple, you won’t even know you are saving the world.” Says Doctor Nefario.

...After the process

I take a pregnancy test, and Jake is by my side, even though we know I am pregnant, it looks like King Henry is more emotional than I am. What a interesting.

“I’m so proud of you Eba, you’re like the daughter I never had.” King Henry than lifts me up and hugs me while letting the water works go out. I then realize something, if this is a girl, she will have to go through this process like I did, and then will the next and the next and the next. Maybe at some point this will end, where humanity will be back to normal, where women don’t need to sacrifice their bodies for this. But I at least want her to have a choice.

...9 months later

I wake up with a realization of oh crap my water broke, and scream

“JAKE”

“I’M COMING, DON’T MOVE”

Memories just compile with bits and pieces of what happened. I notice I go in a stretcher, and then a hospital room, and then a baby. Time just stops for a little bit when I hold her, the craziness of the world stops, and all I care about is her.

“She is beautiful” Jake says while holding my hand, and this time only did not feel like a business transaction, even if it was just for a moment. Sadly a moment is not a lifetime, if I truly did want her to live a happy life I need to be braver than I already am. I need to run away.

By Colin:

Monday, April 21, 2078, 00:02

It’s been a year since this disease had wiped out the women population. I lie in my bed. Jake dead asleep beside me, and Aurora is curled up against my arm like a koala clinging to a tree. I glance out the

window, a full moon is insight, shining bright with such delight. I remember when me and my mother used to ride Dad's sailboat late at night to stargaze and get a good view of the moon. I would bring snacks, blankets, and we would sing songs along the way. Those were good memories.

All of a sudden the clouds hide the moon. It begins to get oddly dark outside.

This is weird, I think to myself. It doesn't usually get this dark. The glass window shatters.

Startled, I jumped up out of my bed.

The window is shattered. A strange darkness seeps through the cracked glass, and into the bedroom. It begins to consume the walls around us, then the ceiling, and the floors. It starts to flood the floor. I stand up, holding Aurora above me. I nudge Jake, trying to wake him up, but he's dead asleep. I hug Aurora tight. Everything around me is now immersed in darkness. I look at my arm.

"AURORA?!"

"WHERE ARE YOU!?"

"WHAT IS HAPPENING?!"

I'm now in this frigid, dreary, and confined space. I start to cry as I sit alone on the marble floor. I feel terrified and hopeless.

What is going on?

I want to leave this place. I desire Aurora's return. I want things to get back to normal.

"Hello Eba"

I look up, my eyes red, drowning in tears.

Who are you? Where am I? Why am I here? Let me out of here now yo-

Before I could say another word she puts her finger on my lips, "I'm here to help you"

Help me what?

"Honey, you need to get out of this castle, very soon. King Henry is planning to keep you locked up and take Aurora away to experiment on her."

What is this girl talking about?, I think to myself.

How do you know this?

“Eba, I’m you from the future”

WHAT? HOW? THAT’S IMPOSSIBLE!

“Look at my arm”

She shows me a tattoo of a star with a tiger on it, the same exact tattoo I have.

“You have a cat named Buggy, you love poetry, you hate coleslaw, and your dream is to be a movie star.”

Omg, this girl really is me, or I mean I really am me, does that sound right?

I’m astonished. You really are me.

“Yep, you in 30 years.”

Damn I look good.

“You mean we look good.”

The both of us laugh together.

“There’s a screwdriver in the the drawl of your nightstand. Use it to unhinge the screws on the vent in the bathroom. Ok I have to go, oh, and don’t eat those pancakes!”

Than- before I can even thank her, me, she disappears. I disappear.

3 hours later April 21, 2078, 03:35

I wake up in my bed, Aurora still latched to my arm, and Jake snoring beside me. I feel my heart beating out of my chest. I’m still freaked out by what I just experienced.

“Eba, are you okay, you look like you just saw the devil himself.”

I’m fine, just a bad dream, I reply.

He puts his arm around me to comfort me, and I actually start to feel less anxious.

April 21, 2078, 09:12

It's morning. I look over and see that Jake isn't in bed. I found a note next to his pillow.

"Good morning, Love. I made you pancakes, your favorite. Meet me in the dining room. Love, Jake."

I smile as I read his message. I go downstairs, take Aurora with me, and sit at the dining room table. Jake is talking to me but I pay no attention. I look at the pancakes in front of me, but I'm too occupied with finding an escape route to eat.

I look around, no hope, but then I remember the vent that my future self was telling me about. I go back up to my bedroom and open the drawer and there I see a screwdriver. I take it and go back down to the kitchen.

Excuse me Jake, I'll be right back, I'm going to change Aurora's diaper.

"Ok darling, don't be too long"

I get to the bathroom and attempt to unhinge the screws attached to the vent. I manage to get three of the screws off, but the last one is stuck. With an insane amount of force, I was able to rip the screw out. It flies across the room, creating a loud bang on the marble flooring.

"Oh no", I whisper to myself.

I hear someone walking over. I climb into the vent, picking up the cover and holding it back in place. A guard walks in.

"Hey, is everything ok in here?!"

The man looks around and then leaves after a minute.

Phew, I'm surprised that it actually worked. I place the vent to the side and begin to crawl forward.

BANG

Owwwww, I just hit my head on the roof of the vent. I try to be as quiet as possible. The vent cover falls out of the vent and hits the floor.

BANSHASDKAJD

Crap!

I hear the guard walking back over.

“HEY GET BACK HERE!”

I crawl as fast as I can. The man is now behind me. He grabs my foot. I try my best to push him away but he's got a powerful grip. Then I remembered that I still have the screwdriver and I got an idea. I take out the tool and lift my arm and stab him right in his arm.

“Ow my arm!!!”

“You rotten banana!”

I continue my way through the vent. My heart beating out of my chest. I make it to the other side of the castle. I look out the vent, no ones in sight. I carefully lift the vent door up and get myself out. I'm now in a bedroom. The architecture is very lavish. I look at the door and see the initials, King H. imprinted. King Henry?! Oh no I need to get out of here.

“Uhhh, what're you doing in King Henry's room?”, said a guard passing by.

“Uhhh, he needs to see me.”, I reply

“Eba, I'm not stupid, I know you're trying to escape this place with Aurora. I saw Gerald, the guard chasing after you in the vent go after you.”, he said

“Oh... please I just want to take my baby somewhere safe. King Henry is plotting to kill me and take Aurora away.”

“Don't worry, I'm not here to take you away, I actually want to help you.”, the guard said.

“Really?”

“I've seen what you've had to go through. I feel for you and want to help you escape.”

“Thank you, sir”

“Call me Alejandro.”

I'm so relieved and shocked at the same time. This guard is actually helping me out.

"We should probably get out of King Henry's room", Alejandro said.

"Agreed", I replied.

"I know a way out, follow me."

I follow behind him, he takes me down a hallway that leads to a door guarded by guards.

"Hey, Alejandro!", said one of the guards

"Hey, what's good homie!", said the other.

"Hey, guys! Just showing Eba around the castle and I wanted to show her the garden", replied

Alejandro.

"Right this way, man!", said one of the guards.

I walk to the garden with Alejandro. I hear a voice in the distance.

"Hey you're the girl who stabbed me earlier!"

"Get her!!!"

Alejandro takes my hand, "RUN!"

I ran the fastest I've ever run in my life. There's guards shooting at us, helicopters chasing us, and the two of us running for our lives.

"I see a cave ahead, lets hide behind there!", Alejandro said.

We run to the cave. Bullets flying past us.

"AH!"

I look back. Alejandro has been shot.

"Alejandro!!!"

I see a man in the distance.

"Darling, where do you think your going?"

ITS JAKE!?

“Jake!?”

“That’s me”, he replied.

“HOW COULD YOU!”

“Hand the baby to me love and there will be no trouble”, said Jake.

“No way you psychopath”

He pulls a gun out and points it at me.

“Goodbye E-”

Alejandro shoots Jake in the heart

“Eba... save yourself!”, said Alejandro.

“No, I’m not you leaving you to die!”

I try to pick him up on my back, but I struggled to do so.

“Please, Eba. Get somewhere safe for me.”

I start to tear up. Alejandro was different from anyone I had ever met here. He was kind, genuine and helped me escape from death. He listened to her stories and offered me words of encouragement.

“RUN EBA!”, Alejandro says

Monday, April 21, 2078, 19:30

I continue running, tears streaming from my eyes. I run into the cave, holding Aurora tightly. A guard tries to shoot me but misses and shoots a rock instead; causing a series of boulders to fall and block the entrance of the cave. Fortunately, there is an exit on the other side. The cave lead to a beach. I sit on the cold damp sand alone. The heeps of sea swelled silently. I look out into the horizon, the sight of the sunset stares back at me. My tears fall into the ocean, feelin hopeless once again.

By Jalop:

The tears fell and fell, pouring from my eyes. My cheeks were red and bare, the tears burning as they fell. Everything I have been holding in was finally released that night under the light of the moon. I cried for those I had lost, my sisters, my mother, my friends, Alejandro, and the baby girl in my arms. I cried for them all. The tears continued to fall as I gasped for air. I let out a scream I never had before, it was so dry scraping my throat as it crawled its way out of my mouth... Everything was boiling over. My throat felt like acid as I tried to swallow my saliva. My lungs hurt from the screams every inhale felt as if my rib cage was piercing my lungs forbidding them from expanding.

Why? Why must I have to be the only one? Why did they leave me? Why did they kill him? Why couldn't I have died with the rest? I wish I left this forsaking place behind, falling into the comfort of death.

I close my eyes, desperate to free my mind from the sight of my own pain. As I close my eyes I am punished by the memories. Memories of Alejandro; his eyes, his voice, ...and his death. Falling deeper into the pits of my mind, I am flashed with images of Alejandro's death. The blood was pooling from his back where he was shot. Crawling, using his last dying breath begging me to run away. So I did, he died alone. I let him die alone. He could've lived a long life without me but I had to kill him. I let him die. It's all my fault.

Opening my eyes I accepted it. The tears are dried, and I feel empty, drained of all emotions. Turning my head, I look at the baby I did all this for. She lies there peacefully unaware of what the world wants from her. I want to reach my hand out just to touch her, but I can't, I can't wake her. My baby girl has the world on her shoulder whether she wants it there or not. She'll never have that choice. It feels as if there's a rock in my stomach, the urge to vomit is overwhelming. It's sick, it's inhumane; my baby will have it worse than I ever did. I can't allow that to happen. She has a right to choose. When the world is on her shoulders, will the world ever shoulder her? Will they make her life as peaceful as it can be? Or will they turn on her as they turned on me?

Getting up from the seat I made myself in the sand, I pushed those thoughts out of my head. I don't have time for thoughts like that, not when the whole world is after me.

I dust off my worn pants and then straighten out my ripped and bloody shirt. I reach down ignoring the blinding pain running through my body gripping the little motionless bundle of life. We couldn't afford a break, we had to keep moving, and one day of rest could cost us our life.

Days have passed and we haven't stopped walking. Even as my legs became sore, we kept walking. Even when our bodies cried for food, we kept walking. Only stopping when we needed to refill.

That's what happened this time. It was routine, making the baby her nest made of leaves, hay, for anything soft, laying her down then walking off not too far to get my refill of water. It was routine, we always did this but today... was different. It could be caused by the lack of sleep, or food, but today I forgot something. It was so simple, so important, how could I forget this? This was life or death for us and I just forgot. I forgot to search the area for any signs of human life.

I went down to the body of running water. Dipping my hands in it, taking a drink. Then splashing my face with it. That's when I saw them, marching, flanked by dogs and flashing lights, they were coming for us. I jumped up from my seat. Rushing to get to her before they do, careful not to give away my position.

If I could just get to her, everything would be fine. I breathe in a silent prayer. Praying, begging that she doesn't cry. Hoping that anyone would hear my prayer. I could not handle it if I lost her, not when I did all of this for her, if she is gone then I would've done this for nothing. Once she is gone, I will have nothing to live for.

That's when I hear that familiar sound. It's high pitched, it's loud, it's fearful... it's her cry. The men turn their lights to the sound of the noise. I feel my heart drop to my stomach. I am frozen in fear, my feet glued to the floor. An internal conflict wars on in my mind. Do I stay here frozen in my fear or do I go and save my baby. I don't have long every second that I take thinking about my answer is another second

they get closer to her. Fighting against my natural instincts I move towards the baby. Light on my feet, careful so that they don't see me. My heart beating hard as I continue to make my way towards her. That's when I see it. There's a familiar thump in my chest as I look in her direction.

They have her.

I was too late.

She's crying even harder now.

They pick her up.

I hold my breath.

Should I confront them? Is there even a chance that I could win. There's 100 of them and only one of me. I am not going to win that fight. The realization is a hard pill to swallow.

I need to let her go.

Days have passed and I am plunged with a grief that can only be found from the depths of hell, I put a plan into action. The agony as any hope of happiness dies right before my eyes. I moved backward, until I rested on the trunk of a tree. I draw my eyebrows together in anger. We need no savior, if humankind should go on, it will not be with me. I'll die before I let that happen.

The calling of death is odd. You go from avoiding it all your life, trying by any means to make it so death tags you last. But now I welcome it, no I call for it. Stepping on the edge of life holding the world in my hands. There's no reason to go on. Not when this is the life I will face for as long as I breathe in the breath of life. If anyone shall have my body it should be the animals of this land. They are the only ones who deserve to feast on the last hope of man.

Knowing what I have to do now, I began to walk. My eyes focused on the rays of the blinding sun. Following my last fighting chance of having a choice in this world, I walk towards the edge of the cliff. The feeling is surreal, I feel light-headed. It is like my body using its last bit of strength to prevent me from making my choice. It's too late for that, I have already made my choice long ago.

I count down in my head, 2:00 I remove my shoes from my feet so as to not track dirt into the afterlands. 1:30 I remove my shirt using it to wipe off dirt and blood that tells the story of my pain. 0:40 I take three steps until all I can see are waves of the ocean crashing into the bed of the beach under it. 0:30 I take a deep breath. 0:25 I walked off. I guess what they say about your life flashing before your eyes is true, but what they didn't tell you was that it wasn't a flash. It's like I am living through every moment of my life again. I am remembering things I haven't been able to before. My first steps, the way my mother's face contorts when she was informed of my father's death, both my sister's death. Watching as more than half of the world's population disappeared because of an illness, the bodies upon bodies of lifeless women all around the world, watching as men cried for their mothers, their sisters, their daughters, their friends, their wives, crying over every woman that meant anything to them. I remembered it all.

0:00 Pain, that's all I feel as my back hit the water. The waves threw my lifeless body around in the water. There's a familiar crimson color that pollutes the water as my back scrapes against the sharp edges of the rocks. I feel the chill down to the bone. The coldness of the water sets in, it's oddly comforting in its own way, I accept this.

Aurora... my baby, I am sorry.

Annotation #1 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

Jalop: *One technique my group chose was the use of first person. It allows the readers to feel closer to*

Eba because they get to see what goes through her head. And why she acts the way she does. It gives readers a deeper understanding of Eba as a person. One author we were influenced by was Carrie Vaughn in the short story "Amaryllis." In that story she has a first person POV so that we the readers feel more connected to the MC.

Colin: *One technique I chose was to use first person in order to allow the reader to have a glimpse inside the protagonist's mind, their point of view, and be able to understand their internal thoughts and emotions. My group incorporated, "I", in our story to show that it is meant to be read and viewed through the eyes of Eba. First person point of view really allows the reader to have a clear perspective of what internal conflict the main character is experiencing. We were influenced by the author, Carrie Vaughn, and her short story titled, "Amaryllis". She uses a first person point of view to allow the reader to*

Ahnyah: *One technique I used was 1st person. I wanted the reader to have a glimpse of the life Eba had the first few days since the illness. I wanted the reader to get a feel for how Eba was as a person and listen in on the thoughts she has while facing some challenges.*

Annotation #2 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

Jalop: *One technique I chose was the use of no dialogue. The reason for this was because Eba was alone throughout most of my part, so she had no one to talk to. So I put all my attention on showing the readers how Eba felt. Rather than having her say it. I was influenced by Octavia Butler, in her short story we read in class she used little to no dialogue.*

Colin: *Another technique we decided to incorporate in our dystopian story is the use of dialogue. The*

communication between characters allows the reader to get a sense of what each character is like and paint a more vivid picture. It also

Ahnyah: I used a good amount of dialogue in my section. There were more words and thoughts that were happening to Eba. I really wanted to add on the details that were happening to Eba and I felt like adding dialogue would help the reader understand the character Eba better.

Annotation #3 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

Jalop: One technique I used was chronology. Near the ending of the story I had Eba count down her final two minutes on earth before she killed herself. Showing the reader what she does and what goes through her head during the countdown. And once the time hits zero Eba has finally died.

Colin: In addition to the other techniques used, I decided to use symbolism to show how she wan

Ahnyah: I had also used the technique of first-person narration. I was using narration in 1st pov explaining each action or feeling Eba was feeling in that moment or scene.